



2023

RESULTS REPORT

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAMME

“TOWARDS THE FUTURE”

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1. SUMMARY

The Annual Results Report 2023 presents the results, challenges and lessons learned of the second year of Fida’s Development Cooperation Programme 2022-2025, “Towards the Future – A Safe Educational Path and Living Environment for Children and Youth”. During the year, Fida implemented a range of activities that strengthened the fulfilment of the Right to Education and to a Safe Living Environment for children and youth. The Programme also strengthened the capacity of its implementing partners in the areas of organisational management, advocacy and Innovations, Technology and Corporate Collaboration (ITCC). Activities in Finland, meanwhile, focused on raising awareness and increasing engagement regarding the Programme’s themes among the Finnish public. This was achieved through work in three key areas, namely Advocacy, Development Communication and Global Education. Three Cross-Cutting Objectives; Gender Equality, Disability Inclusion and Environment and Climate Resilience were mainstreamed throughout the Programme.

An overview of the Programme is provided in Section 2 below, while the global-level results are presented in Section 3. Section 4 then provides a brief overview of the results of each Country Programme. The results of the Advocacy, Global Education and Development Communication activities implemented in Finland are presented in section 5, followed by the Programme Management and Quality Control in Section 6 and Programme Funding in Section 7.



Figure 1. Fida Country Programmes 2022–2025

During 2023, the Development Cooperation Programme operated in **10 countries in South and South-East Asia, Eastern Africa and the Middle East** (see Figure 1. above). This Annual Results Report has been prepared based on the annual reports of each Country Programme as well as the results of the Development Communication, Global Education and Advocacy work carried out in Finland. The Programme's Result Matrix (Appendix 2) has also been an important tool for analysing the Programme's results.

Fida's **operating environment included countries that were fragile and/or least developed and in which the space for civil society to operate was limited**. This difficult operating environment posed challenges to implementation and necessitated regular analysis as well as updating of the Programme's Risk Management Plan as circumstances changed. More information regarding the operating environment can be found in Section 2.3. The Programme's Risk Management Plan is presented in Section 2.4 and Appendix 3.

During 2023, the **Programme directly impacted the lives of 458 600 people, including 237 400 girls and women and 23 600 persons with disabilities** (see Figure 2. Below). The number of indirect beneficiaries reached was 7.7 million (number includes over 6 million reached through media campaigns in Ethiopia). This represents a reasonably large increase compared to the equivalent figures for 2022. Direct beneficiary numbers increased as Country Programmes became more firmly established and were able to expand their reach. Meanwhile, indirect beneficiary numbers grew due to an increased use of media, such as radio and television, in awareness raising.

Significant results were achieved during the year in terms of changes in the knowledge, attitudes and practices of rights holders and duty bearers regarding the Right to Education and the Right to a Safe Living Environment. Substantial steps were taken in ensuring access to education for all children and improving the inclusiveness and quality of the education provided. Parents were also equipped with new knowledge and skills for supporting their children's education. In addition, unemployed youth and parents were provided with vocational training and access to capital that they used to increase their income and support the wellbeing of their families.

Please refer to Section 3 below for a detailed analysis of Programme results.

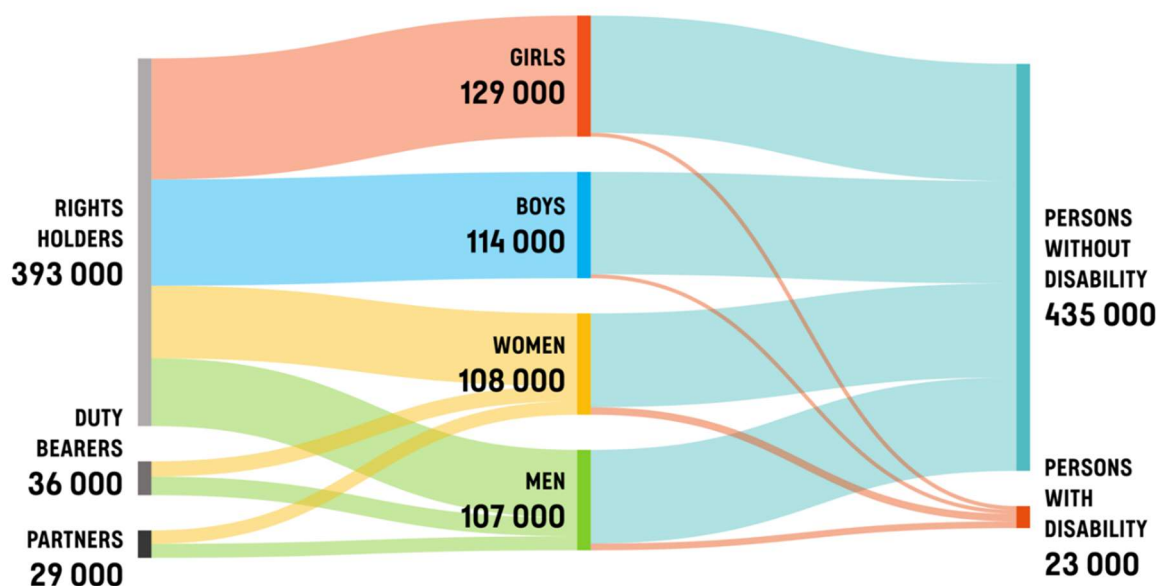


Figure 2. Direct Beneficiaries in 2023

Local civil society was also strengthened through the Programme. As described further in section 3.3, the capacity of the Programme's local partner organisations to operate effectively and carry out impactful advocacy work increased during the year, as well as their readiness to innovate and collaborate with other actors. The Programme also worked with 1100 community-level civil society groups, many of which were established through the Programme, to support them in providing a voice for marginalized communities.

The Programme encountered various challenges during 2023. These challenges, outlined in Section 3.5, nevertheless provided opportunities to innovate, pilot new approaches to Programme implementation and learn lessons that will serve the Programme in future. The **Cross-Cutting Objectives of Gender Equality, Disability Inclusion and Environment and Climate Resilience were incorporated into all Programme activities** (see Section 3.4). Learning, meanwhile, was supported through monthly thematic workshops, regional seminars and through sharing evaluation results broadly across the Programme. Two external evaluations conducted in 2023 are described in more detail in Section 6.3.

Four funding reallocations for 2023 were approved by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Firstly, in Myanmar, the Country Programme Advisor's role was reduced by 50%, resulting in a saving of €19 000. The savings were used to support other budget lines in the Myanmar Country Programme (€6000) and to cover increased personnel costs in the Bangladesh Country Programme (€13 000). A second request was accepted to reallocate €202 900 (€164 000 in savings and €38 900 from unallocated funds) among several Country Programmes. The reallocated funds were used to construct 20 water pans (Kenya), establish four IT labs in schools and an irrigation system (Nepal) and to cover consultation and other costs (Bangladesh). The request also included €95 000 to cover car tax expenses in Ethiopia. However, due to delays in the purchase of the vehicle, a third reallocation request was later approved to roll over €120 000 to 2024 for the purchase of the vehicle and payment of vehicle tax. Finally, a request to roll over €500 000 in unused funding to 2024 was approved.

2. FIDA'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAMME 2022–2025

2.1. STRUCTURE AND THEMES OF THE PROGRAMME

The overall aim (impact) of the Development Cooperation Programme 2022 – 2025 is to bring about improved access to quality education and safer living environments for children and youth in Programme countries. This is achieved through four outcomes, as outlined below.

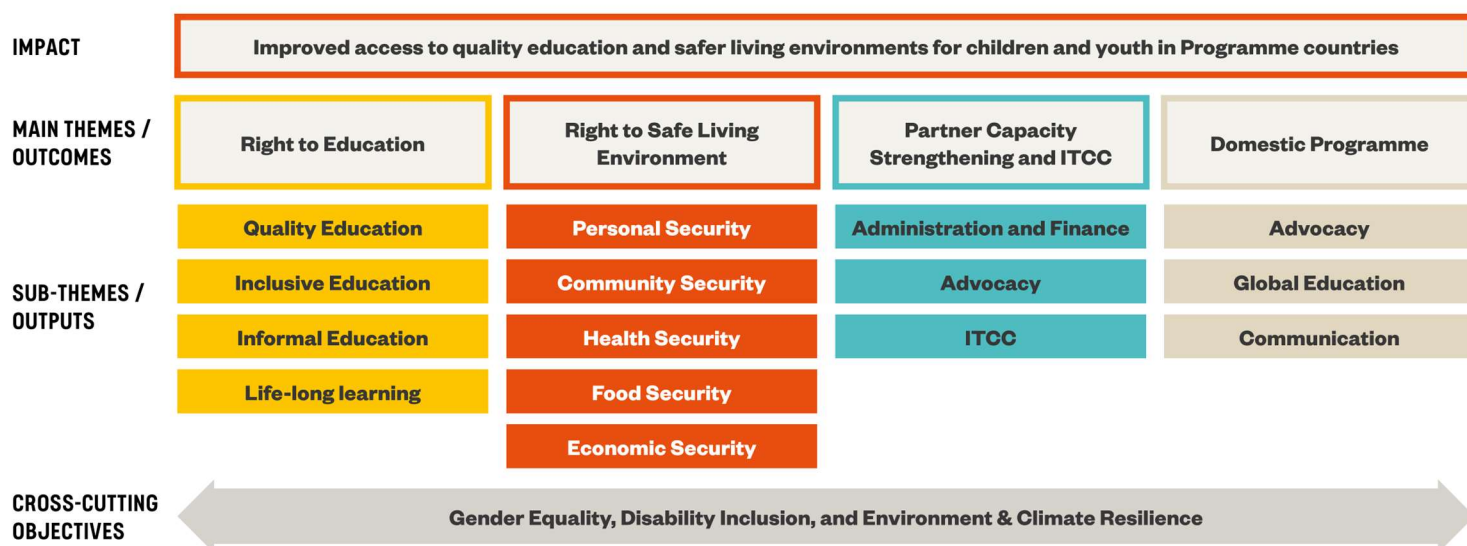


Figure 3. Development Cooperation Programme Structure

The first Programme outcome is **strengthened realisation of the Right to Education for children and youth, especially girls and children with disabilities**. This goal is reached through activities under four sub-themes. Firstly, **Quality Education** activities focus on ensuring that teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide high quality education to all children in a safe environment. **Inclusive Education** activities, meanwhile, address education accessibility, particularly focusing on children with disabilities and ethnic minorities. **Informal Education** activities focus on ensuring that children have opportunities to learn and interact with one another in informal classes outside school hours. Finally, the aim of **Life-Long Learning** activities is to provide opportunities for young people and parents to further their education and learn new skills.

The Programme's second outcome is **strengthened realisation of the Right to a Safe Living Environment, especially for girls and children with disabilities**. This goal is achieved through activities under five sub-themes. **Personal Security** activities focus on children's and parents' psychosocial wellbeing and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). **Community Security** activities, meanwhile, equip local community members with skills for resolving conflicts and promoting peaceful environments, where all can thrive. Activities in the area of **Health Security** aim to promote healthy practices and ensure that all community members have access to adequate sanitation and clean water and that persons with disabilities can access rehabilitation services and use assistive devices. **Food Security** activities equip local communities with the skills and know-

how to sustainably grow crops and manage livestock. Finally, **Economic Security** activities provide right holders with skills and knowledge relevant to gaining employment and establishing small businesses.

The Programme's third outcome is **improved administrative and financial practices of partner organisations and strengthened commitment to act innovatively to strengthen the realisation of the rights of children and youth, especially girls and children with disabilities**. This goal is achieved through three outputs. The first output concerns improving the financial and administrative capacity of partner organisations. The second output relates to strengthening the advocacy capacity of implementing partners. Meanwhile, the final output and related activities support local partners in collaborating with private sector actors, increasing their capacity to innovate and embrace new technology solutions. The Programme's fourth outcome, covering Programme activities in Finland, is **increased commitment of target groups to promote children's rights to quality education and a safe living environment globally** and includes, as previously mentioned, Development Communication, Advocacy and Global Education.

In 2023, the Development Cooperation Programme contained 10 Country Programmes, all of which implemented outcomes 1-3 of the Programme. The number of sub-themes addressed in each Country Programme varied, however, depending on the local context and capacity gaps identified as well as the expertise of the local implementing partners. The outline of a typical Country Programme can be found in Figure 4. below.

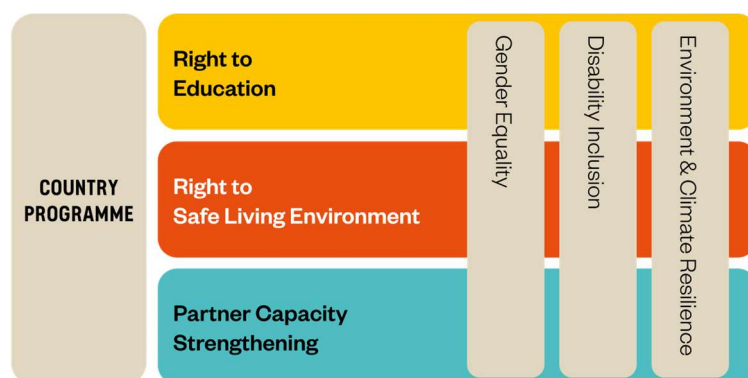


Figure 4. Country Programme structure

The Country Programmes were designed based on a Human-Rights Based Approach (see Section 2.2 below) and in close collaboration with Fida's partner organisations and other local stakeholders. Special care was taken to include both rights holders and duty bearers in the planning and implementation of the Country Programmes. The Country Programmes focused on changing attitudes and behaviour and building sustainable structures to ensure that positive changes can be maintained after the intervention period. Country Programme activities focus on both building awareness of children's rights among rights holders and duty bearers and on empowering rights holders to advocate for the realisation of their own rights.

The Programme was planned with sustainability in mind. This meant ensuring genuine local ownership of Programme activities and focusing activities on tackling the root causes of poverty and inequality. Careful consideration was also given to how and on what scale activities will continue after the programme period. This was done through the formulation of Sustainability Plans for all Country Programmes, which are reviewed at least once per year. The Programme also worked closely with all local implementing partners to strengthen

their organisational capacity (see section 3.3) so that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct impactful work in future.

2.2. HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH AND THEORY OF CHANGE

Fida's development cooperation is based on a **Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)**. The Development Cooperation Programme 2022-2025 aims to identify and tackle structural causes preventing rights from being fulfilled in order to promote long-term, sustainable changes in people's lives. Progress towards the results is monitored by collecting disaggregated data concerning the fulfilment of human rights and the knowledge and capacity of rights holders and duty bearers. Additional indicators measure changes at the civil society and government levels. The Programme is considered to be **human rights transformative, and work is being carried out during the programme period to solidify the transformative foundation of the Programme**¹. The Programme's **Results Chain outlines its intervention logic** and forms the basis for the Programme's Results Matrix. Meanwhile, a broader picture of the various factors that contribute to the achievement of the Programme's goals is provided by the **Theory of Change** (see Figure 5 below). For further information regarding the Programme's intervention logic please refer to the 2022 – 2025 Programme Plan.

