



**AfriChild**  
Research. Policy. Impact.  
*The Centre for the study of the African Child*

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**  
2019 - 2020



“

*There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children.*

*Nelson Mandela*

# AfriChild

**A center of excellence for the study of the African Child**

AfriChild Centre is a child-focused multi disciplinary research institution based at Makerere University, Uganda.

It was established in January 2013 to address gaps in human resources needed for adequate child wellbeing responses and child-focused research; collaboration and coordination of learning efforts; and the overarching need to link research on the child to policy, programming and practice.

The Centre is promoted by ChildFund International – Uganda Office, the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development, Makerere University, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO), Uganda, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Columbia University.

# CONTENTS

5.	Word from the Chairperson Board
6.	Word from the ED
8.	Who we are
9.	Our Focus
10.	COVID-19, Children Under Siege
12.	AfriChild's COVID-19 Response
13.	Child Focused Research
17.	Building the next generation of researchers
19.	AfriChild Initiatives
21.	Challenges and Lessons Learnt
22.	Financial Report



## Word from the CHAIRPERSON BOARD



Our dear valued friends and stakeholders; It gives me great pleasure to share with you our annual report for the year 2019-2020. It has been another remarkable year for the AfriChild Center in which the organization has successfully navigated through emerging challenges.

The organization has pursued strengthening and re-organizing of internal capacities to deliver on the strategic objectives and ensure continuity of on-going initiatives. This process led to the recruitment of a new Executive Director, Director for Research and Knowledge Management as well as a communication officer.

I am proud to note that in spite of the relatively shaky moments; we have continued to register progress in the areas of research, capacity building, resource mobilization and partnerships. The organization has attracted four new research partnerships and is also extending this at the regional level.

The Covid-19 pandemic has without doubt been the most challenging issue during the year. It caused great disruptions in the organization plans and activities testing the resilience of the organization. However, we celebrate a year that saw AfriChild demonstrate its relevance by undertaking a robust media campaign that positioned it, as one of the lead organizations championing the protection of children amidst the covid-19 pandemic.

The board continued to work with the secretariat on internal systems strengthening aimed at promoting accountability to ourselves, our partners and all other stakeholders of concern. We have also embarked on a journey to develop a new 5-year strategic plan for the organization. It's our belief and hope that the new strategic plan will enable the organization better deliver on its vision and mandate by responding to the current and emerging needs of the African Child.

Finally, I must acknowledge that none of this would be possible without the unwavering support from our development partners, the promoters and the board. Management and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that the resources provided achieved the results contained in this report. This report is dedicated to the children with and for whom we relentlessly seek to create a society that invests in their wellbeing as a key pillar for sustainable development.

  
**Margaret Kakande**  
Board Chairperson

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S WORD



### What a journey!

This year marks eight years since the AfriChild Centre was established by a consortium of institutions ChildFund International – Uganda Office, the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development, Makerere University, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO), Uganda, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Columbia University.

Since its establishment, the AfriChild Centre has carved out a niche as Centre of excellence in the study of the African Child. As we mark yet another successful year in the implementation of the vision, mission and objectives laid out in our strategic plan, we are cognizant of the fact that while the year started on a high note, the later part of the year was unprecedented.

### COVID-19 AND CHILD PROTECTION

The global COVID-19 pandemic impacted the way we live and work but most critically it amplified the vulnerabilities of children not only in Uganda but across the globe. The closure of education institutions and other government-imposed measures to help curb the spread of the virus meant that 15 million children were out of school without the protection net that schools provide.

The government-imposed lockdown meant that many people were forced to stay home under lockdown without a livelihood. The confinement of couples at home and the confinement of would be perpetrators of child abuse together with the victims meant that the situation would explode.

Indeed, what followed was a sharp rise in cases of domestic violence, child abuse, teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation, child labour among others. This put into sharp focus the work of institutions like AfriChild and the need for strategies to ensure child protection amidst not only the global COVID-19 pandemic but the hidden crisis of child abuse escalated by the pandemic.

