



STRATEGY 2024

FEARLESS
FOR
CHILDREN



WELCOME TO OUR STRATEGY 2024: FEARLESS FOR CHILDREN

Why do we need a new strategy?

The truth is, we live in a complex and volatile world. In 2021 alone, the impacts of COVID-19, climate change and the pace of digital transformation challenged all our pre-conceptions and priorities. Change is the only constant. And it makes our mission for children more critical than ever.

One billion children (a thousand million!) don't have access to essential healthcare. Over 450 million children are not learning (that's 20 times Australia's whole population). More than 400 million face conflict or gender-based violence. And 1 billion children live below poverty lines. In 2021, both in Australia and overseas these numbers got worse for the first time in three decades.

It's time for a re-set

Our ambition for children is massive. Some would say impossible. But as our founder Eglantyne Jebb said, "It's impossible only if we make it so. It's impossible only if we refuse to attempt it." Well, our 2024 Strategy is our best attempt to make it possible. It defines what we want the world to look like for children by 2024 and how we're going to help make that happen.

Our strategy is ambitious and transformative

We want to increase our impact for children faster and on a larger scale than ever before. Our five ambitious goals imagine the change we want to see. And our six drivers for change will help us work smarter and more efficiently, so we achieve more for children. We are committed to defending the rights of children who are most impacted by discrimination and inequality. Through our advocacy, programs and initiatives, we will continue to advance the fight for child rights on these First Nations lands now called Australia, across the Pacific and around the world.

Together we can make it happen

Only by working together can we reach our ambitious goals, working side by side with children, young people, families, staff, volunteers, supporters, partners, and governments. We still have much to achieve together. But with this 2024 Strategy, we can move forward with hope, optimism and determination to be fearless in achieving a better world for children.

Chair, Larry Kamener
CEO, Paul Ronalds



WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM, WHERE ARE WE GOING TO?

Our 2030 Breakthroughs

In 2016, Save the Children agreed to a 15-year global ambition in line with global Sustainable Development Goals. Three target breakthroughs for children were set for us to achieve by 2030:

Survive: No child dies of preventable causes before their fifth birthday.

Learn: All children learn from a quality basic education.

Be protected: Violence against children is no longer tolerated.

In executing these breakthroughs, Save the Children agreed to put the rights of the most deprived and marginalised children first, and to advocate for others to do the same. We are particularly committed to supporting children experiencing discrimination on aspects of their identity, including gender, LGBTIQ, disability, culture, language and migration status. In our journey towards achieving these ambitious breakthroughs, we set ourselves intermediate goals every three years; steps by which we can measure our progress and adjust our approach towards our ultimate 2030 Breakthroughs.

Our 2024 Strategy builds on our strengths and successes from the previous three-year strategy, while also stretching us to grow and increase our impact for children, on a larger scale and at a faster rate than today.

Global trends and local implications

Our strategic and operational environment, both globally and locally, is changing at an incredible pace. To maintain our relevance and our impact in the face of such rapid change, we need to identify and understand these changing dynamics and respond by adapting ourselves to best meet the new challenges facing our mission for children.