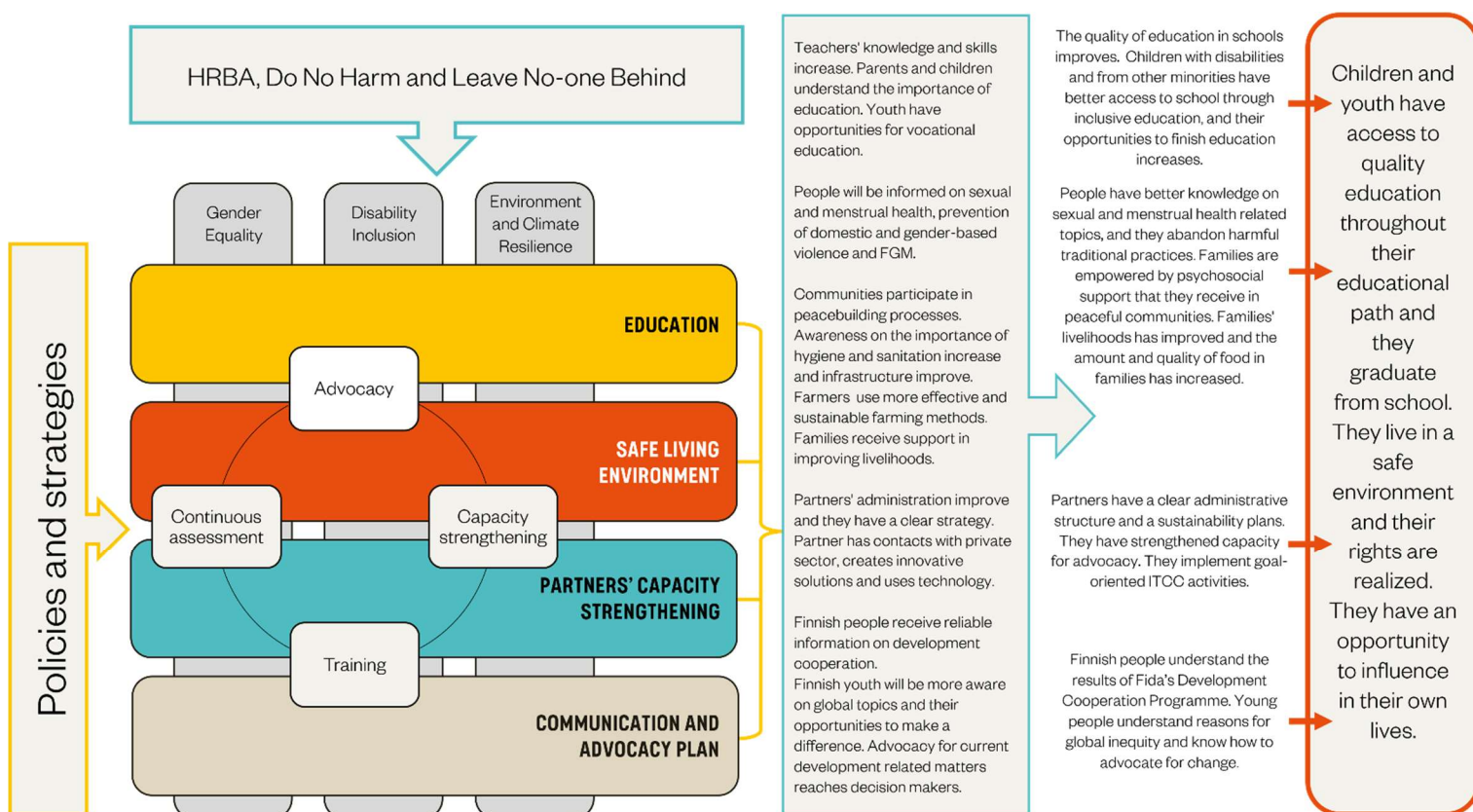


Figure 5. Theory of Change of Development Cooperation Programme 2022 – 2025

¹ Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation: Guidance Note 2015, Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

2.3. OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Fida's Development Cooperation Programme operated in 10 countries during the 2023, of which eight were classified as Least Developed Countries by OECD DAC, whilst the remaining two were Middle-Income Countries. The Fragile State Index (FSI) classified four countries as being at the "Warning" level, signifying weak political and social institutions and cohesion, whilst six countries were considered to be at the most serious "Alert" level, which indicates a highly fragile situation and the potential for societal collapse. Several countries in which the Programme operated, such as DR Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, and Myanmar were experiencing or recovering from conflict situations.

According to analysis by CIVICUS, the space for civil society to operate was limited to some degree in all operating countries. All countries faced challenges in terms of fulfilling basic rights, such as the Right to Education and Right to a Safe Living Environment and contained significant segments of the population living in poverty. For this reason, Fida's work supporting and equipping local NGOs, Churches and other actors as advocates has been very important. Figure 6 below provides an overview of the level of development, fragility and civil society space in the operating countries.

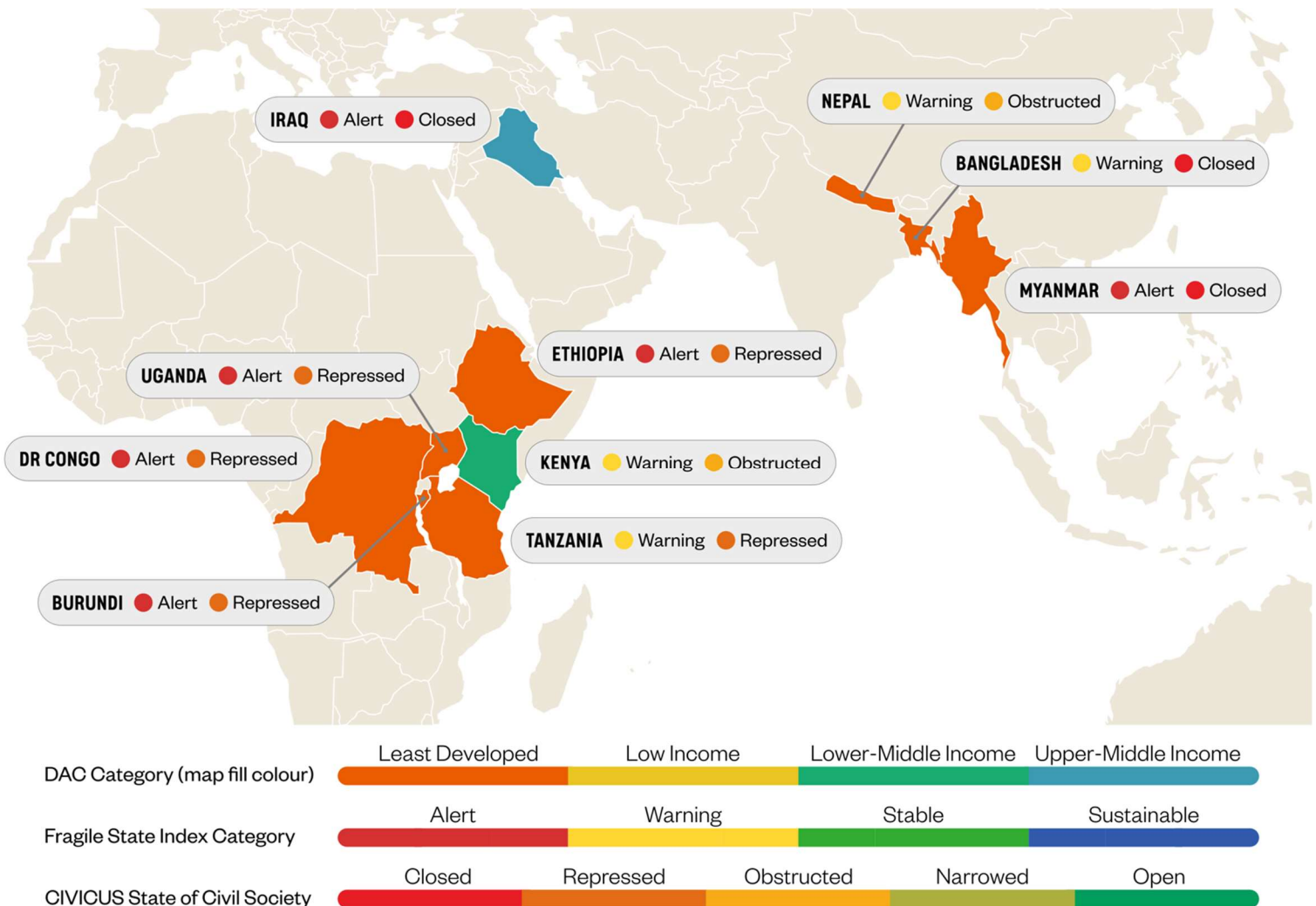


Figure 6. Key Development Indicators for Programme Countries

UNSTABLE AND INSECURE OPERATING ENVIRONMENTS

During 2023, the operating environment in several countries in which the Programme operated was unstable and insecure. In eastern DR Congo, fighting continued between rebel groups and the Congolese army. The M23 rebel group made significant territorial gains and began to threaten Goma, the largest city in the area and a hub for development organisations including Fida. In Myanmar, meanwhile, fighting continued between government forces and various armed groups with the United Nations estimating that the fighting had displaced more than 2.6 million (800 000 since October 2023)². In Iraqi Kurdistan, the security situation worsened, following the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas conflict. There was, for instance, an increase in Iranian drone attacks near Erbil. Finally, in Ethiopia the security situation remained difficult in many regions. An additional development was the emergence of a movement known as “No More”, which is critical of Western presence and influence in the country. This movement will be monitored during the coming years.

INFLATION AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Inflation remained a major challenge during the year in many programme countries and impacted both beneficiaries and Country Programme operating budgets. Increased transportation costs have been a challenge in many countries. In Myanmar, rising prices combined with limited livelihood opportunities led many people to resort to harmful coping mechanisms such as taking on debt, selling assets and reducing food consumption. In Kenya, meanwhile, the cost-of-living crisis increased anxiety and tensions within families and drove some people to harmful practices, such as cutting down trees. In Tanzania, it was highlighted that increasing costs could impact on the results of the Country Programme as the price of many of the inputs of livelihood activities such as seeds, fertilizer and palm and sunflower oil has increased.

Additional challenges were caused by banking regulations in Iraq, where the government introduced a requirement that all bank withdrawals be made in Iraqi Dinars with an unfavourable US dollar exchange rate. This differed to the previous situation when it had been possible to withdraw cash in US Dollars, a practice followed by most NGOs. Also, in Myanmar, the large discrepancy between official and unofficial exchange rates and strict military control over money transfers increased the complexity of financial management.

OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The operating environment was also affected by other factors. Climate extremes, for instance, impacted work in various locations. In DR Congo there were major floods in South Kivu Province which led to deteriorating road conditions which made travel more difficult. In Uganda, meanwhile, there were prolonged droughts which created challenges for food security activities. Also, in Uganda, UNHCR reduced the amount of food rations provided to inhabitants of refugee settlements. This change led to adults spending more time trying to secure food and frequently requesting that their children support them in planting and harvesting crops. In Nepal, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake hit the west of the country, destroying thousands of private dwellings and public buildings and killing 153 people.

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-emergency-update-1-january-2024>

2.4. RISK MANAGEMENT

The strategic-level Risk Management Plan was reviewed in the autumn of 2023. The Plan contains four risk categories which are strategic, operational, financial and hazard risks. The risk level for each risk was reviewed, focusing on impact and probability. Risk management and responsible parties were also reviewed. Finally, residual risks were checked and re-evaluated.

Some updates were made to clarify the wording as the Risk Management Plan covers Fida as an organisation and not only development cooperation activities. Furthermore, an additional chapter was added to clarify how risk management is integral to leading the work. No new risks were added, and the current and residual risk scoring was seen to be adequate for the current situation. The risk 'The effects of a local, interstate conflict on the Programme or individual Country Programmes' was adjusted to include global conflict as the global security situation has become more tense during 2023. The Programme's Risk Management Plan can be found attached (see Appendix 3). In addition to this, each Country Programme reviewed and, where necessary, updated its Country Programme-specific Risk Management Plan during 2023. In general, plans were found to be effective and comprehensive, however, a few risks were added to the plans, such as the risk of earthquakes occurring in Iraq and general insecurity during election periods in Bangladesh.

The security situation was tense in many Programme areas, as outlined in section 2.3 above. This led to challenges related to logistics and psychological strain for Programme staff. Major insecurity occurred mainly in DR Congo, Myanmar and Ethiopia. The Country Programmes in question responded by adapting implementation strategies and, in DR Congo, providing psychosocial support to Programme staff. Programme staff also adhered to security guidelines and did not travel to highly insecure areas. In Myanmar the local team readied emergency food provisions, along with fuel reserves for potential emergencies and stored them both at the Country Office and in the residences of team members. In addition, the Myanmar team have various channels of communication open to ensure the communication is possible between Learning Centres, field staff, and Country Programme management. All Fida staff members working in/travelling regularly to insecure locations have completed Hostile Environment Awareness Training.

A further risk that materialised during 2023 was price increases due to general inflation. As described above (section 2.3), this posed challenges in many Country Programmes and required adaptation and, in certain cases, the reduction of targets. Meanwhile, in Iraq, a budget crisis in the Kurdistan region led to teacher demonstrations and school closures, hampering Programme activities. Nevertheless, the Country Programme had contingency plans which were successfully put into practice so that Programme activities could continue.

Four allegations of misconduct were made through whistleblowing channels during 2023 and were reported to the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA). All cases were thoroughly investigated. Three cases related to Tanzania. Firstly, an allegation was made that funds totalling €4000 had been misused. The case was found to have merit and the MFA requested that the funds be repaid. Secondly, an allegation was made that funds had been misused in Zanzibar, however, the case was found to be groundless. A third allegation of misconduct was made relating to two previous Fida employees but was also found to be groundless. Finally, an allegation was made that Fida's Ugandan implementing partner had discriminated against sexual minorities, however, this case was also found to be groundless.

3. PROGRESS BY OUTCOME AREAS

The objectives, indicators, and results of Fida’s Development Programme are presented in full in the attached Result Matrix (Appendix 2.). This Results Report contains **an analysis and overview of Programme performance** based on the Results Matrix and the Country Programme Annual Reports. Sections 3.1 – 3.3, present the results for outcome areas 1, 2 and 3. The results for outcome area 4 are presented in section 5. The results of the Cross-Cutting Objectives are presented in Section 3.4. Meanwhile, reflections on the challenges and lessons learned are discussed in Section 3.5. Overviews of the main achievements in each Country Programme are presented in Section 4.