Aware that as a country, we stood a risk of losing an entire generation of children to violence and abuse resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, AfriChild in partnership with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and

Social Development implemented a nationwide media campaign to raise awareness about the threats faced by children, strategies for child protect children and the urgent need for prioritization of mental health and children's wellbeing in government interventions to fight COVID19.

### A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

During the year, we continued our journey of distinguishing AfriChild as a Centre of Excellence in the Study of the African Child. The Centre undertook both qualitative and quantitative research on a range of issues affecting the child such as health, education, care and protection using innovative tools and methodologies to provide empirical evidence that is used to influence policy and practice.

Some research studies undertaken by the AfriChild Center included: Randomised Control Trial of Enhanced Child Friendly Space Interventions for Children Affected by Conflict and Displacement, Omugo Refugee Settlement, Arua District, Good School Toolkit – Secondary School (GST-S) Pilot Trial, The Impact of Men's Active Positive Presence in the Lives of Children among others.

The Center also continued in its quest to build local capacity of Ugandan researchers to undertake rigorous scientific research that is child focused. Memoranda of Understanding were renewed with seven local universities to ensure continuity of our inter-university training programme that equips upcoming researchers

with knowledge and skills in child focused research.

### LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

The AfriChild Centre has continued to grow and this year we come to the end of our Strategic Plan 2015-2020. As an institution, we have registered significant milestones that have made us come of age. A smooth transition to full autonomy has especially been realized with the Centre independently managing its HR, Finance, Admin and Grants functions. These functions were previously managed by ChildFund Uganda Country Office. This transition started in 2018, and as we close this financial year, AfriChild is ready to be an entity of its own. Gratitude to ChildFund for nurturing AfriChild to this point.

Progress registered in this financial year has been possible due to the dedication of the AfriChild staff and the unwavering commitment of the AfriChild Board members, as well as support from our partners. To all of them, I am immensely grateful.

Sincerely,

**Timothy Opobo**

**Executive Director**



## Who we are

At Africhild, **our vision** is a world where society invests well in children as a key element of sustainable development

To fulfill **our mission**, The AfriChild Centre generates research that contributes to the evidence base to improve the lives and wellbeing of the African child. It does this in collaboration with public and private sectors, academia, and civil society.

### AFRICHILD'S LEADERSHIP TEAMS ADVISORY BOARD

- Mr. Patrick Onyango Mangan
- Prof. Edward Kirumira
- Mr. Simba Machingaidze
- Dr. Diego Angemi
- Dr. Fred Ssewamala
- Mr. Mark Canavera

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Margaret Kakande (Chairperson)
- Prof. Lynn Atuyambe
- Emily Gakiza
- Penninah Kyoyagala Tomusange
- Judy Kamanyi
- James Sembatya Kabogozza

In all we do, we strive to ensure that society invests well in children's



## Our Focus

Broadly, AfriChild's work is categorized into four core areas;

- generating research evidence, innovations and demonstration projects
- translation of research evidence into policies and programs
- strengthening research capacity in Uganda and the region
- strengthening partnerships and collaboration for research and knowledge management.



### RESEARCH

The Centre undertakes both qualitative and quantitative research on a range of issues affecting the child such as health, education, care and protection using innovative tools and methodologies to provide empirical evidence that is used to influence policy and practice.

### POLICY

The Centre uses the evidence generated to advocate policy makers, CSOs and practitioners at both national and international levels on issues affecting the child.

### IMPACT

The research we conduct is aimed at bringing meaningful change in the lives of children. We partner with practitioner CSOs to uptake our research findings and improve their programming approaches and methods.





# COVID-19 Response



AfriChild implemented a nationwide advocacy campaign starting in the month of April under the rallying call **“We risk losing a generation unless urgent action is taken to prioritize child wellbeing in the fight against COVID 19”**.

During the campaign, evidence from our previous studies was presented as a backdrop to the risk children faced if urgent action was not taken to prioritize children’s wellbeing in the fight against COVID-19.

Some of the studies that were leveraged to provide evidence include; The Violence Against Children Survey Report, A Qualitative Study of Risks and Protective Factors for Violence against Children living in Residential Care Institutions (RCIs) in

Uganda, Menstrual Hygiene Knowledge, Attitude and Practices in Primary Schools in Mukono District: A Girl Child’s Perspective among others.