Key global trends in child rights and needs

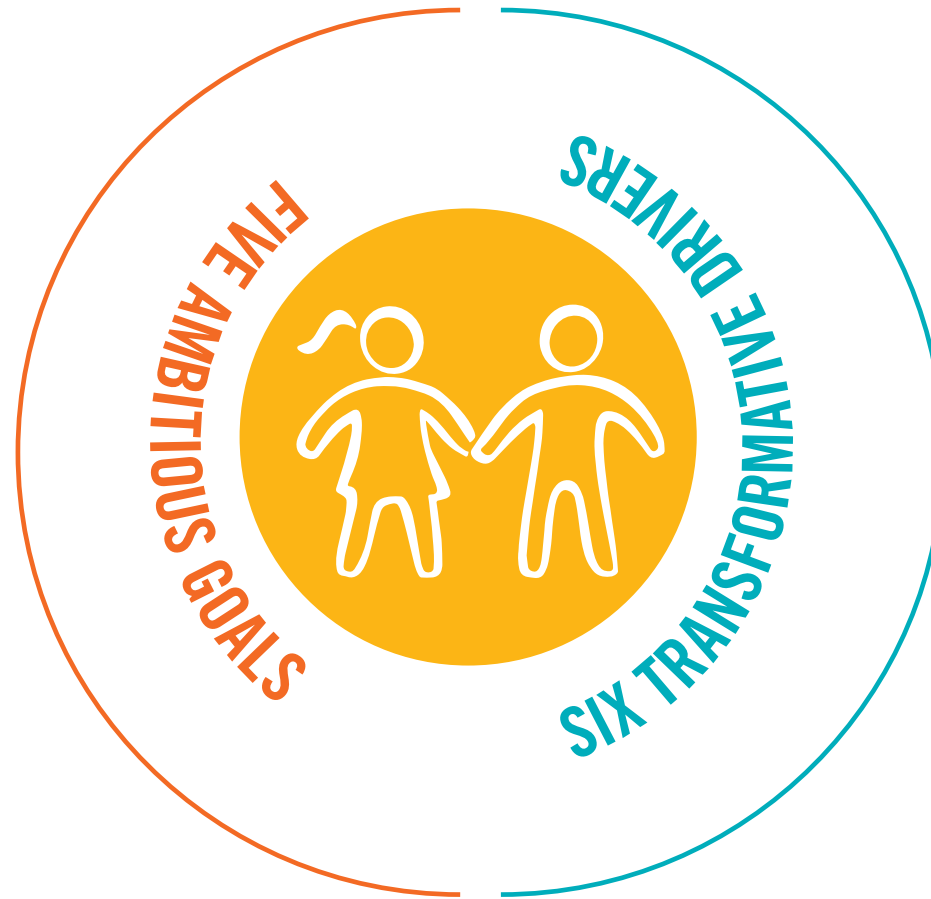
- Impact of COVID-19 on health, education, child protection and economic context
- Impact of conflict and chronic instability
- Increasing impact of the climate crisis
- Challenges (and opportunities) from emerging technologies
- Changing face of poverty in Australia
- Failure to make progress against entrenched disadvantage in Australia.
- Ongoing impact of discriminatory systems and social norms on some children including girls and children with disability



OUR 2024 STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

BY 2024 IMAGINE IF WE COULD ACHIEVE:

HOW WE CAN CHANGE OURSELVES TO DRIVE CHANGE FOR CHILDREN:



1. IMAGINE IF WE COULD ACHIEVE:

A SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL AND LEARNING FOR ALL CHILDREN

Why is this important?

Disadvantage creates further disadvantage in an ongoing cycle that starts in the first years of life. If we are to break the cycle of disadvantage, we need to intervene early, so every child gets the chance to fulfil their potential.

Research shows that children from low socio-economic backgrounds are:

- least likely to have engaged in early childhood education in the first 1,000 days
- least likely to have engaged in pre-kindergarten programs, and
- most likely to start school developmentally behind and stay behind.

What we're going to do about it

A child's development at school entry is predictive of their long term educational and life outcomes. We will focus our efforts to achieve these goals both in Australia and across the Asia-Pacific region where we work. We will:

- Support Australia's most disadvantaged children to reach Kindergarten development milestones and be ready for school.
- Ensure 1.7 million children have access to quality basic reading material through technology enabled learning resources delivered and supported by Library For All.
- Provide safe and quality learning to over 500,000 children via our programs.



2. IMAGINE IF WE COULD ACHIEVE:

MORE CHILDREN LIVING FREE FROM VIOLENCE

Why is this important?

The scale of violence against children prior to the pandemic, with over 1 billion affected every year, calls for a step-change in approaching the 'Be Protected' breakthrough. Social and economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic have exacerbated existing inequalities, increasing risks of violence against children exponentially, especially for women, girls and children with disability; in the home, online and in the context of conflicts and crises. Additional threats for children's security and safety are also increasing as climate change impacts more countries.