The Development Cooperation Programme used a **traffic light system** to show progress towards annual indicator targets. A green light indicated that the targets were achieved or close to being achieved (> 80% of annual target). An amber light showed that there was moderate success in reaching the indicator targets (60-80% of annual target) and a red light indicated that the Programme was relatively far from meeting its target (< 60% of annual target), suggesting either that there were implementation challenges or that the original targets were overly ambitious. Traffic lights reflect cumulative results during 2022 – 2023 while all other results and figures in this report are annual, i.e. cover 2023 only.

The total number of beneficiaries of all outcome areas is presented in Table 1 below and shows that during 2023 the Programme reached 458 600 (f: 237 400) direct beneficiaries. The number of direct beneficiaries of each outcome area can be found in sections 3.1 – 3.3 below.

● Rights Holders ● Duty Bearers ● Partners		FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
TOTAL DIRECT BENEFICIARIES (458 600)	Children without disabilities	125 000	109 400	234 400
	Children with disabilities	4200	4100	8300
	Adults without disabilities	71 200	66 200	137 500
	Adults with disabilities	6200	6200	12 500
	Adults without disabilities	16 200	19 600	35 900
	Adults with disabilities	170	200	360
	Adults without disabilities	12 700	14 200	27 200
	Adults with disabilities	1600	800	2400

Table 1. Total Direct Beneficiaries 2023

3.1. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

The Convention on the Rights of the Child states (Article 28) that “every child has the right to an education” and that children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. The Education outcome of Fida’s Development Cooperation Programme works towards the achievement of these goals whilst recognizing the importance of the so-called 4 A’s of education: availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. Programme activities emphasize, in particular, strengthening the educational rights of girls and children with disabilities. In 2023, **Right to Education**



activities directly impacted 182 200 persons, among them 69 300 girls, 62 400 boys and 2 300 children with disabilities.

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES IN EDUCATION				2023 TRAFFIC LIGHTS
● Rights Holders ● Duty Bearers	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	
Children without disabilities	68 200	61 200	129 300	0
Children with disabilities	1 100	1 200	2 300	
Adults without disabilities	21 100	9 900	31 000	1
Adults with disabilities	380	250	630	
Adults without disabilities	10 300	8 000	18 300	5
Adults with disabilities	330	300	630	
Total	101 400	80 800	182 200	

Table 2. Right to Education Beneficiaries and Outcome-level Traffic Lights

The Programme contains six outcome-level indicators measuring progress towards strengthening children's Right to Education in Programme countries. During 2023, the Programme achieved 5/6 of its targets (green traffic light), while one indicator was partially achieved (amber traffic light). This represents a small improvement compared to 2022 results. The partially achieved target concerned the number of students completing non-formal and vocational education.

STRENGTHENING CHILDREN'S AGENCY

During 2023, the Programme had notable successes in strengthening children's agency regarding their educational rights. This was achieved through both informing them of what their educational rights are and providing them with tools and opportunities to highlight gaps in the fulfilment of those rights. Across the Programme as a whole, almost 7000 children (f: 3700, CWD: 130) were able to take part in decision-making regarding their education. In DR Congo, 960 children (f: 480, CWD: 48) participated in, for instance, school management meetings and awareness campaigns on education rights. During the campaigns, they used creative methods such as songs and role plays to highlight the importance of education. Children were also able to demonstrate leadership skills in children's parliaments, established in each of the Country Programmes schools, and sports teams. In Bangladesh, over 800 children (f: 530) participated in decisions such as whether to continue with their studies and which subjects to study. They also spoke out against child marriage. In Kenya 300 young people (f: 190), including teenage parents, took decisions such as re-enrolling in school and pursuing vocational education.

In Myanmar, 20 Learning Centres provided safe spaces for children to meet with their peers and continue their education while also learning about human rights. One young pupil, when describing the impact of child rights training, stated: *"Since learning about child rights and child protection, I have been talking to my parents about the importance of avoiding negative words and violent behaviour. They have started to change their behaviour and stopped using negative words."*

QUALITY OF EDUCATION IMPROVED

During 2023, the quality of education was strengthened for 72 500 children (f: 39 100, CWD: 3500). This result was achieved through, among other measures, strengthening teachers' knowledge of national education curricula and provided them with training on inclusive and child-centred teaching and assessment methods.

In Kenya, 32 trained **teachers reported adopting a more professional approach to teaching**, including making lesson plans in line with the Kenyan national curriculum. Feedback from head teachers confirmed this positive change. Likewise, in Burundi, an internal assessment by Programme staff found that 360 teachers' skills had improved and that the relationships between teachers, children and parents had been strengthened during the year. In Nepal, meanwhile, focus group discussions were organised with both children and parents, which found that there had been notable improvements in the learning environment and that children valued the child-friendly teaching methods being employed by their 410 teachers.

970 TEACHERS
STARTED USING NEW
TEACHING METHODS
AND TOOLS

In Uganda, a novel approach was adopted to improve pupils' grades and strengthen their readiness for sitting school leaving exams. The approach involved organising 250 academic seminars in schools during which difficult exam topics were explained. Feedback from pupils was positive and **the academic performance of over 800 pupils (f: 375) subsequently improved**. The model proved so effective that 25 neighbouring schools have begun conducting similar seminars on their own initiative. Positive improvements in academic performance were also observed in Tanzania, where the pass rate in the Primary School Leaving Examinations increased from a baseline level of 80% to 90% in 2023.

ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Access to education was strengthened for 68 600 children (f: 32 200, CWD: 3500). Various measures were taken to achieve this result, including **making physical improvements to school premises**, raising awareness of children's educational rights and training teachers on how to support the education of children with disabilities. In Nepal, physical infrastructure was improved in 60 schools. Improvements made included constructing and renovating 21 toilet facilities. Improvements to toilets ensured that taps with running water and menstrual pad disposal facilities were available and also that toilets could be accessed by children with disabilities. Meanwhile, in Kenya, improvements such as cementing floors and securing new desks were made and in five schools the number of classrooms was increased. In Burundi, work to strengthen access to pre-school education resulted in the number enrolled at this age increasing by 4395 children.

Work to ensure adequate access to education was particularly important in areas experiencing and recovering from conflict since **poor security and conflict frequently threaten children's right to education**. In these areas, Country Programme's needed to be flexible according to the situation. One such country experiencing these types of challenges was Myanmar, where in many areas schools have been closed since 2021 due to insecurity. The Myanmar Country Programme was able to respond to this situation through an **"Education in Emergencies" approach**, which involved repurposing its Learning Centres to teach the national curriculum, rather than providing informal education, as planned. In addition to enabling 1780 children (f: 905, CWD: 14)

to continue with their education, the Learning Centres were perceived by children as being safe locations in which they could interact with one another and receive emotional support.

In DR Congo training for 390 teachers on **inclusive education** bore fruit as teachers reported strengthened skills for creating positive and inclusive classroom environments. They reported, for instance, introducing activities such as games and role play that involve teamwork and encourage participation by all children, including those with disabilities. Ministry of Education inspectors gave positive feedback on the learning environments and use of inclusive methods in the schools in question. Meanwhile, in Iraq, 280 teachers, were taught about the educational rights of children with special needs. The teachers subsequently began to use more inclusive teaching methods and were also supported to disseminate this knowledge among their colleagues.

COOPERATION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND GOVERNING AUTHORITIES

Increased involvement of parents in matters related to their children's education was observed in several countries. In Uganda, for instance, School Management Committees (SMCs) worked actively to end absenteeism with dramatic results observed. For example, in Kisimunga Primary School, the number of children attending afternoon lessons increased from 50 to 250. SMCs also built four boarding houses to allow

840 CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS ADVANCING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN

children to stay closer to school and participated in the construction of two thatched houses for teachers. Meanwhile, following training on educational rights in Kenya, a community in Adu established a pre-primary Learning Centre for local children. In DR Congo, greater involvement of parents in Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) resulted in several schools establishing budgets for school activities which had not previously been supported financially. In

Nepal, training was provided to strengthen the capacity of local SMCs and PTAs. It was subsequently observed, during monitoring visits, that teachers, **SMCs and PTAs were working more closely together to formulate School Improvement Plans** and were using the plans as the basis for advocacy towards local authorities, for instance, regarding budget allocations.

Significant results were also observed at the government level. In Iraq, **advocacy efforts bore fruit** when the national government took a decision to roll out teaching modules related to sustainability, developed by a local implementing partner, to the whole country. In addition, a special education plan was adopted by the authorities in Iraqi Kurdistan. Please refer to Advocacy section below for further information. Meanwhile, in Burundi, an assessment carried out by the Country Programme identified a number of schools with poor access to pre-school and that also lacked qualified teachers and teaching materials. The assessment was shared with national authorities who took the decision to rehabilitate 18 pre-school classes and train 162 pre-school teachers. In addition, advocacy activities resulted in nine new special education teachers being hired by local authorities in Iraq. Finally, in Nepal, local authorities have provided technical and financial contributions to support the education objectives of the Programme. Moreover, state Provincial Training Centres have provided resource persons for the in-service teachers training and for training School Management Committees.

3.2. RIGHT TO SAFE LIVING ENVIRONMENT



The main goal of the Right to Safe Living Environment outcome is to ensure that all children in target communities are able to grow up in a safe and supportive environment as outlined in Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This is possible when states, local communities and parents take action to ensure that children’s surroundings are safe and promote their wellbeing. The Programme ensures that children and their parents are aware of their rights to a safe living environment and that parents are equipped with the knowledge and skills to generate income to provide for their families. In cases where children and caregivers are experiencing trauma or mental health issues, psychosocial support is provided. During the year, **the Safe Living Environment activities directly impacted the lives of 239 000 direct beneficiaries, among them 96 800 children and 15 000 persons with disabilities.**

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES IN SAFE LIVING ENVIRONMENT				2023 TRAFFIC LIGHTS
● Rights Holders ● Duty Bearers	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	
Children without disabilities	50 000	44 700	95 000	2
Children with disabilities	1000	800	1800	
Adults without disabilities	48 400	54 300	102 700	0
Adults with disabilities	5700	5800	11 500	
Adults without disabilities	11 900	14 100	26 300	14
Adults with disabilities	1300	400	1700	
Total	118 200	120 200	239 000	

Table 3. Right to Safe Living Environment Beneficiaries and Outcome Traffic Lights

Progress towards building a Safe Living Environment for children and youth is measured through 16 indicators. Fourteen of the indicators show good progressive towards the targets during 2022 (green traffic light), while two indicators were red, signifying limited progress. None of the indicators showed an amber light. The poorly achieved targets relate to community safety and peacebuilding, with smaller numbers than planned participating in peacebuilding activities and the number of children reporting feeling more safe than previously also below the targeted figure. These results were partially due to over-optimistic peacebuilding targets. Targets for 2024 and the remainder of the programme period have been revised downwards.

IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH AND RESILIENCE

During 2023, work continued in several Programme countries to strengthen psycho-social support provision for vulnerable children and adults. In Bangladesh, for instance, training on psychosocial support and trauma was organised for 450 school pupils, with 77% reporting improved knowledge of the topic and of tools that can be used in situations that can cause anxiety. Pupils also commented that the training helped them recognize the mental health challenges that their fellow pupils might be facing and also how they can help them. In DR Congo, emotional support groups were established for schoolchildren in the 80 partner schools and teachers and parents were trained on psychological first aid. Teachers and pupils reported that the atmosphere in

schools improved during the year and that cases of bullying decreased. In Iraq, 32 trained social workers improved their understanding of trauma and applied the learned concepts in their work with pupils. As a result, 140 students revealed marked reductions in their exam anxiety. Furthermore, peer support groups continued to be used as a means of providing psychosocial support and were found to be effective in helping children with disabilities and their families find solutions to challenging and stressful situations.

In DR Congo, the Programme also worked with 180 female (PWD: 9) survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Their reintegration into local communities was supported, for instance, through encouraging them to join local self-help groups. As a result, 50% of survivors of SGBV have become more actively engaged in their communities and no longer live in isolation. Meanwhile, psychosocial support sessions for 176 (f: 89) refugees in Uganda were reported as being effective in helping recipients to deal with past trauma and coming to terms with their current situations.

INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR)

A further key focus of work during 2023 was on strengthening sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). In Nepal, for instance, 19 500 (f: 13 500, PWD: 37) children and adults learnt about themes such as menstrual health, child marriage, and gender-based violence, with children subsequently reporting strengthened knowledge of SRHR and greater willingness to speak out on topics such as child marriage.

Monitoring visits also indicated that girls were attending school during their periods, which previously had not

42 000 PEOPLE
WITH STRENGTHENED SRHR
KNOWLEDGE OR BETTER
ACCESS TO SRHR SERVICES

always been the case, and making use of menstrual pad disposal facilities in schools. Furthermore, based on key informant interviews with local health posts, the number of women attending for SRHR-related appointments increased. In Bangladesh, meanwhile, 450 school pupils (f: 190) were taught about puberty with above 90% reporting increased knowledge.

Positive results were also observed in several Eastern African countries. In Uganda, community dialogue resulted in the number of 12-13 year old girls attending school in one location increasing from 334 in 2022 to 392 in 2023. In DR Congo, awareness raising on family planning was effective with a marked increase in the number of women attending health centres for family planning appointments (6 women per day, compared to 2 women per day previously). In Kigoma in Tanzania, meanwhile, gender-based violence rates dropped from 56% to 22% during the year. In Kenya, decreases in teenage pregnancies were observed in several locations- in Loita the decrease was 38%, while the figures for supported communities in Nairobi and Magharini were 25% and 12% respectively. Results were attributed to awareness raising, peer-to-peer forums, re-enrolment of girls to school/TVET, and SRHR training and counselling.

STRENGTHENED LIVELIHOODS AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

During 2023, work continued to increase livelihood opportunities for young adults and parents. The work took various forms from providing business training for unemployed youth to working with local savings groups to ensure the availability of capital in local communities and training farmers in the use of conservation agriculture practices. In Kenya, 2970 households were able to secure new productive assets and the land area under cultivation increased from 23 hectares in 2022 to 213 hectares in 2023. At the same time, yields also increased

from an average of three 90 kilo bags of maize/mung beans in 2022 to 5 bags in 2023. This change was attributed to the use of conservation agriculture techniques and certified seeds. There was also a dramatic increase in the number of households reporting sufficient food throughout the year in Kenya. The figure was 2000 in 2023 compared to a baseline of 120. Increased yields were also observed in Tanzania, where cashew farmers increased their production from 354 tons in 2022 to 472 tons in 2023. Meanwhile, in Uganda, positive changes in the mindset of beneficiaries were observed- whereas in the past they expected planting materials and seeds to be provided by the Programme, in 2023 they began saving cuttings from cassava for planting in the coming years.