The media campaign was a contribution from AfriChild to the on-going efforts to address the above mentioned challenges using its unique position as a child focused multidisciplinary research centre. The media campaign was also rooted in the fact that most of government’s COVID-19 efforts focused a lot more on the health response measures such as tracing, testing and treating COVID-19 patients. This created a gap in the psychosocial support and child protection arena.

## Child Focused Research

*The AfriChild Centre undertakes both qualitative and quantitative research on a range of issues affecting the child such as health, education, care and protection using innovative tools and methodologies to provide empirical evidence that is used to influence policy and practice. These are the researches we undertook in 2019 - 2020.*

### Randomised Control Trial of Enhanced Child Friendly Space Interventions for Children Affected by Conflict and Displacement, Omugo Refugee Settlement, Arua District

In an effort to address the growing need for an evidence base for Child Friendly Spaces, World Vision Uganda, World Vision International and World Vision, UK partnered with Columbia University and the AfriChild Centre, Makerere University in a joint research and learning project. The focus is on documenting the impact of CFSs on children’s social and emotional well-being, sense of security and protection and where appropriate - acquisition of skills and competences.



### Household economic status, sexual violence and utilization of services among adolescents aged 13 – 17 years in Uganda.

The study aimed at generating evidence on the relationship between household economic status, sexual violence and utilization of services among adolescents aged 13 – 17 years in Uganda using the Uganda VACS data; and strengthening in-country research capacity for data analysis and utilization of VACS data to inform and influence policies at national and subnational levels to better prevent and respond to VAC





### The Impact of Men's Active Positive Presence in the Lives of Children

This study aims to establish the influence of fathers' active positive presence on the wellbeing of their children. To realize this purpose, the formative research objectives are: to describe fatherhood in Ugandan context; To determine attitudes, beliefs and practices around fatherhood with respect to personal experience; To identify enablers and barriers of active participation of men in the lives of children and; To identify children's needs met by the fathers, the enablers and barriers to realization of children needs.

### A scoping review of the state of fathers in Uganda

AfriChild Centre, embarked on a scoping review on the state of fathers in Uganda. This review will build into the national report on the state of fathers in Uganda. The national report will publish information about men's contribution to caregiving, typically with four lenses: 1) men's caregiving in the context of gender equality between parents; 2) the relationship between men's caregiving, violence against women and violence against children; 3) men's caregiving related to maternal and child health; and 4) how men's caregiving contributes to early childhood development (Sonke Gender Justice, 2018)<sup>1</sup>.

The findings will inform the national family policy as well as parenting guidelines developed by The Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD).

Fathers play a critical role in the parenting process. In Uganda, there is increasing demand on fathers to participate more actively in the lives of their children and more broadly in family life. However, there is limited comprehensive and reliable data on the state of Uganda's fathers, including their perception of what fatherhood and parenting is, and their involvement in this role.

### Good School Toolkit – Secondary School (GST-S) Pilot Trial

The Good School Toolkit for secondary school (GST-S) is an intervention developed by Raising Voices to prevent violence from school staff towards students, and peer violence between students. It is a whole-school approach which aims to reduce multiple forms of violence and change power dynamics underpinning violence, by changing the operational culture of the school.

This pilot RCT is a collaboration between the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Raising Voices and the AfriChild Centre, Makerere University.

The overall aim of GST-S Pilot trial is to determine whether progression to a phase 3 cluster randomised controlled trial to deliver the Good School Toolkit-Secondary Schools intervention to prevent violence in Kampala/Wakiso District, Uganda, is justified in terms of pre-specified acceptability and feasibility criteria.

### Measuring Impact and Sustainability of a Community-Based Child Protection Approach in Addressing Violence against Children in Post Conflict Setting in Northern Uganda

An impact evaluation is planned to respond to the following questions:

Do interventions to sustainably empower community based child protection structures lead to the prevention of violence against children at family and community level?

How have the basic child protection indicators measured at baseline and integrated in the project log frame and interventions changed overtime following the three year interventions to empower communities to protect children?