What we're going to do about it

We will focus our efforts to achieve this goal by increasing our influence to strengthen Indo-Pacific child protection systems while empowering communities to keep children safe and well. We will aim to ensure:

- All countries in the Indo-Pacific have in place coordinated action plans to prevent, respond to and address the root causes of violence against children.
- A 50% increase in the number of child protection networks/committees/mechanisms that are available and active in ensuring children are protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- All of our country offices implement 'Parenting without Violence common approach' with midline or endline evaluations that reflect reduced use of physical or humiliating punishment by caregivers.



3. IMAGINE IF WE COULD ACHIEVE:

A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN DETENTION

Why is this important?

Australia's current minimum age of criminal responsibility of 10 years old is out of step with international standards and is below the global median. Children aged 10 to 13 should not be criminalised and jailed.

There is overwhelming medical evidence that at these ages, children's cognitive and emotional development has not reached the stage where decision-making and impulse control are mature. Nor are children capable of fully understanding the consequences of their behaviour.

Australia's low minimum age entrenches intergenerational disadvantage. Criminalising children reinforces negative life trajectories that can be impossible to escape. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are disproportionately affected by the low minimum age. Around 65% of the approximately 600 children aged 10 to 13 who are imprisoned each year are Indigenous, despite being only 6% of all children.

What we're going to do about it

- Reduce by 50% the number of children aged 10–13 in detention in Australian states and territories.
- We will influence governments to raise the age in Australia to at least 14 years old.



4. IMAGINE IF WE COULD ACHIEVE:

MORE RESILIENT FAMILIES WITH RESOURCES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN

Why is this important?

Many children are still growing up in poverty, impacting their ability to learn, survive and be protected. More than 17% of Australian children fall below the poverty line. Internationally, hundreds of millions of families have been pushed over the brink of poverty since the start of the pandemic as parents lost work, impacting children's access to healthcare, education, food and housing.

What we're going to do about it

We help children and their families meet their basic needs and escape the intergenerational cycle of poverty. While we continue to provide assistance to children and their families through providing education and healthcare, our cash transfer programs will give families the flexibility they need to be able to help themselves in a dignified way.

We will focus our efforts to achieve this goal across the Indo-Pacific region where we work. We will aim to ensure:

- At least 85% of households in the Pacific can meet their basic needs with support from our CASH programming.



Photo: Martin Worts/Save the Children

5. IMAGINE IF WE COULD ACHIEVE:

A HEALTHY START IN LIFE FOR ALL CHILDREN

Why is this important?

Young children who do not get enough food and nutrients cannot grow properly and can become underdeveloped for their age. This condition is called 'stunting' and it prevents children from reaching their full potential – both mentally and physically.

A severely stunted child faces a four times higher risk of dying. Malnutrition (caused by starvation) is the underlying cause of 45% of all deaths of children under five, and it puts children at far greater risk of severe illness from infections, such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, HIV and AIDS, and measles.

What we're going to do about it

We ensure sustained access to life-saving maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition services. This is done by directly implementing programs targeting child undernutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, and gender inequality, and campaigns for investment by governments in direct nutrition interventions that can save children's lives.

We will focus our efforts to achieve this goal across the Indo-Pacific region where we work. We will aim to ensure:

- A 12% reduction in the number of children 0–2 years in the Pacific whose growth is stunted by malnutrition.



I. WE CAN DRIVE CHANGE BY:

AMPLIFYING THE VOICES AND RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN EVERYTHING WE DO

Why is this important?

