

Strategic Framework

2022 - 2025



©ChildLifeAction

1. Letter from the President of the Executive Committee

“Our children are our duty, our responsibility, our commitment, individually and collectively”.

Ahmed Zenaidi – President & Co-founder of Child Life Action



Henrietta Fore, Executive Director of UNICEF, portrayed a reality that is both terrible and unacceptable, a reality which has certainly overtaken us, but which forces us to immediately come out of our torpor with these words: «One year into the COVID-19 pandemic, progress has gone backward across virtually every key measure of childhood »¹.

Child Life Action (CLA) is the result of my encounter with 3 beautiful souls, with different individual backgrounds and with a common commitment. It is a synergy of common values, of a common and necessary passion for North/South solidarity, and of a common and strong desire to give something to those who have nothing.

Our mission is not easy, but it must be and will be accompanied by unwavering determination. Likewise, the path that will lead to the achievement of our objectives will be just as important as the objectives themselves because it will be a question of carrying out this mission with a very high degree of ethics, imprint of responsibility, honesty, righteousness, and transparency.

The human right to education² deserves all our efforts to fight inequalities, reduce poverty, create a sustainable planet, and promote peace. We are not doing it alone, we need those who are willing to put one brick and those who can put ten, to build an environment favorable to our children's education.

Indeed, as Nelson Mandela said, « Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world ».

¹ <https://twitter.com/unicefchief/status/1370090997653327882> Henrietta Fore, 11 march 2021, Twitter

² <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights> Article 26 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948.

2. Executive Summary

Vision	SDG 4: Quality Education SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy			
Mission	To effectively address the obstacles to quality education, ensuring the realization of Human Rights to water and sanitation & hygiene in schools with a specific attention to girls' specific needs; raise, catalyze, and invest resources to accelerate the access to technology in schools for children with the highest burden and lowest ability to respond.			
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving children from communities left behind • Accountability and transparency • Collaboration, Complementarity and Partnership for high quality delivery • Efficiency and value for money 			
Strategic Objectives	1: Increase sustainable water, sanitation, hygiene and MHH services in schools.	2: Address the energy gap in schools that prevents the access to educational technology.	3: Actively support innovative solutions towards WASH, MHH and Energy in schools.	4: Undertake advocacy activities in favour of vulnerable child's well-being.
Strategic Actions	<p><i>1.1: Increase the availability of sustainable WASH services in schools, contributing to retention rates, especially of girls and rural children.</i></p> <p><i>1.2: Increase the availability of affordable and accessible menstrual materials and facilities in schools.</i></p>	<p><i>2.1: Increase the availability of sustainable energy supply services in schools, contributing to improve the quality of education infrastructures.</i></p> <p><i>2.2: Increase the availability of sustainable energy services in schools, ensuring the reduction of technology gaps, equitable access to knowledge and information and even the continuity of education.</i></p>	<p><i>3.1: Catalyze innovation in technologies, energy and other sanitation, hygiene, water pumping and MHH solutions that are cost effective, sustainable and climate resilient.</i></p> <p><i>3.2: Fund the installation or purchasing of innovative solutions, adapted to school needs in energy supply, technologic tools, water sanitation and hygiene mechanisms, and menstrual material.</i></p>	<p><i>4.1: Support the global advocacy efforts of the international community for promoting the universal realization of Human Rights, the achievement of SDGs.</i></p> <p><i>4.2: Realize activities enabling fundraising.</i></p>
Enablers	UNICEF + OHCHR + WHO + Global Coalitions + International partnerships + NGOs & Civil society actors + Private sector + Academia + National Governments + Permanent Missions + Regional Councils + Development agencies + Trust and Funds			

3. Context

The Child Life Action (CLA) Strategic Framework 2022 – 2025, the first of its existence since it was founded in November 2021³, comes at a time child's lives face unprecedented issues everywhere on the planet. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the existing gaps for most of the child rights-related Sustainable Development Goals. The most fragile and poorest communities, the most excluded and discriminated populations have a greater risk to see their fragile youth suffering from the consequences of the several global crises the world is facing.

This period also marks the last mile for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The task is tremendous, and all hands and efforts are welcome for reaching the ambitious agreed objectives. Hence, during the pandemic, the global recession, the climate crisis, and the conflicts affecting civil populations and particularly affecting children, CLA founders decide to unite their strengths for leveraging financing and providing technical expertise to child related projects and programs where their education is lacking the basic needs in highest burden countries.