How much change and in what form and measure is attributable to the interventions?

What factors do stakeholders attribute to perceived and measurable project contributions and/or failures and Why?

### Violence perpetrated against street-connected children

AfriChild conducted a study on violence perpetrated against street-connected children indicates that prostitution & defilement are some of the prominent risky sexual experiences the street children in Kampala are exposed to.



## Strengthening Education Outcomes for Children in Uganda

AfriChild in partnership with the department of Social Work and Social Administration is designing a pilot study that is intended to improve educational outcomes for children in schools in Uganda. The pilot study seeks to identify the social emotional and mental health barriers that impede school completion and achievement for learners in Ugandan schools. We anticipate to use the ensuing evidence to develop and try models that can support school retention for children from low income families.



## Research Fellowship with CDC and Together for Girls

AfriChild received a grant from Together for Girls. This support is intended to run a research fellowship that focuses on strengthening individual and institutional in-country research capacity to generate and utilize evidence for policy and programming for prevention and improved response to violence against children. We hope to use this support to illuminate the drivers and protective factors for sexual violence against children in Uganda and inform specific and targeted

interventions both at national and subnational levels. The research shall focus on the relationship between household economic status, sexual violence and utilization of services among adolescents aged 13 – 17 years in Uganda using the Uganda VACS data.



## CHILD- GLOBAL Research Fellowship

AfriChild was invited to be on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the CHILD-GLOBAL Research Fellowship, a new training program funded by the Fogarty International Center and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development within the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The program is part of the growing research training portfolio at the International Center for Child Health and Development, at Washington University in St. Louis in the United States, in collaboration of Chair of the Department of Psychiatry in the School of Medicine at Makerere University in Uganda.

This training programme will build capacity for scholars from Uganda, to conduct research in low resource settings. One of our associates, Ms. Agatha Kafuko has been admitted on this program. In the coming three years, 12 more scholars will be admitted, as we are strategizing to support more of our associates to participate in the programme.



At AfriChild we are building the next generation of researchers and policy makers to utilize research evidence in designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs and policies.

The AfriChild Centre has been implementing “Building the Next Generation of Researchers” Program that “Supports the Linkages between Child-Focused Research, Practice and Policy in Uganda” since January 2017.

Through this program, the Centre conducts rigorous child focused research and on the other hand, is strengthening the capacity of in-country researchers to conduct child focused research as well as policy makers and practitioners to utilize the research generated by the academia.

Building the Next Generation of Researchers Program has three arms, the Inter-University Collaborative Child- Focused Research and Training (IU-CCRT) Program arm, the Training of Policy Makers and Practitioners in Utilization of Research Evidence (PPURE) Program arm and the training program arm for journalists to report on child focused issues in research reports.

## Inter-University Programme

The Inter-University Programme aims at strengthening inter-university collaboration and training in child-focused research skills. The seven universities are: Makerere University, Kyambogo University, Uganda Christian University, Uganda Martyrs University, Muni University, Gulu University and Nsamizi Institute of Social Work and Development.

The main objective of the Inter-University program is to strengthen inter-university collaboration and training in child focused research methods.

This year, 30 mid-level researchers from seven universities in Uganda were trained and equipped with skills in child-focused research methods, grant acquisition, and publication. AfriChild also provided research grants to the trainees to undertake child-focused research on issues affecting children.

The trainees have continued to utilize the skills acquired to undertake child-focused research. They have also integrated the knowledge and skills acquired into their lectures and guided university students to write research projects and dissertations.

In 2017, Africhild, with the support of Oak Foundation initiated the inter-university programme with a goal of building the next generation of child-focused researchers.

## Training of Policy Makers and Practitioners in Utilization of Research Evidence

This program aims at promoting effective utilization of research evidence generated by the academia. To realize this, the Centre embarked on developing knowledge and skills of practitioners and policy makers in utilization of research evidence for program/policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The target groups are policy makers and practitioners from the fields of education, health and child protection. Through these interventions, AfriChild has not only strategically sharpened its research focus but also shaped and contributed to the national child focused research agenda.