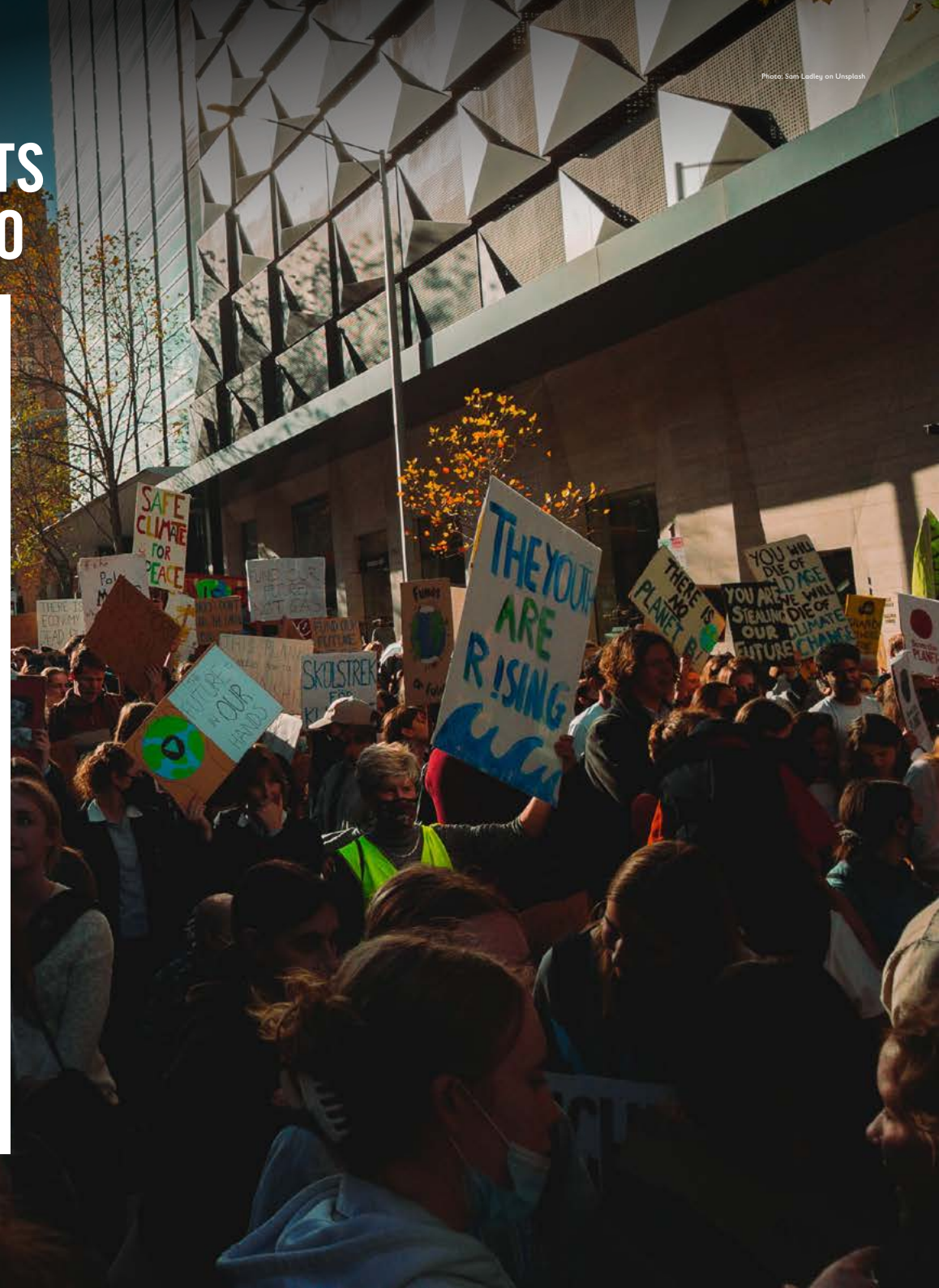
Child Rights matter now, more than ever, as society builds back from the COVID-19 pandemic and we confront the rapid and disruptive change required after decades of global inaction by adults on the climate crisis.

Child Rights need to be at the centre of everything we do. We need to drive change in the way communities and governments view, talk with, and treat children. This means taking children seriously in their own right, rather than as vulnerable objects to be acted upon. It means seeing the world from a child's perspective, developing shared language with children, hearing and understanding children's experiences and views, and designing systems and delivering services accordingly. This is particularly important for children experiencing discrimination on aspects of their identity, including gender, LGBTIQ, disability, culture, language and migration status.