Across the Programme 560 **new employment opportunities** were created and 5100 households reported increased income levels, thereby increasing their ability to take care of their families. In Bangladesh, 94 women participated in business development training and 72 were subsequently able to increase their income, using the money to buy more nutritious food for their families and clothes and school material for their children. In Tanzania, meanwhile, 250 small businesses were established (three by persons with disabilities) and 720 households reported quantifiable increases in their savings levels. Key success factors in Tanzania were cooperation with the Small Industry Development Organization (SIDO), a state-run organisation that supports small businesses, and the linking of savings groups to government soft loan schemes. The cooperation with SIDO has helped beneficiaries to produce certified and standardized products (such as foodstuffs – like honey, sunflower oil, and chili sauce), which can be sold legally in supermarkets and as an ingredient for the food processing industry (thereby linking beneficiaries directly with value chains).

1000
SUSTAINABLE
SMALL
BUSINESSES
CREATED

REDUCED CONFLICT AND MORE PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES

In DR Congo, people from different ethnic groups were **brought together in self-help groups** and children's clubs, which has strengthened connections among both children and adults. Meanwhile, in Burundi, there was an impressive multiplication effect observed with the number of peace groups increasing substantially during 2022-2023 from 50 to over 100 groups carrying out diverse peace and development-related activities. During 2023, one group in Cibitoke, for instance, mobilised local resources to construct a footbridge enabling two previously separated communities to cross a river to reach each other.

In Myanmar, activities were organised that brought together **representatives of various religions**- Christians, Muslims and Buddhists- to pursue dialogue and discuss ways in which to live together peacefully. Training was also organised specifically for youth and women with participants reporting that they had shifted their attitudes to others and aimed to engage in positive communication. Interfaith dialogue meetings were also organised in Ethiopia, bringing together almost 16 000 (f: 5400) ethnic and religious representatives and leaders. The meetings built trust between groups that had previously viewed one another with suspicion and helped establish channels for resolving conflicts through peaceful means. **Community members and government representatives were also brought together to identify factors that divide and connect communities and to discuss possible solutions.** This initiative helped build trust and strengthened local justice systems. For example, religious leaders and traditional courts (Geda), relationships were strengthened, and they began jointly working to prevent conflicts and conflict-inducing narratives. Finally, **sports activities were**

organised in Uganda and Ethiopia for groups that were previously in conflict with almost 1000 people participating in Uganda.

STRENGTHENED CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS AND GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

Work was also carried out with civil society groups and state authorities to promote safer living environments. For instance, new civil society groups, such as saving and loan associations and mothers groups were established and their capacity built. In addition, meetings and training for local authorities was organised. In Uganda, 26 new Village Saving and Loan Associations were established and provided cheap loans to their members. During the year, the Ugandan VSLAs were able to increase their total assets to €14 200 from €6000 at the beginning of the year. Meanwhile, members established 223 businesses. In Nepal, meanwhile, community groups conducted a WASH campaign and planned activities for children in kids clubs.

In Bangladesh, 71 government officials were trained on child rights and were able to prevent eleven planned child marriages and four cases of child labour. Similar results were observed in Uganda where, following meetings and focus group discussions with authorities regarding continued cases of child abuse, the district authorities carried out a large-scale sensitization initiative. Meanwhile, the Ethiopia Country Programme supported the Ministry of Peace and National Peace Council (includes religious institutions, civil society representatives, security institutions, higher education institutions, intellectuals, and political parties as members) in drawing up peacebuilding manuals covering, among other topics, how civil society organisations, faith-based organisations and universities can work together to promote peace. Finally, in Kigoma in Tanzania, 203 self-help groups were registered and have established written constitutions with the support of the local Community Development Officer.

3.3. STRENGTHENING PARTNERS' CAPACITY



The goal of the Strengthening Partners' Capacity outcome area is to equip the 18 local implementing partners with the necessary knowledge and skills to to operate effectively both during and after the current programme period. The outcome is achieved through three outputs. Firstly, the Programme strengthens the organisational and financial management capacity of the local partners. Strengths as well as capacity gaps requiring follow-up are captured through regular Organisational Capacity Health Checks which are carried out for all local implementing partners. Secondly, the Programme builds the advocacy capacity of the local partners through providing training to key partner staff on how to carry out effective advocacy work and through strengthening the knowledge of local partners on the Programme's themes. Finally, the Programme supports the local partners to embrace new innovations, technology and corporate collaboration (ITCC) in order to provide added value to the Programme and its target beneficiaries.

Progress is measured through seven outcome indicators. Analysis of the indicators results shows that progress was reasonably good during 2023. 5/7 indicators showed a green traffic light. Meanwhile, one indicator related to ITCC partnerships was amber and the final indicator, covering the number of advocacy initiatives, was red, despite some strong results in certain countries. **The Partner Capacity Strengthening outcome reached a total of 17 700 direct beneficiaries among them 6800 women and 430 persons with disabilities.**




DIRECT BENEFICIARIES IN PARTNER CAPACITY STRENGTHENING				2023 TRAFFIC LIGHTS
	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	
Adults without disabilities	6600	10 500	17 200	
Adults with disabilities	160	270	430	
Total	6800	10 700	17 700	

Table 4. Strengthening Partners’ Capacity Beneficiaries and Outcome Traffic Lights

STRENGTHENING ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

During 2023, Organisational Capacity Health Checks were carried out for partner organisations. The assessments were used to evaluate capacity across several metrics and to identify capacity gaps for follow-up. The Programme employed one member of staff who worked full-time with the Country Programmes to manage activities in this area and monitor progress towards the Programme’s targets. During the reporting period, activities and training focused on themes including strategic planning, financial management, ethics, leadership and preventing fraud and corruption. Improvements in the following areas of financial and administrative management were observed:

- **Finance staff have increased ability to communicate important financial information** to other staff members in an easily understandable manner (7 local partners).
- **Development of systems and structures to improve performance.** Includes having user friendly financial systems & developing internal policies. (7 local partners).
- **Capacity Strengthening Teams (Task Force/Change Control Board) formed** to work on the implementation of various aspects learned during the training (5 local partners).

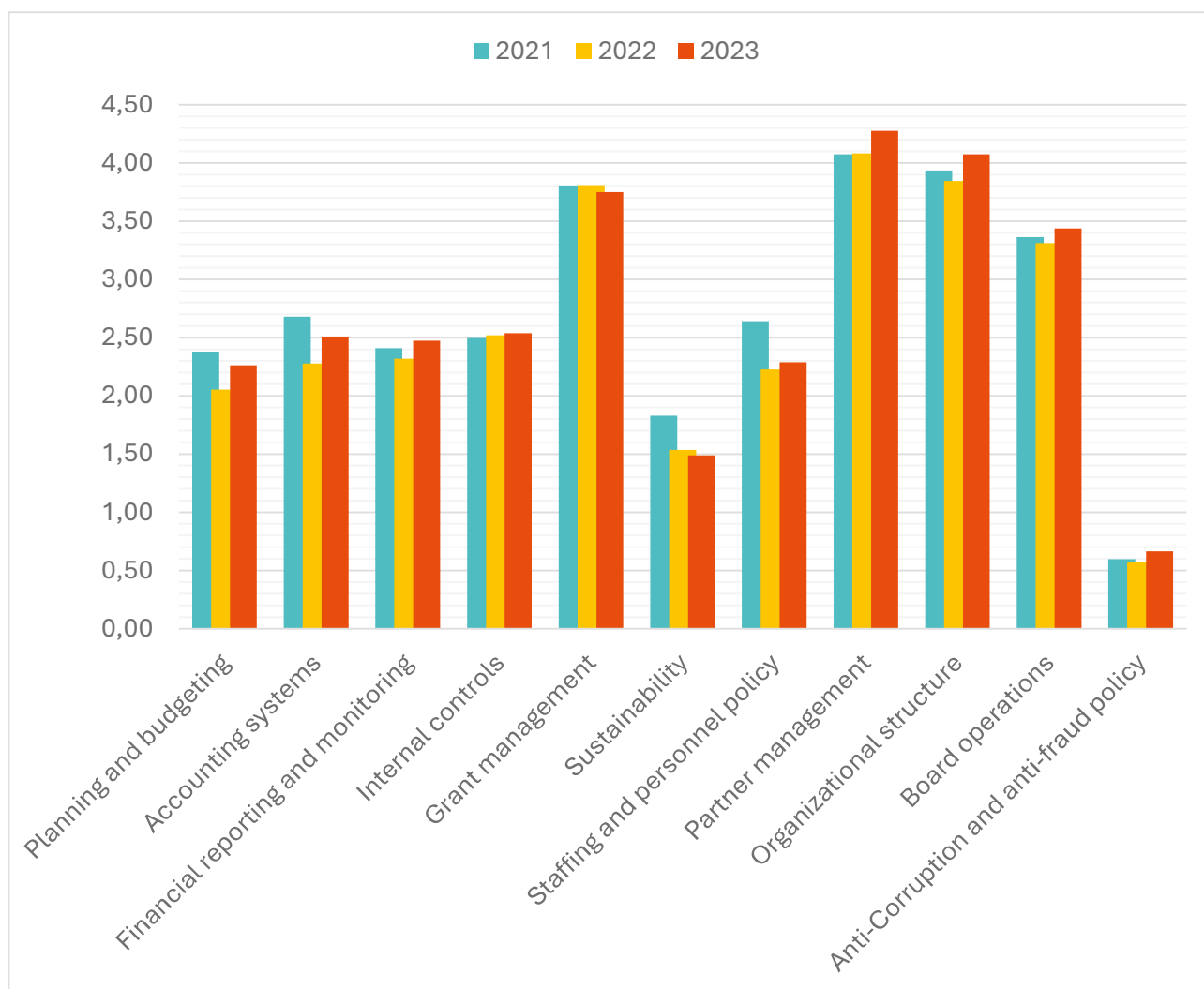


Figure 7. Results of Partner Capacity Health Checks 2021 – 2023

As can be seen from the chart above, there was a slight decrease in performance in several areas between 2021 and 2022. During 2023, however, positive developments were observed in areas such as financial reporting and monitoring, organisation structure and board operations. The average score across the 11 areas assessed increased from 2.6 in 2022 to 2.71 in 2023.

ADVOCACY INITIATIVES AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

The Country Programmes also worked with partner organisations during 2023 to strengthen their role in advocating for the fulfilment of the rights of children and youth. This was done through providing advocacy training for partners' leaders and volunteers and supporting their participation in relevant networks as well as supporting them in implementing advocacy initiatives. Progress was measured through annual Advocacy Capacity Assessments. Key advocacy partners were local communities, Civil Society Organisations and national and international Non-Governmental Organisations and state actors. During 2023, almost 800 (f: 180, PWD: 200) leaders of partner organisations attended advocacy training and 20 600 staff members participated overall. In addition, partner organisations started 40 new advocacy initiatives, of which over half (34) led to positive results.

Several impressive advocacy results were achieved in Iraq during the year. Firstly, a “Sustainability in Education” package developed by Fida’s local partner, TOGETHER, received high-level recognition from the Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Planning and a decision was made to roll out its use in schools across the country. The package contains a training programme and guide for teachers about how to consider Sustainable Development Goals in teaching, including practical application such as cultivating school gardens and planting trees. Secondly, the Ministry of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government took a decision to implement the “Special Education Guidelines”, created by a second Fida partner in Iraq, Halabja Disabled Organisation. The Guidelines include detailed instructions on the right to education for children with special needs. Furthermore, the regional government took a decision to hire eight new teachers to support students with disabilities.

Strong results were also achieved in other countries. In DR Congo, following advocacy by Fida’s local partner, CEPAC, a law was passed that exempts children with disabilities from certain school fees at the secondary level. In addition, a decision was made by the Congolese government to provide maternity care cost-free. The Free Maternity Care initiative covers pregnant women and new-borns, and exempts mothers from paying hospital fees. Meanwhile, the rights of girls and persons with disabilities and environmental sustainability were kept in the spotlight as events were organised to celebrate relevant international days, such as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and World Environment Day. Also, in Eastern African Country Programmes, partners participated in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaigns.

INNOVATIONS, NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING (ITCC)

Fida continued to work to diversify the funding base of its Country Programmes by seeking new sources of institutional funding and boosting collaboration with other organizations and the private sector. During 2023, 25 new partnerships were established that strengthened the overall impact and funding-based of the Programme. These include 22 new partnerships with the private sector, as well as partnerships with educational institutions and other actors.

Innovations and Digitization

In Burundi, a partnership was formed with the local administration of Gashikanwa to train over 200 high school students to use computers for communications and e-business. This partnership helped to increase the skills and employment opportunities of youth. In Ethiopia one local partner (EGCDWO) adopted a digitalized financial system, “Jami One”, to help Self-Help Groups (SHGs) manage their finances more effectively and transparently. In addition, the Programme collaborated with Ethio Telecom to use their Telebirr application which enables SHGs to save and transfer funds through their mobile phones, thereby increasing financial security and reducing the risks inherent in handling cash.

In Iraq one local implementing partner, Sheyaw, started using a new innovative methodology to increase impact. They hired a theatre group made up of persons with disabilities to perform skits on the equal capabilities of persons with disabilities at an event on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The event drew 220 attendees, including media, dignitaries, and government officials, fostering a deeper understanding of issues faced by women with disabilities. As a result, the Ministry of Social Affairs promised to enforce a law that requires that persons with disabilities form at least 5% of the workforce of any company.

In Kenya, meanwhile, a new digital rehabilitation pilot was started with JAMK University to explore how technology can be used to provide rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities.

Consortia and network building

Fida is a member of the EU-CORD network and has been active in setting up EC-CORD country forums in Kenya, DR Congo, Nepal, Ukraine, Uganda, Bangladesh and Ethiopia. The forums build partnerships and collaboration in the respective countries and look for joint funding opportunities. Fida is actively collaborating with LM-International, PMU, ZOA, Leprosy Mission, Sign of Hope, Tearfund, Woord en Daad and Dorcas. In DR Congo, CEPAC strengthened its partnership with LM International in designing a humanitarian project to implement in North-Kivu province with ECHO funding. In Myanmar, meanwhile, collaboration continued with the Grace Samaritan learning centres. The purpose of this collaboration was to improve the quality of education provided through the Country Programme, especially activities surrounding Kid's Clubs. Collaboration also continued with the Magga foundation to formulate a peace training manual.