As countries continue to reel from the effects of the pandemic, disparities are more visible than ever. Without swift, concerted action in a spirit of global solidarity, justice and human rights, the poorest countries will be left far behind, and the trend towards universal dignity will stall indefinitely.

The CLA's target is to realize reasonable activities at first, using its agility proper to a Non-Governmental Organization, modest resources -human and financial- and the strong experience in humanitarian affairs of its founders and members.

This strategic framework sets CLA on a course for working for children from poor communities and disadvantaged groups, improving their health and well-being with a decent quality of education through sustainable access to water and sanitation and affordable energy.

In 2018, about 260 million children were still out of school. In 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, close to 1.6 billion children and youth were out of school. Never before have so many children been out of school at the same time, disrupting learning and upending lives, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised. The global pandemic has far-reaching consequences that may jeopardize hard won gains made in improving global education, particularly amongst sub-Saharan Africa and refugee children⁴.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the critical importance of sanitation, hygiene, and adequate access to clean water for preventing and containing diseases. Hand hygiene saves lives. According to the World Health Organization, handwashing is one of the most effective actions you can take to reduce the spread of pathogens and prevent infections, including the COVID-19 virus. Yet, millions of children still lack water, hygiene, and sanitation particularly in schools. Each day, nearly 1,000 children die due to preventable water and sanitation-related diarrheal diseases⁵. A significant number of girls drop school due to shame, discriminations and lack of adequate material and infrastructure responding to their specific needs (menstrual health and hygiene – MHH- among others) during menstruation.

³ Status approved by the Constitutive General Assembly held in Geneva the 4th of November 2021.

⁴ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/>

More focused attention is needed to expand the use of renewable energy beyond the electricity sector, and to increase electrification in sub-Saharan Africa. Energy services are key to preventing disease and fighting pandemics, supplying clean water for essential hygiene, enabling communications and IT services that connect people while maintaining social distancing and guarantying the continuity of education despite the closure of schools for example and among other benefits. 789 million people – predominantly in sub-Saharan Africa – are living without access to electricity⁶, which contribute to the limited access to technology and modern education tools in schools worldwide.

Indeed, with almost no warning, the right to education has become—at the global level—dependent on connectivity. Over three-quarters of national distance learning solutions available during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic relied exclusively on online platforms. Yet as many as 465 million children and youth, or almost 47 % of all primary and secondary did not have access to these platforms because they do not have internet connections at home. This mirrors a global digital divide: close to half of the world’s population, some three billion people, have no access to the internet and its many portals to education. Not only does connectivity remain far from universal, but significant gaps exist across and within countries. These gaps are associated with a wide range of factors related to education, age, gender, income status, skills, and residence⁷.

Given the cross-cutting and holistic method adopted by CLA; it is only with a human rights-based and collaborative approach that its mission is intended to success. Thus, projects and programs are designed, developed, and implemented with trustful partners both globally and locally.

4. Vision⁸

Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people’s lives and sustainable development. (SDG 4: Quality Education)

4.2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education.

4.A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all.

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. (SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation)

6.2: By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity. (SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy)

7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services.

7.A By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.

⁶ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/>

⁷ <https://globaleducationcoalition.unesco.org/home/flagships/connectivity>

⁸ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

5. Mission

To effectively address the obstacles to quality education, ensuring the realization of Human Rights to water and sanitation & hygiene in schools with a specific attention to girls' specific needs; raise, catalyze, and invest resources to accelerate the access to technology in schools for children with the highest burden and lowest ability to respond.

6. Principles

- Accountability and transparency
- Serving children from communities left behind
- Collaboration, Complementarity and Partnership for high quality delivery
- Efficiency and value for money

7. Strategic Objectives



6.1 Strategic Objective 1: Increase sustainable water, sanitation, hygiene and MHH services in schools.

Strategic Action 1.1: Increase the availability of sustainable WASH services in schools, contributing to retention rates, especially of girls and rural children.

CLA supports selected partners to accelerate progress toward sustainable access to water and safely managed sanitation and hygiene, in schools from countries in high burden and less able to respond. The support includes financing specific projects or programs but is not reduced to this. Indeed, CLA reserves the right of reviewing the details of the project and provide its technical advice to partners, should this process need support.