What we're going to do about it

We will:

- Ensure children's rights and voices are systematically, equitably and explicitly embedded into service design, innovation, delivery and evaluation, starting with Child Rights in our policy and advocacy work.
- Develop a new Child Rights practice framework, and a whole of Save the Children Australia engagement framework including tools and methodologies, using it to upskill staff in programming, advocacy and communications.
- Co-design appropriate, systemic and inclusive ways for children to participate in Save the Children Australia's governance processes and feedback mechanisms to hold us to account for our progress against the 2024 Strategy.
- Partner with like-minded peers and research leaders to create stronger child rights institutions in Australia, expand opportunities for children to participate in decisions that affect them, and advocate for the incorporation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child into Australian law.
- Pursue strategic litigation for and with children to uphold and protect their rights.



ACCELERATING OUR IMPACT BY LEVERAGING INNOVATIONS IN DIGITAL AND DATA

Why is this important?

Increasing and improving our use of digital technologies and data will allow us to:

- Enhance the quality and reach of our programs
- Strengthen our capability to measure progress
- Enhance the efficiency of our operations
- Respond to donors' shift to giving through digital channels
- Better protect children online
- Address inequalities in access to digital technology.

What we're going to do about it

We will:

- Use digital and data to improve program outcomes and cost effectiveness particularly in education and child safeguarding in Australia and the Pacific. This includes leveraging our social enterprises and impact fund, partnerships, and innovative funding models.
- Strengthen evidence of what works for children (including on 'Common Approaches' and cost effectiveness) and use data analytics to better anticipate and respond to needs.
- Consistently capture program outcomes to measure impact for children, including at a disaggregated level.
- Increase advocacy and drive pilot programs showcasing solutions to highlight the impact of the digital divide on children.
- Ensure best practice standards and approaches are applied consistently, reducing our organisational risk, driving efficiencies and increasing quality.
- Amplify children's voices through accessible technology by leveraging existing platforms, tools and data.



III. WE CAN DRIVE CHANGE BY:

ELEVATING CLIMATE CHANGE TO A CHILD RIGHTS ISSUE OF THE FIRST ORDER

Why is this important?

The climate crisis is fundamentally and irreparably reshaping our world, with grave implications for the rights of current and future generations of children. When ranked by income, the top 50% of states are responsible for 86% of cumulative global CO₂ emissions, while the lower half are responsible for just 14%. Despite this, it is the children of low and middle-income countries that bear the brunt of losses and damage to health and human capital, land, cultural heritage, indigenous and local knowledge, and biodiversity because of climate change. They have inherited a problem not of their own making.

What we're going to do about it

We will put climate change front and centre as a child rights issue by ensuring:

- Children's voices are amplified in their campaign for climate justice and in all of our climate-related policy and advocacy initiatives which will be informed by our programming and accurate, up-to-date climate data.
- We deliver on the promise of the Green Climate Fund to help millions of children and communities adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- We explore emergent climate related opportunities to enhance our Impact or funding model.
- We minimise our carbon footprint and environmental impacts.
- We advocate across the Save the Children movement to ensure systematic inclusion of the climate crisis as a central challenge to achieving our 2030 Breakthroughs.
- We engage the Green Climate Fund at scale, supported by our philanthropic and private sector funding channels and a strong Save the Children Australia public presence, to drive transformational change with and for children and communities.
- All new Save the Children Australia non-Green Climate Fund international programs, and where practicable existing programs, are climate sensitive, ensuring that the broader climate and environmental impacts of our operations are minimised and resilience building opportunities are maximised.
- We implement a carbon reduction road map for carbon neutrality by 2030.
- We explore emergent climate related opportunities (e.g. potential for carbon and biodiversity credits to fund development activity) to further scale our impact.



IV. WE CAN DRIVE CHANGE BY:

STRENGTHENING OUR EFFICIENCY BY TRANSFORMING SHARED SERVICES

Why is this important?

In an increasingly dynamic and complex operating environment, our Shared Services are crucial in ensuring our back office and support functions are fit for purpose to help us deliver impact for children. We will improve customer experience and increase efficiency by leveraging advances in technology and automation and building performance accountability. We will embed new ways of working to improve prioritisation through agile delivery.