Collaboration with the private sector

In Bangladesh collaboration with Zabai Ltd. centred around digital educational courses in the Bangla Language for teacher development, child rights and business development. In Ethiopia, meanwhile, local partners approached the private sector and educational institutions in an effort to mobilize local resources and learning opportunities. They have also mapped potential private partners for creating apprenticeships and employment opportunities for youth. In Nepal, a private hospital in Kailali district started to collaborate with us to organize a health camp for children providing medical personnel and medicine as their contribution to helping the local community. Finally, in Tanzania, a partnership was started with CRDB Bank (Tanzania's largest commercial bank) to provide microfinance services to community members in the Kigoma region.

There was a further promising development in Iraq, where a pilot project was started with the North European Business Academy (NEBA), designed to strengthen entrepreneurship in Iraq. Five tutors were trained to facilitate online entrepreneurship training which will begin in 2024. The long-term vision is to make the training programme sustainable by making our local partner TOGETHER the national representative of NEBA in Iraq.

In Burundi, two radio stations (UBA Radio and Nderagakura) aired discussions on the right to education for children and youth, especially those with disabilities. Through this collaboration the Country Programme was able to reach a larger audience than in previous years. Finally, the Uganda Country Programme worked with two local banks to enable the registration of VSLA groups so that they could access credit.

Diversified funding base

The Fida Country Programmes aim to increase their sustainability through diversifying their funding base and expanding local income generation. In Tanzania €42 000 was raised through local income generation. In Nepal, local governments have provided match funding of over €32 900 for improving ICT facilities, health camps, tree planting, and the improvement of the physical infrastructure of schools. This match funding significantly increases the Country Programme's impact. Moreover, communities' active participation and in-kind community contributions valued at €23 065 have been impressive during the reporting period.

3.4. CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVES

The Programme contains three Cross-Cutting Objectives that are incorporated into all Programme activities. Firstly, **Disability Inclusion** entails working proactively to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to participate in all Programme activities and are given opportunities to make their voices heard. **Gender Equality** activities aim to tackle structural barriers preventing gender equality from being fulfilled and a major focus area is strengthening the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) of girls and young women. Finally, **Environment and Climate Resilience** are mainstreamed in all Programme activities, referring to the goal of minimizing the environmental impact of the Programme and supporting beneficiaries to reduce their own impact on the environment and adapt to the changing climate. All beneficiary data is disaggregated by gender and disability status and specific indicators measure progress in each of the Cross-Cutting Objectives.

GENDER EQUALITY



Fida worked to ensure that all persons, regardless of gender, have equal access to its Programme and could influence activities and decisions that impacted their own lives and communities. The Programme worked to raise awareness of important gender-related topics such as Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The Programme engaged with girls, women, boys, and men to promote open discussion regarding gender roles, norms, rights, and expectations in target communities.

During 2023, the Programme **strengthened the rights of 206 600 female rights holders**, while 30 700 female duty bearers and partner organisation representatives participated in the Programme in various ways. The proportion of female beneficiaries in the Programme was 52% in 2023.

Female Leadership and Representation

Children's rights and gender equality were promoted through teaching in schools and Kids Clubs and through other initiatives. In Bangladesh, for instance, gender classes were organised in which 920 children (f: 580, CWD: 16) participated. During the classes, children learnt about puberty and menstrual health, among other topics. As a result of the classes, boys began showing greater respect for girls and girls' opportunities to participate increased. In DR Congo and Nepal, it was reported that girls have assumed leadership positions in school and youth committees and Kids Clubs and were participated actively in decision-making processes. The voice of women in communities was also promoted through work to strengthen local-level groups and organisations, such as women's savings groups and parent groups. In Kenya and Uganda, for instance, emphasis was placed on strengthening the role of women in Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). Currently, almost 60% of VSLA leaders in Uganda are women while the corresponding figure for Kenya is 80%.

Steps were also taken to increase female representation within local implementing partners. In Iraq, Sheyaw saw increased female participation within their network (48% of participants, compared to 40% in 2022) and two women with disabilities were appointed as board members. In Burundi, several congregations of the local church partner took steps to establish a new women's department. This process will require further technical and financial support in order to make the department fully operational. In Nepal, the Country Programme

worked to ensure the realisation of a national gender equality law that requires a minimum 33% representation of whichever gender is underrepresented. This was followed within the Country Programme during recruitment and in School Management Committees, youth clubs and Kids Clubs. Similarly, in Ethiopia, priority was given to women in recruitment processes with the aim of improving gender balance among the staff and the share of female staff more than doubled, climbing from 14% to 33%.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

During 2023, 42 400 people (girls: 16 200, PWDs: 1100) strengthened their knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and work continued to raise awareness of menstrual health management and to prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). Awareness raising was organised for both children and parents covering topics such as puberty, menstruation, sexual development, and consent. The training focused on schools and Kids Clubs and also leveraged various local-level groups and media, such as radio. Monitoring indicates that in Bangladesh and other countries mothers are more ready to discuss issues related to sexual development with their daughters. During 2023, 24 girls were rescued from early marriage and enrolled in vocational education in Kenya. In Bijo, Uganda, meanwhile, cases of SGBV fell from 80 in 2022 to 20 in 2023. Finally, in DR Congo, a 3% reduction in the number of reported cases of SGBV was reported. While this is a positive development, cases remain high indicating that further work to address SGBV is needed.

Concrete changes were also made to infrastructure in schools, such as toilets. In Nepal, for instance, 21 toilets were constructed/renovated with separate facilities for girls, including facilities for disposing of menstrual pads. According to teachers and School Management Committees, this has contributed to increased numbers of girls attending school regularly during their periods. This innovative approach has been complemented by the government distributing sanitary pads free of charge to school-going girls.

DISABILITY INCLUSION



The Programme promoted the equal participation of person with disabilities in education and community life, supporting the idea of “nothing about us without us”, i.e. that no decisions related to persons with disabilities should be taken without consulting them first. Persons with disabilities often face discrimination due to prejudiced attitudes, therefore, it was important to educate local people and duty bearers regarding disabled persons rights and work to change attitudes.

In 2023, **23 600 (2022: 9000) persons with disabilities benefited directly from the Programme** (5.1% of total beneficiaries) and Country Programmes estimated that, on average, 18 % of their budgets were spent on promoting the fulfilment of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Inclusive Education

During 2023, 189 schools improved accessibility for children with disabilities. For instance, in Uganda four ramps were constructed to partner schools while in Burundi, 18 public schools were rehabilitated to meet the needs of children with disabilities. Progress was also made in improving inclusive education. Over 1900 teachers were trained on inclusive teaching methods and the education of 2300 children with disabilities (f:

1100) was supported. Through the training, teachers gained new skills and knowledge which improved their ability to include children with disabilities equally in school. In Bangladesh, trained teachers reported that they had better knowledge and tools for supporting the education of children with disabilities and that they had begun to actively ensure that children with disabilities were included in the classroom and in other school activities. In Burundi, meanwhile, the Country Programme supported the training of sign language teachers to support learning for children with hearing impairments. Almost 300 children with disabilities participated in Kids Clubs in various countries.

In DR Congo, the number of children with disabilities in partner schools increased from 606 to over 900. Furthermore, all enrolled children with disabilities successfully completed the school year and their academic performance improved compared to previous levels. These improvements were attributed, in part, to parents actively encouraging their children to attend school and covering the costs of learning materials and school fees. Meanwhile, in Lindi, Tanzania work continued to promote enrolment in school for children with disabilities. Parents and caregivers brought 62 children (f: 28) for disability/special needs assessments, following which, they were enrolled in primary education. At the end of 2023 no children with disabilities enrolled in schools in the area had dropped out of education.

Strengthened Awareness of Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In Uganda, events were organised in to inform persons with disabilities of available government support, such as the Parish Development Model (PDM). Subsequently 200 persons with disabilities joined PDM and other support groups. The Country Programme also trained 60 disability support persons (f: 40), who provided support to persons with disabilities, as a way of strengthening accessibility and inclusion. The disability support persons displayed a positive attitude and much wiliness to support persons with disabilities during community events, according follow up with 30 persons with disabilities. Across the Programme, 1100 PWDs (f: 760) were able to strengthen their knowledge of SRHR. In Tanzania, Fida, Felm and a Tanzanian Organisation of Persons with Disabilities published sexual and reproductive health and rights material targeted specifically at persons with disabilities.

Challenges unfortunately remain, however. For instance, in Nepal and other countries there is **still stigma at the community level** around having child with a disability and parents often do not see the point of sending a child with a disability to school, indicating that the need to raise awareness regarding the rights of children with disabilities remains.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE



The Cross-Cutting Objective of Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience equipped local people to take action to protect their immediate environments and to mitigate and adapt to the negative effects of climate change. Through the Programme children learned about the importance of protecting the environment, farmers gained new skills in conservation agriculture and land regeneration and local communities increased their knowledge of disaster risk reduction. All Country Programmes also took care to minimize the environmental impact of their activities.

Strengthened Knowledge of Environment and Climate Change

During 2023, various actions were taken to raise awareness of climate change and the importance of caring for the environment and to provide local people with tools for mitigating and adapting to climate change. Children in schools and Kids Clubs learned about topics including climate change, water conservation, electricity consumption, plastic pollution, green spaces, tree planting, waste management, and environmental advocacy. Events were also organized, such as International Earth Day celebrations in Iraq, where 250 children learned about climate-related topics through games, presentations and discussions. One participant remarked afterwards: *“I learned about the greenhouse effect, which I did not understand before. It’s the first time that someone explained to me in a fun way”*.

Meanwhile, adults learnt about climate change mitigation and adaptation methods in local groups and associations and through agricultural training. Farmers were encouraged to use conservation agriculture techniques and Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), while households were taught about energy-efficient cookstoves, water conservation and saving energy, among other topics. Programme staff were also able to strengthen their own knowledge on these topics. For instance, in Uganda staff learnt about the “5 Rs”, i.e. to recycle, reuse, refuse, repurpose and reduce and began practicing these in their own homes.

Climate Change Adaptation

In DR Congo, schools establish school gardens and planted trees so that by the end of the year 45/80 schools had established their own garden. In Myanmar, digital lessons on environmental topics were developed and taught to Kids Club pupils. Following the lessons, many clubs set up mini recycling stations and began separating their waste. Steps were also taken in seven schools in Yumbe, Uganda to improve waste disposal. During the year, 48 600 (f: 24 600) children strengthened their knowledge regarding the environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In Uganda, following training, 80 households built their own smokeless stoves. These were found to be functioning well during monitoring visits. Follow up visits were also made in Uganda to monitor wood and fruit trees planted the previous year. These were found to be flourishing and functioning as useful wind breaks and sources of shade. In Tanzania, 386 acres of land was placed under sustainable resource management, including 272 acres of protected natural forest. Meanwhile, a group of young people in Cibitoke, Burundi, began growing drought resistant crops like cassava and sweet potatoes during the dry spell, on their own initiative. The venture was successful and the group were able to harvest 250kg of sweet potatoes from a small plot of land. In Kenya, the Country Programme constructed 20 water pans through which 450 cubic metres of water was harvested for communal use, thereby strengthening climate resilience. Finally, 193 700 trees were planted in various countries as a climate change mitigation measure.

Reduced Carbon Footprint in Country Programmes

Action was also taken by implementing partners to reduce their carbon footprint during 2023. For instance, efforts were made to minimize the use of paper, conserve water, turn off lights and electrical appliances when not in use and to recycle waste as much as possible. Other measures taken include encouraging carpooling and the use of public transport in Kenya, installing solar panels in Burundi, using electric scooters in Nepal and

a ban on the use of single-use plastic bottles in a partner office in Iraq. In addition, in Uganda local congregations under the implementing partner planted 800 trees.

3.5. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Country Programmes operate in difficult environments in which they face frequent challenges, as discussed in Section 2.3 above. The success of the Country Programmes in achieving their planned results often depended on their ability to learn and adapt to their frequently changing operating environments. Some of the key challenges and lessons learned during the reporting year are detailed below. Lessons learned were recorded and will be used to strengthen the Programme in future.

INSECURITY AND CONFLICT

Difficult security situations in various locations posed challenges to Programme implementation. In DR Congo, for instance, fighting between the army and the M23 rebel group resulted in some schools and child-friendly spaces being crowded with people fleeing the fighting, thus hindering their normal functioning. Instability also posed difficulties with implementation in Ethiopia. This was tackled through shifting operations to relatively safer areas and using early warning information to conduct dialogue to prevent conflicts pre-emptively. In Rakhine State in Myanmar, meanwhile, insecurity combined with poor internet connectivity and electricity cuts required the Country Programme to adapt in order to find alternative ways to provide digital lessons. Unfortunately, some Learning Centres needed to temporarily pause activities due to nearby fighting. In these testing circumstances ensuring the physical and mental well-being of volunteer teachers was identified as being essential to ensuring the continuity of education provision and was prioritized during 2023. In addition, delegating certain monitoring tasks to local community members was introduced to combat communication difficulties.

There were also conflicts between groups at the local level in some countries. In Kenya, tensions arose between pastoralists and farmers over resources that had become scarce due to drought. Meanwhile, in Burundi, a lack of trust led to conflict regarding group leadership. Both situations were successfully resolved through organising mediation sessions and engagement with local leaders.

LOCAL CULTURAL VALUES AND PRACTICES

Challenges also arose, at times, due to differing expectations regarding the Programme and values that were incompatible with the aims of the Programme. In some communities in DR Congo, for instance, some couples deliberately aimed to have a large number of children, considering this a form of protection against enemies. In Bangladesh, engaging with men around the themes of the Programme remains difficult since they are often the main breadwinners in their families and may work up to seven days a week. The Country Programme organised some events at weekends but, even so, men did not always attend. In Iraq, the opposite situation was encountered- men's participation in some Programme activities was relatively high, while female participation was low. Obstacles to female participation were found to be low levels of confidence among women and also family responsibilities. The Iraq Country Programme responded by designating a focal point for female engagement who will proactively reach out to potential female participants.

The Bangladesh Country Programme also encountered difficulties when advocating on the rights of persons with disabilities and seeking out persons with disabilities. Local community members frequently expressed that they were uninterested in cooperating with the Country Programme unless they received material aid, such as wheelchairs or cash. Similar situations were reported among new Programme communities in Uganda, where local people expressed that they would rather have material aid than participate in development cooperation activities. Meanwhile, in DR Congo, some other NGOs began giving direct cash donations to certain supported communities. As a result, some of the mutual aid groups stopped their activities. These situations highlight the importance of managing expectations and being clear and open regarding the Programme's aims.

INFLATION

Inflation levels were high in many Programme countries during 2023, which caused difficulties of various kinds. Local people frequently struggled to take care of themselves and their families. In Kenya, for instance, several VSLAs were unable to save as much as planned and there was an increase in the number of defaults on loans. There were also some cases of parents struggling to pay school fees and increased school absenteeism. In Bangladesh, meanwhile, participants in menstrual health management trainings unexpectedly requested sanitary pads due to their current high cost. The Bangladesh Country Programme is currently looking into cooperation with another NGO that provides sanitary pads.