CLA recognizes the importance of enabling affordable and sustainable water pumps in schools, as well as adequate sanitation and hygiene infrastructures that include gender sensitive toilets, with soap for handwashing, and locks on the doors. Therefore, the efforts of CLA are not limited to services for schools and support every child feels safe at school, contributing thus to limit absenteeism, dropout, and gender discrimination where the new generations are being shaped. CLA is also shaped to design, develop, and implement its own projects and programs in line with this strategic action when funds allow, and suitable partners are not existing.

Strategic Action 1.2: Increase the availability of affordable and accessible menstrual materials and facilities in schools.

CLA supports selected partners to accelerate progress toward sustainable access to menstrual hygiene health and hygiene material like sanitary pads, tampons, or any other menstrual hygiene products available, accessible, and affordable. The support includes financing specific projects or programs but is not reduced to this. Indeed, CLA reserves the right of reviewing the details of the project and provide its technical advice to partners, should this process need support. CLA recognizes the importance of enabling gender sensitive infrastructures including menstrual waste disposal solutions like rubbish in girls' toilets, as well as cloth lines for drying sanitary pads. Therefore, the efforts of CLA are not limited to providing stocks of menstrual health and hygiene material and support educative methods for ending gender discrimination at school, ending menstrual related absenteeism, and contributing to retention rates of girls in schools. CLA is also shaped to design, develop, and implement its own projects and programs in line with this strategic action when funds allow, and suitable partners are not existing.

6.2 Strategic Objective 2: Address the energy gap in schools that prevents the access to educational technology.

Strategic Action 2.1: Increase the availability of sustainable energy supply services in schools, contributing to improve the quality of education infrastructures.

CLA supports selected partners to accelerate progress toward sustainable access to electricity and energy in schools. The support includes financing specific projects or programs aiming at installing solar panels, bringing electricity to the rural schools, avoid energy cuts. Indeed, CLA reserves the right of reviewing the details of the project and provide its technical advice to partners, should this process need support. For security reasons, access to remote infrastructures of

education and its linked sanitation and hygiene settlements must be enlightened. Also, for many schools, class time is limited to sunlight time, shortening thus allocated time to education in some countries. Therefore, the efforts of CLA are not limited to financing or providing batteries, generators, solar panels and include as well advice on important lighting of key installations for improving the security feeling of children and the commodity for bringing knowledge. CLA is also shaped to design, develop, and implement its own projects and programs in line with this strategic action when funds allow, and suitable partners are not existing.

Strategic Action 2.2: Increase the availability of sustainable energy services in schools, ensuring the reduction of technology gaps, equitable access to knowledge and information and the continuity of education.

CLA supports selected partners to accelerate progress toward ensuring the reduction of technology gaps in schools for enhancing equitable access to knowledge and information, as well as guarantying the continuity of education when schools are closed during pandemics, disasters, conflicts, or any other case of force majeure. Even if CLA agree and recognize the importance of books, pens, notebooks or satchels, its action will focus more on increasing the number of schools using its energy source for supplying computers, printers or even internet connection. Then, the support includes financing specific projects or programs aiming at providing computing hardware, but also radios for distance lessons, tablets, modems, and any other technological and pedagogical tools leading to simplify basic learning as well as technological knowledge. Indeed, technology management is vital for the generation of the 21st century and the future of their respective communities, countries, and regions. CLA is also shaped to design, develop, and implement its own projects and programs in line with this strategic action, when funds allow, and suitable partners are not existing.

6.3 Strategic Objective 3: Actively support innovative solutions towards WASH, MHH and Energy in schools.

Strategic Action 3.1: Catalyze innovation in technologies, energy and other sanitation, hygiene, water pumping and MHH solutions that are cost effective, sustainable and climate resilient.