What we're going to do about it

We will:

- Ensure shared services for business units and subsidiaries are fit for purpose and support growth.
- Establish clear accountabilities enabling timely decision making and improved operational efficiencies.
- Enhance the transparency of shared services ability to add value and proactively identify improvement opportunities.
- Develop an improvement acceleration program with a 'no regrets, quick wins' approach that targets key pain points identified by business units.
- Embed new ways of working and developing a culture of continuous improvement and agile ways of working.
- Develop a multi-year roadmap of improvement initiatives and process automation for each shared services function to realise opportunities.



GROWING AND DIVERSIFYING OUR SOURCES OF FUNDING TO ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

Why is this important?

Fundraising is a key source of revenue for supporting Save the Children Australia's programs. Over the last decade the volume and value of donations from traditional fundraising methods has declined – both for Save the Children Australia and the NGO community as whole. This decline presents a challenge to our sustainability and our ability to achieve our ambitious agenda for children.

What we're going to do about it

While we continue to grow and improve our existing fundraising program, we will look to opportunities for diversification - such as the evolution of our retail network and growing new funding partnerships. We will:

- Conduct rolling agile initiatives to optimise existing funding streams.
 - Continuing optimisation of our Regular Giving fundraising program.
 - Developing our digital fundraising program.
 - Maximising our retail store footprint by evolving our offering
 - Growing our network of legacy givers.
 - Research and identify potential new funding opportunities.
 - Pilot, test and analyse selected opportunities to evaluate viability and suitability as 'future state' initiatives.



ENHANCING OUR ADAPTIVE AND INCLUSIVE CULTURE

Why is this important?

Our strategic and operational environment is changing at an incredible pace. To increase our impact in the face of such rapid change, we need to be agile and innovative, constantly learning with a relentless focus on continuous improvement. We also need to strive for a truly inclusive and representative organisational culture, ensuring that our workplaces are culturally and psychologically safe, valuing and embracing race, gender, disability or sexual identity.

What we're going to do about it

We will:

- Use proven methodologies to embed culture and practices which build our capacity to take risks, experiment and practice continuous learning and innovation, so we become a highly adaptive and future orientated organisation.
- Relaunch our values and our story, drawing on our history, our mission and our future to create context and connection.
- Identify barriers to diversity, equality and inclusion and establish plans to overcome these.
- Conduct targeted training, including a focus on unconscious bias, to strengthen the capability of our leaders to create psychologically safe workplaces.
- Deliver more wellbeing support to all staff and better leverage our EAP provider Benestar.
- Implement our stretch Reconciliation Action Plan including:
 - developing deeper relationships with Aboriginal communities across our sphere of operations
 - creating employment and training opportunities that align with Save the Children Australia and community needs
 - bringing Aboriginal businesses into the Save the Children Australia supply chain and supporting the building of capability and capacity
 - driving personal accountability for understanding Aboriginal history and culture and maintaining cultural competency to operate within Save the Children Australia
 - setting targets, collecting data and holding ourselves accountable.



THE JOURNEY AND THE DESTINATION

Photo: Robert McKechnie/Save the Children
Cover photo: Hanna Adcock/Save the Children

How the Strategy 2024 was developed

At Save the Children we recognise that our strategy needs to be a living document. And the journey we've been on to create it is as important as the end product.

This process has been led by the Save the Children Executive and Strategy Working Group. We've talked to children, analysed the status of their rights in the countries and communities in which we work. We've consulted our teams and the partners we work with. We've engaged stakeholders in a series of workshops, meetings and surveys. We've pulled the priorities apart and put them back together again. We've made hard choices and re-prioritised things that are important, because we know we need to be focussed in our ambition if we are to maximise our impact.

Now with this Strategy 2024, we can move forward with hope, optimism and determination to be fearless in achieving a better world for children.

For more information

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Save the Children acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work. Our deepest respect to their Elders past and present.

Save the Children Australia is a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission ABN 99 008 610 035.