Meanwhile, Country Programmes were forced to adapt to high inflation in various way, including by scaling back activities and reducing the number of monitoring trips they conducted. One way in which Country Programmes adapted to higher implementation costs was by engaging media organisations to carry out awareness raising rather than organising in-person events. Local resources were also leveraged in Ethiopia, for example from the private sector, church congregations and local government.

OTHER LESSONS LEARNED

Several additional lessons were learned during the year that will be used to strengthen the Programme in future. Firstly, it was observed that is important to find a good balance between setting ambitious goals in terms of geographical and thematic scope and ensuring that activities are not spread so thinly that their impact is limited. This topic will be explored further in future. A second lesson is that, in Country Programmes with activities in several locations, attention needs to be paid to ensuring that capacity strengthening and follow-up takes place with regional staff as well as staff in central offices. The reason is that, in large Country Programmes of this type, decisions are often taken at the local level regarding staffing and finances and it is therefore important that these staff have the capacity to make financial and other decisions in accordance with agreed standards and procedures. A third lesson learned in several countries concerns the effectiveness of art, particularly songs and drama, in raising awareness of human rights topics. In DR Congo, awareness raising on the topic of peacebuilding was carried out through songs and drama in local languages while in Iraq theatre was used to highlight the rights of persons with disabilities as well as their capabilities. Finally, academic seminars, in which difficult exam topics were covered and children had the chance to ask about topics that they did not understand, were found to be an effective means of improving academic performance in Uganda.

4. COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

An overview of the Country Programmes and their sub-themes can be found in Table 5, below. This is followed by short descriptions of Country Programme results during 2023.

	Quality Education	Inclusive Education	Informal Education	Life-long Learning	Personal Security	Community Security	Health Security	Food Security	Economic Security	Capacity Building	Advocacy	ITCC
Bangladesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
Ethiopia				✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Kenya	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DRC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Tanzania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Uganda	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Myanmar	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓
Burundi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Iraq	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Nepal	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 5. Country Programmes and their sub-themes

4.1. COUNTRY PROGRAMME RESULTS 2023

ETHIOPIA: ETHIOPIA PEACEBUILDING AND WOMEN AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME (5022)			
Partners	Ethiopian Guenet Church Development and Welfare Organization (EGCDWO) Ethiopian Mulu Wongel Amagnoch Church Development Commission (EMWACDC)		
Direct beneficiaries	120 097 (f: 47 938, m: 72 159, PWD: 11 733)		
Indirect beneficiaries	6 599 318	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 611 913	FSI rank	11 th

Fida works with the Ethiopian Guenet Church Development and Welfare Organization and the Ethiopian Mulu Wongel Amagnoch Church Development Commission to address two key challenges. Firstly, conflict and insecurity are tackled through bringing together religious leaders, young people and women to work on concrete measure to strengthen peace and community cohesion. Secondly, unemployment among women

and youth is tackled through the provision of vocational training and support in acquiring entrepreneurial skills. The partners' capacity to advocate and lead peace processes is also strengthened. The Country Programme operates in nine areas: Addis Ababa, Adama, Bahir Dar, Dessie, Hawassa, Nekemte, Shashamane, Wolmera and Wolayta Sodo.

During 2023, the political situation remained unstable, and conflict flared up in various areas. The climate was also unpredictable with both flooding and drought conditions experienced. Work to strengthen education rights proceeded, however, focusing mainly on providing youth and unemployed adults with vocational training and employment opportunities. Joint research was conducted with TVET institutions and businesses to identify the most relevant and needed vocational skills and apprenticeship opportunities. During the year, 2200 (f: 1700) people gained new skills for improving their livelihoods. The Country Programme also cooperated with local schools to create 14 Kids Clubs in which school children participated in joint activities and, for instance, promoted peace and conflict resolution through drama, poetry and music.

The Country Programme also worked through local Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to improve access to capital and livelihoods. This resulted in 33 new small businesses being established and a total of 41 people (f:27) gaining full-time employment. While Self Help Groups were originally established for economic purposes, they were increasingly used to support the aims of the Country Programme more generally. For instance, members have become, among others, trained peace ambassadors, family counsellors and small business advisors.

The Country Programme also continued to work with local and national authorities, religious leaders (Orthodox, Catholic, Evangelical and Muslim) and youth representatives to promote interfaith dialogue. In total, almost 16 000 (f: 5400, PWD: 47) people participated in such meetings during the year. In addition, the Ministry of Peace was supported in its work to form a coalition of national peace forums to support peacebuilding processes. One significant result during the year was the creation of a set of guidelines regarding how civil society organisations faith-based organisations and universities can cooperate to promote peace.

In communities in which indigenous practices relevant to peacebuilding were practiced, such as Aba Geda (traditional courts) and Hadha Siqee (conflict management mechanisms), these were strengthened as a means of resolving conflict and promoting peaceful communities. As indicated in reports of the regional security and peace offices, the training has increased the skill of government and community leaders to effectively lead dialogue without creating offense. Large-scale media campaigns, reaching several million people, were also organised to promote peaceful relations between different communities and religious groups.

BANGLADESH: SCHOOL CHILD ADVOCACY IN BANGLADESH – A SAFE EDUCATIONAL PATH FOR ALL (5010)

Partner	Bangladesh Assemblies of God / Ashirbad NGO		
Direct beneficiaries	9 972 (f: 7 997, m: 1 975, PWD: 65)		
Indirect beneficiaries	182 645	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 257 510	FSI rank	41 st

In Bangladesh, Fida partners with Bangladesh Assemblies of God Church and its development NGO, Ashirbad, which maintains 40 schools in Western and Southern Bangladesh. The Country Programme currently cooperates with 15 of the partner's schools and organises lessons and workshops on children's rights, focusing particularly on the rights of girls and children with disabilities. In addition, teachers are provided with in-service training on counselling, psychosocial support, and inclusive education and cooperative societies are established to offer livelihood possibilities for single-parent families and families with members with disabilities. The Country Programme also promotes open discourse on taboo topics, such as sexual and reproductive health and rights.

During 2023, the operating environment in Bangladesh was relatively stable, however, there were movement restrictions towards the end of the year due to the risk of violence linked to national elections. In general implementation of the Country Programme progressed smoothly and the education rights of 1350 children (f: 820, CWD: 23) were strengthened. The quality of education was strengthened through organising e-learning courses for 78 teachers which covered various topics including inclusive education. Teachers found the courses useful and were able to incorporate their new skills into regular teaching, while 15 schools began to provide individual support to children with learning difficulties. Kids Clubs, attended by 750 (f: 400, CWD: 10), were a further means of strengthening the life skills of children and promoting self-expression through dance, singing and other activities. Finally, over 15 children's committees enabled children to participate in decision-making regarding their lives and speak out on topics like child marriage. During the year, government officials also intervened to prevent 11 child marriages and four cases of child labour.

Economic empowerment activities reached 94 marginalized women who participated in business development training. The women established various small businesses and cooperatives related to agriculture and animal husbandry and also small shops. A follow-up survey indicated that 72 of the women had been able to increase their income. The women reportedly used the money they earned to purchase nutritious food for their families, school materials, clothes and for making improvements to their homes. Finally, partner capacity strengthening activities bore fruit when the local implementing partner updated its constitution and made reforms to strengthen its financial management.

BURUNDI: COMMUNITY, FAMILY AND YOUTH WELLBEING PROGRAMME IN BURUNDI (5284)

Partners	Community of Pentecostal Churches of Burundi (CEPBU) Ministry of Education, Burundi		
Direct beneficiaries	51 625 (f: 27 298, m: 23 920, PWD: 773)		
Indirect beneficiaries	309 750	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 300 297	FSI rank	20 th

Fida's Country Programme in Burundi partners with the Community of Pentecostal Churches of Burundi (CEPBU). Work is implemented in the Bubanza, Cibitoke and Ngozi provinces. The Country Programme trains kindergarten and pre-school teachers on the national pre-primary curriculum and early childhood development. Work under the Safe Living Environment outcome, meanwhile, provides vocational and entrepreneurship training to unemployed youth. Parents are also trained on agribusiness skills and income-generating activities so that communities are able to produce enough food to feed their members and parents have sufficient resources to support their children's education.

During 2023, the operating environment in Burundi was relatively stable, however, the Country Programme was impacted by high inflation rates of up to 26% and by fuel shortages which hindered travel. The educational rights of 32 500 children (f: 17 700, CWD: 430) were strengthened through, among other measures, providing 402 teachers with in-service training regarding children's right to education and inclusive teaching methods. Additionally, 162 pre-school teachers received training on appropriate teaching methods for pre-school children. Follow-up by the Burundian Ministry of Education indicated that trained teachers had gained new skills and knowledge and were putting them into practice. Finally, Kids Clubs were established in 25 schools and provided extra-curricular teaching and sport and art opportunities to 9700 children (f: 5100, CWD: 34).

Committees for the provision of psychosocial support were established in seven communities and psychosocial support was also provided to 9700 Kids Club participants (f: 5100, CWD: 34). Subsequent monitoring of parents pointed to improved relationships in the home and lower stress levels. Meanwhile, the number of peace groups in the Country Programme grew impressively during the year with 50 new groups established, taking the total number to over 100. Over 300 households increased their income, following vocational and business training. For instance, a group of 30 women and youth established a soap and cleaning detergent initiative for domestic and commercial purposes. In addition, a young lady from Cibitoke registered a **cooperative which incorporated a group of 65 women**. She trained the women and provided small startup capital for their businesses. Some women have grown their businesses and now support the running of the cooperative.

IRAQ: INNOVATIVE EDUCATION AND PEACEFUL LIVING ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN IRAQ (5440)

Partners	Together to Protect Human and Environment Halabja Disabled Organisation Yes We Can – Network Assemblies of God Kurdistan		
Direct beneficiaries	8 275 (f: 5 350, m: 2 925, PWD: 605)		
Indirect beneficiaries	41 695	DAC classification	Upper Middle-Income Country
Expenses	€ 391 779	FSI rank	27 th

Fida partners with several local organisations in Iraq, including Together to Protect Human and Environment Association (“Together”), Halabja Disabled Organisation (“HDO”), the Yes We Can Network and Assemblies of God Church in Kurdistan. The Country Programme is implemented in four locations: Erbil, Halabja, Ninewa and Kirkuk. Through the Country Programme teachers are trained on inclusive education and child-led teaching methods. The Country Programme also promotes a Sustainable School teaching module, which raises awareness of environmental issues and climate change. Access to education and inclusion for children with disabilities are also key components and are promoted through advocacy and Kids Clubs. Meanwhile, the wellbeing of children with and without disabilities is supported through the provision of psychosocial support.

During 2023, the operating environment was tense at times due to drone attacks near Erbil. The Kurdistan region’s budget crisis and new Iraqi banking regulations also posed some challenges. The former led to school closures for part of the year when teachers went on strike and meant that the Country Programme was not able to reach the targeted number of beneficiaries. Even so, the educational rights of over 5300 children (f: 2300, CWD: 620) were strengthened through various measures. The Country Programme also continued to work to strengthen the quality of education for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. In Halabja, almost 850 teachers, school administrators, and students learned about the importance of education for children with special needs. In addition, 12 Education Supervisors were trained regarding inclusive education and gained skills for helping schools to reintegrate children with disabilities. Finally, the Country Programme achieved two significant advocacy breakthroughs (see section 3.3), when the Ministry of Education in Kurdistan instructed schools to implement the Inclusive Education Guidelines developed by HDO and the national authorities adopted TOGETHER’s Sustainability in Education module as compulsory across the country.

The Country Programme also supported the provision of psychosocial support to both children and adults, reaching 370 people (f: 190, PWD: 150) during 2023. The Country Programme continued to use peer support groups for this purpose since they have been found to be effective. As a result, social phobia, anxiety, depression and stuttering were reduced leading to improved mental health of pupils with disabilities. In addition, a survey among school pupils revealed that a large number (140 pupils) experienced less exam anxiety than prior to receiving psychosocial support. Finally, expert trauma training was provided for 32 social workers with 80% increasing their skills in counselling and stabilization methods.

KENYA: TUNAJALI - OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH FOR QUALITY EDUCATION AND A SAFER LIVING ENVIRONMENT IN KENYA (5040)

Partner	Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (FGCK)		
Direct beneficiaries	18 779 (f: 10 784, m: 7 995, PWD: 598)		
Indirect beneficiaries	94 925	DAC classification	Lower Middle-Income Country
Expenses	€ 319 582	FSI rank	35 th

In Kenya, Fida partners with the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya (FGCK) to strengthen access to quality education and support safer living environments for children and youth. The Country Programme provides in-service training to teachers on modern teaching methods, educational rights, and inclusive education. School communities, meanwhile, are trained on sanitation and hygiene practices and children learn about their rights through Kids Clubs. Livelihood opportunities and food security are strengthened through literacy classes, vocational training and teaching on sustainable farming. The Country Programme operates in five locations: Kakamega, Loita, Marsabit, Pwani and the informal settlements of Dagoretti and Mathare in Nairobi.

During 2023, the operating environment was relatively stable, however, inflation put a strain on many families and also impacted the Country Programme's budget. The Country Programme strengthened the educational rights of 4400 (f: 2300, CWD: 124) children. 32 teachers were trained on modern teaching methods and classroom management and reported a strengthened ability to deliver the national curriculum. Meanwhile, 32 teachers from 10 schools were trained on providing individual support to children with learning difficulties. School Management Boards carried out fundraising and were able to make infrastructure improvements, such as cementing floors and providing desks to improve classroom environments. Finally, as a result of previous teacher training, eight schools were able to begin offering classes at junior secondary school level in addition to primary level.

The Country Programme also equipped over 2900 farmers with conservation agriculture skills, such as mulching and the utilization of zai pits. As reported above (section 3.2), this resulted in average yields increasing compared to previous levels. In 2023, a total of 2140 households reported having access to sufficient food throughout the year. This compares to 120 households in 2022 and can be attributed to conservation agriculture, drought-resistant crops and the use of water pans. In addition, almost 1200 households were able to increase their income through various means during the year and 123 full-time jobs were created in tailoring, retail and various agricultural enterprises.

DR CONGO: ELIMU HAKI - EDUCATION AND PEACE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN DR CONGO (5041)

Partner	Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale (8th CEPAC)		
Direct beneficiaries	17 522 (f: 10 596, m: 6 926, PWD: 3 147)		
Indirect beneficiaries	87 610	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 474 478	FSI rank	4 th

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) is one of the poorest countries in the world. Decades of violent conflict have displaced millions of people and made it difficult for many children to attend school. Fida partners with the CEPAC Pentecostal Church in DR Congo. Activities are implemented in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Tanganyika provinces. The Country Programme works to strengthen educational rights, particularly those of children with disabilities. In addition, children, young people, and women are informed of their sexual and reproductive health and rights and communities are made aware of sexual and gender-based violence and its prevention. The Country Programme also supports various local-level peacebuilding initiatives, such as peace clubs for young people, and provides vocational training to broaden employment opportunities of parents.