CLA is conscious of the quick and timely evolution of knowledge and methods, or technologies related to energy, WASH, MHH solutions. Then, an active role will have to be adopted in proposing grants, subsidies, and even innovation contests amongst academia, private sector, consultants, and civil society actors with interest in these fields. Knowledge sharing platforms can be a way for catalyzing innovations from anywhere, solve problems and obstacles, link different parties, and meet the needs of everyone. Providing these platforms and having sufficient means to incentivize research and innovation can make the difference. The diversity of needs is large includes for example:

- Sanitation solutions for schools located in areas where extreme weather conditions exist
- Hygiene solutions for transforming waste into energy or economic resources
- Environment friendly solutions for managing menstrual hygiene waste
- Water pumps working with solar energy and batteries for night use
- Low consumption lighting system coupled with movement sensors to save energy

CLA may build partnerships with key sector actors able to provide low-cost solutions, sponsoring its innovation programs or supplying with industrial material.

Strategic Action 3.2: Fund the installation or purchasing of innovative solutions, adapted to school needs in energy supply, technologic tools, water sanitation and hygiene mechanisms, and menstrual material.

CLA believes in the success of collective efforts to find innovative solutions to persistent problems. However, funding is needed for implementing them in the field. Hence, part of the innovation budget will be dedicated to purchase this material and provide it to partners or using it in its own projects and programs dedicated to child life. Implementation of innovative solutions cannot be perceived or understood as schools become testing grounds and children guinea pigs. Innovation implementation's will be monitored and evaluated before, during and after in strict ways by CLA and in partnership with experts and local or national authorities.

6.4 Strategic Objective 4: Undertake advocacy activities in favour of vulnerable child's well-being.

Strategic Action 4.1: Support the global advocacy efforts of the international community for promoting the universal realization of Human Rights, the achievement of SDGs.

CLA headquarters is based in Geneva and strongly believes in multilateralism. Thus, its actions in favor of child's lives, through a rights-based approach, cannot be unlinked to the global 2030 agenda. Through its participation to global meetings, conferences, committees, and coalitions in its quality of civil society actor and non-governmental organization, CLA participate to the promotion of social and political change at global level. Building on its experience in the field, those of its partners, its successes and failures, the impact of its work, CLA is actively playing a critical part in developing society, improving children from diverse communities; thus, CLA is giving voice to children in the global fora during key periodic UN events.

Strategic Action 4.2: Realize activities enabling fundraising.

CLA is dedicated to act for children's lives, everywhere. If programs and projects are entitled to be implemented in low- and middle-income countries, within left behind communities; there are activities that can be held around us, in Geneva or anywhere else. The everyday more globalized world we are building, the welcoming of refugees due to conflicts, natural disasters, or economic crisis, have led to bring together children from very different cultures. CLA commits to dedicate time and energy for helping the children nearby as well, organizing punctual activities enabling to provide a safe space for cross cultural exchanges amongst children, presenting CLA's activities and collecting funds. This kind of activities is part of CLA's will of building links and peaceful dynamics between children from different horizons.

8. Enablers

Building partnership and collaboration with key partners is the essential frame for all CLA activities. Every step will aim at strengthening partnerships with governments, civil society, specialized agencies, academia, private sector, donors. Through these collaborative partnerships, CLA hope to bring sustainable solutions and contribute to enable the acceleration of SDGs across different sectors and their related goals affecting children's lives and education.

CLA always ensure only inclusive and leave no one behind programs and projects are implemented with relevant and multiple stakeholders that can deliver value for money. To that end, voices of key populations, actors and children are listened and incorporated to the planification, implementation and evaluation.

CLA consider monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of planning, design, and implementation, for correcting and improving programs and projects, partnerships and measuring impact.

Adhering to international programs and coalitions, CLA is aiming at integrating international standards in its best practices serving humanitarian values. Indeed, the UNESCO Global Education Coalition or the Sanitation and Water for All Global partnership are examples of entities providing robust systems.

Research and innovation are successful when incorporating civil society, academia, and private sector together with specialized UN agencies in concrete and relevant projects.

Attending international conferences, participating to high level panels and advocating for the universal realization of Human Rights are key component of the advocacy effort together with activity feedback and analysis of data, results and dynamics.

CLA is conscious of the massive inequalities and needs of children affected by poverty, low services of education with water, sanitation, energy, and technology scarcity. To be able to invest accordingly and proportionally, CLA's approach to mobilize resources is focused on the generosity of high-income countries, the participation of private sector, with funding or material supply, benevolent actions from civil society. CLA is also considering requesting support from national governments where programs and projects are implemented, in form of co-financing, provision of administrative resources or any other means. International Trusts and Funds are also privileged interlocutors.