During 2023, the security situation remained unstable, flooding in South Kivu made travel difficult and inflation increased. Nevertheless, implementation of activities continued relatively smoothly and the educational rights of 10 900 children (f: 5100, CWD: 2430) were strengthened. In addition, 386 teachers were trained on inclusive teaching methods and subsequently worked to create more positive classroom environments through interactive activities involving teamwork, such as games and role play. These changes in the classroom were highlighted by Ministry of Education inspectors. Furthermore, there was an impressive improvement in school retention rates with dropouts decreasing from 10% to 1%. Another highlight was the active children's parliaments that have been established in all 80 partner schools. Children took on leadership roles in children's parliaments and also in sports teams and representing their schools in various competitions. Unemployed youth were also encouraged to participate in vocational training and 80 young individuals found work in garment production.

Work also continued to improve the living environments for children and their communities. Psychosocial support training was provided for 1100 persons (f: 750, PWD: 200). Teachers were also trained to provide psychosocial first aid. Livelihoods also improved, with 64 sustainable microbusinesses established, improving the living conditions of over 320 people. Meanwhile, 40 new self-help groups were established that in future will allow their roughly 1000 members to save and access cheap credit. Advocacy efforts bore fruit when a decision was made by the authorities to guarantee free primary education for all children and a law was passed on the rights of persons with disabilities. Finally, partner capacity strengthening saw positive results with the local partner developing three new policies on disability, safeguarding and child protection.

MYANMAR: TOWARDS THE PEACEFUL AND EDUCATED LIFE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN MYANMAR (5130)

Partners	Assemblies of God Myanmar (AoGMM) Myanmar Evangelical Christian Association (MECA)		
Direct beneficiaries	5 274 (f: 3 257, m: 2 017, PWD: 28)		
Indirect beneficiaries	21 096	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 452 733	FSI rank	12 th

Myanmar is one of the least developed countries in the world and has been beset by ethnic conflict and political crises for decades. Civil society has shrunk in recent years, and the government is unable to ensure that educational rights are fulfilled for all or that children are able to grow up in safe living environments. Non-governmental actors, such as Fida and its local partners, play an important role in strengthening civil society and maintaining dialogue regarding human rights. Fida's partners are the Assemblies of God Church of Myanmar (AoGMM) and the Myanmar Evangelical Christian Alliance (MECA). Activities are centred on Yangon, Kachin State and Rakhine State. The Country Programme promotes the right to education for marginalised children and youth through Learning Centres, which are designed to supplement children's formal education. The Country Programme also promotes conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Conflict and political and economic instability characterized the operating environment during 2023. Poor internet connectivity also made the provision of lessons through tablet devices challenging. Despite these difficulties, the Country Programme was able to implement most of its planned activities. Learning Centres continued to teach the national curriculum to school children and two new Learning Centres were established in Rakhine State. In total, the Country Programme supported the education of 1850 children (f: 950, CWD: 15). A new pre-school curriculum was introduced for 57 young children (f: 36) in two Learning Centres. Feedback from pupils and community members points to the impact that Learning Centres have on local children. The Centres provide a safe and friendly learning environment and are also considered important in providing emotional support to children as they live through a turbulent and stressful period. Despite the difficult circumstances, external inspectors found that pupils' academic results have improved and that they are motivated and enthusiastic about attending classes. Village Development Committees have also actively supported Learning Centres, monitoring their operations and mobilizing funds when needed.

During the year, almost 600 women and young people, including 14 persons with disabilities participated in social cohesion and peacebuilding initiatives. Follow-up sessions showed that the participants are putting into practice the skills that they have learned in order to strengthen social cohesion. For instance, they now proactively seek to show appreciation for the strengths and positive attributes of others and practice empathy during communication. Furthermore, 370 religious leaders (f: 160) participated in various peacebuilding and social cohesion activities and made decisions to increase cooperation in order to build peace. Lastly, the local partner (AoGMM) finalized its child protection policy, which will now be implemented across its congregations.

NEPAL: SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL PATHWAY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN NEPAL (5460)

Partners	Rescue Nepal Relative Nepal New Life Service Association Transformation Nepal		
Direct beneficiaries	41 258 (f: 24 277, m: 16 981, PWD: 289)		
Indirect beneficiaries	81 926	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 618 689	FSI rank	55 th

Fida's Country Programme in Nepal seeks to address the twin challenges of poor fulfilment of educational rights and poor living environments for children and youth. Fida partners with Rescue Nepal, Relative Nepal, New Life Service Association and Transformation Nepal to implement the Country Programme. Other important partners include local authorities and schools. The Country Programme operates in Khijidemba, Bateswor, Ishworpur and Kailari. The Country Programme provides in-service training to teachers as well as career guidance to youth to facilitate their transition to working life. The use of information and communication technologies is promoted to enable pupils to use digital learning materials and to support the administrative work of schools. In addition, entrepreneurship training is provided to improve the livelihoods of unemployed youth and poor families.

During 2023, almost 28 000 children (f: 14 500, CWD: 140) were enrolled in schools supported by the Country Programme. The quality of education in supported schools was improved through training over 400 teachers from 97 schools on topics such as child-friendly teaching methods. Based on focus group discussions with children, there has been a noticeable improvement in classroom environments during the year. School environments were also improved through providing training to School Management Committees (SMCs) and Parent-Teach Associations (PTAs). In total, over 1400 members representing 83 schools were trained and increased their knowledge of school management and ways in which they can work together to make school improvements or advocate to governing authorities. Improvements were also made to school infrastructure, including improvements to classrooms in 55 schools, constructing model toilets in 4 schools and renovating existing toilets in 17 schools. All new and renovated toilets included menstrual pad disposal facilities to ensure that girls are able to attend school during their periods and are also accessible by children with disabilities.

The Country Programme also worked to improve livelihood opportunities for marginalised men and women. During the year, 566 families created business plans and almost 400 were able to increase their income. Awareness raising on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) reached 19 500 people (f: 13500, PWD: 37), encouraging the adoption of safer SRHR practices among children and youth. Children and youth shared that they are now more confident to speak out against gender-based violence and child marriage with their friends and parents. Finally, work to strengthen the capacity of local partners was effective with the partners' average capacity building health check score increasing from 3.3 to 3.6 and partners developing new policies on anti-corruption and safeguarding.

TANZANIA: TUNANDOTO TANZANIA PROGRAMME – SUSTAINABLY TRANSFORMED CHILDHOODS (5054)

Partners	Free Pentecostal Church of Tanzania (FPCT)		
Direct beneficiaries	123 558 (f: 67 531, m: 56 027, PWD: 1 368)		
Indirect beneficiaries	138 071	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 811 424	FSI rank	65 th

The Tanzania Country Programme is implemented in collaboration with the Free Pentecostal Church of Tanzania (FPCT). FPCT is a prominent civil society actor in Tanzania with a nationwide reach and strong relationships with local and national authorities. The Country Programme supports children's learning through Kid's Club activities and training teachers in modern teaching methods. A special emphasis is placed on ensuring that children with disabilities are able to access schools and fully participate in education. Meanwhile, unemployed youth are offered vocational training and support with finding employment, while adults' livelihoods are supported through entrepreneurship training and savings groups.

During 2023, the operating environment was relatively stable, however, inflation was a challenge and necessitated scaling back some activities in order to stay within budget. Right to Education activities impacted the lives of 23 400 children (f: 12 800, CWD: 240). In Mtama District, awareness raising for parents and caregivers on the right to education for all children saw early primary enrolment increase from roughly 4000 children in 2022 to almost 4400 children in 2023. Elsewhere, in the Kigoma and Kasulu regions, ward-level school dropout rates declined from a baseline average of 20-30% to 5-15% at end 2023. The Country Programme ran a total of 41 Kids Clubs. Activities and themes covered included academic competitions, debating programmes, assembly speeches and building confidence for public speaking, sports and games, the environment, personal hygiene, road safety, and disability.

The Country Programme also made a significant contribution to increasing economic wellbeing for local households. Almost 1800 households (15 containing a person with a disability) were able to increase their income and 252 sustainable small enterprises were established (3 founded by persons with disabilities). Furthermore, 720 households reported quantifiable increases in their savings levels. Agricultural training was also impactful with small-scale cashew farmers, for instance, increasing cashew production from 354 tons in 2022 to 472 tons in 2023. The local implementing partner contributed a significant €42 000 to the implementation of the Country Programme.

UGANDA: SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN UGANDA COUNTRY PROGRAMME (5061)

Partners	Pentecostal Churches of Uganda		
Direct beneficiaries	62 201 (f: 32 357, m: 29 694, PWD: 4 996)		
Indirect beneficiaries	186 885	DAC classification	Least Developed Country
Expenses	€ 400 973	FSI rank	26 th

The Uganda Country Programme partners with the Pentecostal Churches of Uganda (PCU). The Country Programme raises awareness of children's rights in local communities and improves school environments through training teachers on modern teaching methods, inclusive education, and counselling skills. Children also learn about their rights through Kids Clubs. Training on business skills and Village Savings and Loans Associations is given to promote saving and to improve access to capital. Information regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence, including the dangers of child marriage, is provided to target communities. Finally, various peacebuilding initiatives are supported. The work is implemented in Yumbe, Karamoja and Masindi districts.

During 2023, the operating environment was relatively peaceful, however, UNHCR cut rations for refugee settlements inhabitants which resulted in a decrease in children's attendance at school in some locations as they stayed at home to help their parents grow crops. The Country Programme worked to strengthen the educational rights of 21 300 children (f: 10 700, CWD: 200). Nine community dialogue meetings on educational rights were organised in which 1550 adults and 500 children participated. Monitoring indicated that the engagement of parents in the education of their children subsequently increased. For instance, parents participated in the construction of two small houses for teachers and four mini boarding homes for children. In addition, they resolved to support efforts to provide school meals for pupils. A particularly successful initiative, also reported on above (Section 3.1), was the academic seminars organised to support children's preparations for school exams, which benefited over 800 children (f: 375) and was replicated by other schools. The seminars resulted in 9/10 schools improving their exam performance and two schools recording top grades for the first time.

Activities under the Safe Living Environment outcome area were varied. 26 Village Saving and Loan Associations were established providing access to cheap credit for 560 people (f: 282, PWDs: 42). The groups increased their savings to €14 200, compared to €6000 at the beginning of the year. Group members used loans to establish 223 small businesses with a loan payback rate of 90%. Meanwhile, business coaching was provided for 250 persons (f: 151). Follow-up indicated that participants were using their new skills to, for instance, improve record keeping. Meanwhile, following training on financial literacy for 830 parents (f: 490, PWD: 50), 60% reported being able to provide for their children's needs compared to the 20% before the training. Finally, the Country Programme successfully cooperated with landowners and landlords in Yumbe district to secure land for farming for vulnerable refugee groups whose rations had been cut.

5. DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION, GLOBAL EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

5.1. DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Fida's Development Communication aims at three outcomes: 1) the Finnish public's attitudes towards development cooperation remain positive, 2) the awareness and perception of Fida's work improves during the programme period, and 3) the public's support for Fida's development goals increases. The progress is measured by the increase in the nationwide visibility of Fida, the amount of material produced for Fida's own channels and their reach as well as the level of media cooperation and communication campaigns organised.

The Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs' Survey on Finns' Attitudes to Development Cooperation in 2023 revealed that, overall, the Finnish public's positive attitude towards development cooperation had slightly decreased since the previous year. In 2023, 63% of Finns thought that development cooperation was fairly or very important, whereas in 2022 this number was 66%. The continued decrease in positive attitudes is a challenge that Fida's Communication and Advocacy actively aim to turn around.

The Communication team reached most of the annual targets by publishing content on Fida's channels, organising campaigns and acquiring media coverage. New target audiences were reached by organizing a photo exhibition on the work to prevent child marriages in Bangladesh as well as a fashion show in cooperation with Fida Secondhand in Tampere's Ideapark. Cooperation with three social media influencers resulted in over 10 000 new people being exposed, as was the annual target, to communication on girls' rights to education, menstrual, sexual and reproductive health, as well as women's right to economic independence. Nine radio programmes were broadcast on RadioDei, which was one less than the annual target.

Due to the successful media and journalist cooperation in 2023, the overall visibility on development cooperation themes was strong. A press trip was organised to Burundi, which resulted in five articles in Finnish media about Fida's and its partner's development cooperation work in Burundi. A freelancer journalist was invited to visit Fida's projects in Kenya, resulting in coverage for development cooperation in multiple magazines and newspapers through, for example, STT and the Keskisuomalainen group. There were 47 hits in Finnish media related to Fida's development cooperation work, which resulted in a total potential reach of 23.7 million reads, with the target set at 500 000 people.

A total of 28 articles and blogs covering Fida's development cooperation were published on Fida's website, reaching over 12 800 readers, a four-fold increase on the previous year. Fida participated actively in Fingo's social media campaigning ahead of the parliamentary elections as well as Red Nose Day campaigning in the autumn. Fida's Food for Life campaigning gained coverage for development cooperation in Finnish media (including, for instance MTV3 morning television). Material collection trips were arranged to Burundi, Iraq, Kenya, Uganda, and the DR Congo. Several articles were produced from all the destinations.

5.2. GLOBAL EDUCATION

School visits continued in 2023 in cooperation with Fida's partner, Suomen Helluntaikirkon Koulupalvelu. The global Covid-19 pandemic did not affect schools dramatically in 2023, but there were several changes in staff within the partner organization, which possibly had an impact on the numbers.

Fida's global education reached 4059 students, 55 percent of them for the first time, and 277 teachers in 114 schools. 29 percent of the schools were new connections. The feedback received from teachers and students continued to be excellent: the overall rating by teachers was 3,88/5 and by students 3,57/4. Teachers reported e. g. that the topics and aims of the school visits were well-connected to the national curriculum and pedagogically suitable for school. According to the students, they learned about human rights and global challenges, and got to reflect on the topics from different point of views. Two new material packages were piloted and introduced to the school visitors in August. One of them is targeted to grades 3-5, the second to grades 7-9. A new reporting platform was launched in 2023.

Teachers and educators were contacted in two large events (Educa and Pohjois-Suomen Opettajainpäivät, OPI) at the beginning of the year, which led to several school visit requests. In addition, Fida's global education participated in school fairs and other events, where materials and school visits were promoted (e. g. the national meeting for youth workers in Pentecostal churches). A series of social media posts about global education was published at the end of the year, reaching 3861 views.

Fida's global education website was visited altogether 252 times which is less than in previous years. Different materials were downloaded 118 times. The numbers have decreased compared to the previous years, and the number of school visits may have affected this. Also, the focus has recently been on creating new learning material packages for school visitors, and the updates for websites have been scheduled for later. 850 Epäreilupeli board games were sent to schools, churches, children's clubs, families, and volunteers, which is more than in 2022.

An online training for the church volunteers was organized again in 2023. Altogether, 13 participants completed the course. Fida and Koulupalvelu organized an annual meeting for volunteers, the aim of which was to provide them with tools for school visits. In addition, Fida's global education participated in training sessions that were held locally. An open badge system was designed in cooperation with Koulupalvelu to support learning and to acknowledge the skills that volunteers gain as school visitors. The school visitors of Koulupalvelu were offered two trainings in 2023.

5.3. ADVOCACY IN FINLAND

Fida's advocacy in Finland aims at increased commitment of stakeholders to strengthening children's rights to quality education and safe living environment. During the reporting period, the political climate was not favourable for development cooperation advocacy. The war in Ukraine, popularity of the political right-wing and populism, and the political discourse focusing on security and the economy narrowed the possibilities for development cooperation advocacy. Despite this, Fida's advocacy work progressed as planned and reached its goals through collaboration with other Finnish CSOs. In addition to Finnish networks, Fida engaged in

international collaboration with the Pentecostal World Fellowship's Relief and Development Partners and participated in EU-CORD Network advocacy.

Advocacy work was carried out in close cooperation with Fingo and Programme Support Organizations and its focus was on the parliamentary elections and the government programme. Despite the challenging political climate, Fida met and engaged with decision-makers and authorities a total of 12 times, organised communication campaigns, and produced and disseminated material to decision-makers and the media. Fida participated actively in four political processes. As a result of strong advocacy, development cooperation and its significance were highlighted in public discourse, and proposed cuts to funds in the new government programme did not target civil society organisations. Furthermore, as a result of the dialogue, Fida received a proposal from a Member of Parliament to deliver Dennis Mukwega's book, "Women's Power", to all MPs.

To reach wide audiences across different sectors of society, Fida organised campaigns and events. Fida's campaigns on social media and interviews with Fida and Felm's Executive Directors on Radio Dei reached 231 094 people. Fida was also present at the World Village Festival where 49 000 visitors attended over the weekend, and many visited Fida's exhibition booth and programme. Fida organised two communication campaigns on the International Day of Happiness and World Creativity and Innovation Day that addressed children's rights and local innovations of Fida's partners in Programme countries. The reception was very positive, and the messages reached over 3400 individuals. Collaborative election advocacy and participation in Fingo's petition significantly expanded the reach of advocacy well beyond Fida's usual target numbers. Communication and advocacy in events and media exceeded the set goal of 40 communication products. Fida's 61 advocacy communication products reached 18 683 individuals across various channels, and an op-ed published in Helsingin Sanomat potentially reached over 2 million readers. Additionally, in collaboration with the Finnish MFA, Fida hosted a webinar titled "From Pain to Life - Survivors of Sexual Violence." The event received very positive feedback, with participants feeling equipped with new tools for advocacy work (95% satisfaction compared to the 80% target).

6. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY CONTROL

6.1. MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION

The highest decision-making body within Fida was the Annual General Meeting. The association was represented by the board, which oversaw Fida’s operations. The Leadership Team was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organisation. It was led by the Executive Director and members included the Directors of the domestic units and three Regional Directors. Three Regional Programme Managers worked under the Regional Directors in the Development Cooperation Programme and were responsible for Country Programmes in Eastern Africa, Asia and nexus countries respectively. Each Country Programme was managed by a Country Programme Manager who reported to one of the Regional Programme Managers. The regional management was also supported by Thematic and Technical Advisors.

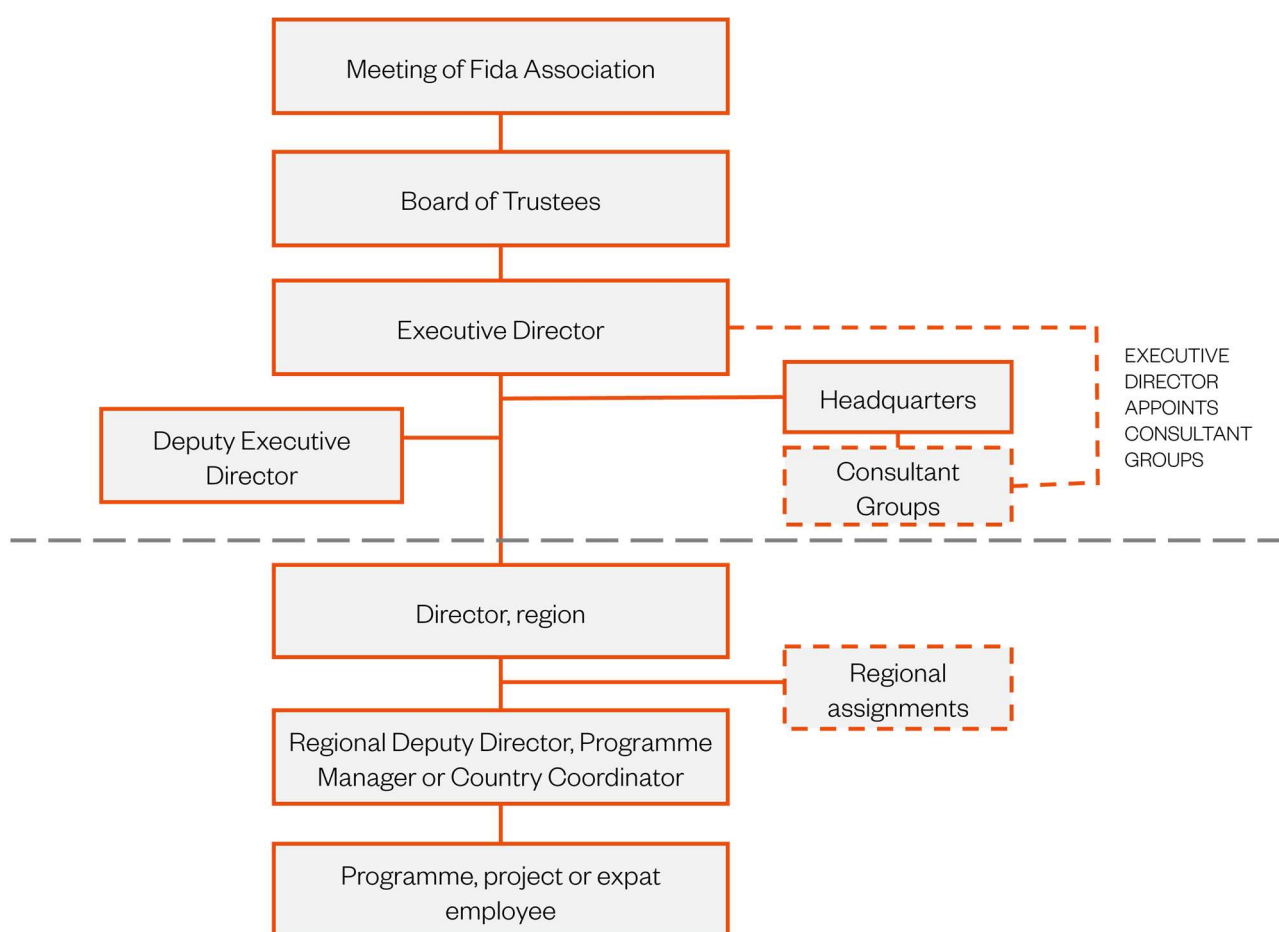


Figure 8. Fida Association Structure

Programme oversight required financial, personnel, ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and administrative management. The role of Fida’s Head Office and its Development Cooperation Unit was mainly to provide PMEL (Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning) and PCM (Programme Cycle Management) and expertise support to the Country Programmes. Development Cooperation Programme management in Finland included communication with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, planning, monitoring, reporting and the development of tools to support these processes. The Domestic Programme (Communications, Advocacy and

Global Education in Finland) was also implemented and managed by the Development Cooperation Unit, based in Finland.

In 2023, there were 29 Programme employees hired from Finland and the Programme employed 237 local employees. Three interns also worked in the Programme.

6.2. PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION AND QUALITY CONTROL

The implementation, monitoring and quality control of Fida's Global Development Programme is carried out in the target countries by Country Programme Managers and Coordinators.

The **quality assurance system includes the following elements**. Firstly, strategic management ensures that staff members throughout the Programme work actively towards the same strategic goals. Secondly, implementation at the Country Programme level is in alignment with the overall Programme goals and is monitored regularly using key performance indicators. Thirdly, all processes relevant to Programme Cycle Management (PCM) are described in Fida's Programme Manual, which all Programme staff are familiar with. The Manual is updated when necessary. Sound financial management is ensured through adherence to the Fida's financial management guidelines. Finally, staff competence and motivation are ensured through recruiting qualified and motivated staff, providing detailed staff orientation, and emphasizing continuous learning through Global Thematic Teams and regular training on programme themes. A staff training plan is made annually.

Fida has a **zero-tolerance policy regarding corruption**. The Country Programmes followed the financial guidelines in Fida's Programme Manual and funding requests to Finland were checked by Regional Programme Managers and Financial Controllers and approved according to Fida's Finance Policy. **External auditing was part of the financial management process** and the audit recommendations were used to improve financial management as part of ongoing learning and development. Internal financial audits were carried out of the Country Programmes in Iraq, Kenya and Nepal. During 2023, four cases of misconduct were reported through whistleblowing channels and dealt with, according to Fida's Anti-Corruption and Safeguarding Guidelines (see Section 2.4 for further details).

6.3. PROGRAMME MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Internal monitoring of the Programme took place according to the structure and processes established at the outset of the 2022-2025 programme period. Monitoring took place in a participatory manner in Country Programme teams. Based on the internal monitoring, observations were collected tri-annually into narrative reports, which were used in monitoring the progress towards the achievement of the annual targets. Annual results and broader reflections on progress were collected in the annual reports of the Country Programmes. Country Programme finances were monitored through tri-annual and annual finance reports. Country Programme financial management practices and expenditure were monitored by independent auditors.

EVALUATIONS

During 2023, **two external evaluations were carried out**. Firstly, an evaluation of the Tanzania Country Programme was conducted, focusing on the results achieved during the current programme period and also on the Country Programme's work to strengthen local civil society. The second evaluation, meanwhile, focused on partnerships, localisation and the strengthening of civil society and was conducted in Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Nepal and Bangladesh and also covered the current programme period.

The Tanzania evaluation found that the Country Programme's objectives were highly relevant and that the activities had been well-planned and implemented. The evaluation also found that the capacity of the local implementing partner had been strengthened. Evidence of increased adoption of key development approaches, such as the human rights-based approach, was also observed. Finally, it was the view of the evaluator that Fida and its local implementing partner had been able to establish a strong and transparent working relationship, in part due to their long history of cooperation.

The **evaluation also contained recommendations** for how the Country Programme can strengthen its impact and operate more efficiently. Firstly, it was recommended that the Country Programme reduce the number of geographical areas in which it operates in order to ensure sufficient resources for implementing activities and to simplify monitoring. Secondly, it was recommended that the number of thematic areas be reduced as a means of creating the conditions for achieving deeper overall impact. Finally, the evaluation commended the Country Programme for filling in gaps in service provision to vulnerable groups. However, the risks of such service provision were also highlighted and it was suggested that the Country Programme's role in providing services be critically assessed.

The partnership, localisation and strengthening of civil society evaluation found that the Country Programmes had played significant roles in strengthening civil society. There was genuine ownership in local civil society groups and transformative change could be observed. Trainings for civil society groups were found to have been effective in terms of providing members with new knowledge and tools for poverty reduction and strengthening human rights. The savings groups in Kenya, for example had built houses, improved roofs, paid school fees and installed waterpipes to homes and had saved over €36 000. Parents' groups were also found to have improved attitudes towards education. The evaluation also found that Fida's relationships with its implementing partners was typically strong and that it was built on trust and mutual respect. The use of volunteers was highlighted as a way in which overall impact was strengthened and also as a key element of ensuring sustainability.

The **evaluation made the following recommendations**. Firstly, it was suggested that greater consideration be given to the particular strengths of each local partner and that implementation be designed around these strengths. Secondly, while it was found that volunteers played an important role in the Country Programmes, it was suggested that there was a need to provide them with further training and to further clarify their roles. The evaluation also called for greater financial and in-kind contributions from local partners. Finally, it was suggested that there is a need to give increased attention to the sustainability of the Country Programmes following the programme period.

Fida's Development Cooperation Programme was also **reviewed by KPMG as part of the Finnish MFA's broader review of recipients of programme-based support**. The review found several moderate risks and

a small number of significant risks. These risks have been examined by Fida and a Follow-Up Plan has been created to address them. The Plan attached to this report (Appendix 4e).

The findings and recommendations of all evaluations were disseminated widely within Fida in order that Programme staff at all levels and in all regions could learn from them. This was enabled through online debriefing sessions that were open to all staff members of the Development Cooperation Programme. Follow-up Plans were compiled based on the recommendations of the reports. The implementation of the Follow-up Plans will be monitored by Fida management. The evaluation reports and a summary of the follow-up plans can be found in Appendices 4a-4d.

7. PROGRAMME FUNDING

During 2023, Fida received 5.5 million Euros (previous operational year 5.7 million Euros) of Development Cooperation funding from the Government of Finland. 400 000 Euros of Government funding was rolled over to 2023 from the 2022 budget and 620 000 Euros of Finnish government funding will be rolled over to the 2024 budget from 2023. The Programme's total expenses during 2023 were 6.23 million Euros (prev. op. year 6.4 mil. Euros). The self-funding portion was 950 400 Euros (prev. op. year 1 million Euros). The self-funding portion was 15.25 % of the Programme funding (prev. op. year 15.7 %). The Programme's Financial Report can be found in Appendix 5.

The self-funding for the Programme accumulated from sponsorship pledges, donations and the support paid by congregations. The Auditor's Report for the Development Cooperation Programme and the Summary Memorandum can be found in Appendix 6. The main recommendations or comments, and the resulting follow-up procedures of the local audits implemented in the Country Programmes are listed in separate charts, by region.

EXPENDITURE 2023	Budget €	Actualization €
A. Project activities	5 129 900	5 092 535
B. Planning, monitoring and evaluation	212 000	217 665
C. Development communication, global education, and advocacy	297 000	297 160
D. Administration	626 000 (10 %)	623 040 (10 %)
Programme total costs	6 264 900	6 230 400

FUNDING SOURCES 2023	Budget €	Actualization €
Government funding	5 280 000	5 280 000
Self-funding from Finland	984 900	950 400

Table 6. Programme Expenditure and Funding 2023.