Under the PPURE program, AfriChild brings together researchers and policy makers to help increase the uptake child focused research within the policy formulation process.

At AfriChild we are building the next generation of researchers and policy makers to utilize research evidence in designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs and policies.

The overall objective of this training is to build capacity of 30 multi-disciplinary practitioners and policy makers from government and NGOs in Uganda in evidence-based interventions to address violence against children in Uganda.



*Jonathan Tumwebaze from Uganda Christian University was awarded a PhD in Governance & Policy Studies from the University of Pretoria, in South Africa. He thanks AfriChild for imparting him with knowledge & skills in child-focused research that enabled him to complete his studies successfully.*

## AfriChild Initiatives

### Sexual exploitation of children:

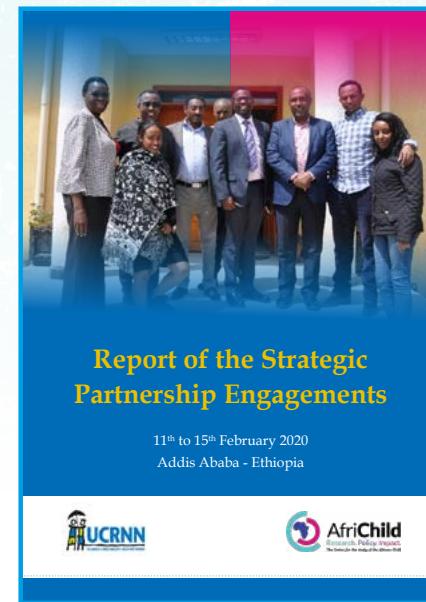
AfriChild, Pan African Child Rights Organisations collaborate to fight vice

The AfriChild Centre and Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) undertook a strategic visit to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to explore opportunities for partnership with regional stakeholders at the Pan African level to fight sexual exploitation of children on the continent.

The visit took place between 11th and 15th February 2020. The delegation was led by Timothy Opobo, ED AfriChild and Stella Ayo Odong, ED UCRNN.

AfriChild and regional Pan African Child Rights Stakeholders agreed to collaborate to jointly mobilize resources and to support governments address violence against children and combat sexual exploitation of children in Africa.

According to the 2015 Violence Against Children Survey (VACS), among children aged 13-17 years, one in four girls (25 percent) and one in ten boys (11 percent) reported experiencing sexual violence in the past year. Only a few of these cases are reported. Many countries in Africa are grappling with similar challenges of addressing sexual violence against children.



### Collaboration between Makerere University and Washington University in St. Louis

AfriChild played a key role in coordinating the collaboration between Washington University at St. Louis and Makerere University as a McDonnell Academy Partner. Makerere is the second university in Africa to enter such a partnership which has benefits such as fully funded scholarships for recruited students from Makerere University, opportunities for paid faculty exchange and training programs. AfriChild coordinated and arranged for meetings between the two institutions. This is a strategic breakthrough that has increased our visibility and relevance within the Makerere University community. AfriChild has been working to foster a positive relationship between the Centre and the leadership at Makerere University.

## The plight of street connected children - Public Dialogue on street connected children #NoChildOnTheStreet

AfriChild and partners organized a public dialogue on on street connected children with the aim of raising awareness about the plight of street connected children.

Street-connected children are children who have completely or partially ruptured family ties & engage in various survival activities on the streets. These children are considered a nuisance.

Extreme deprivation create opportunities for crime involvement. Over 18,000 children are living and working on the streets of Kampala without family protection, many of them suffer untold sexual, physical and emotional violence and resort to harmful coping mechanisms.

In Kampala, majority of homeless children on the streets are boys aged between 8 and 17. Street-connected kids in Kampala & elsewhere face violence & discrimination by police, peers & the community. Some leave home because of domestic abuse, neglect & poverty, only 2 suffer brutality & exploitation by older kids & homeless adults on the streets. The spectacle of children plying the streets is a growing concern & there is urgent need to understand the push and pull factors for this phenomenon. The need to find a lasting and effective solution to the problem of street children.

"Africa is currently experiencing the highest urban growth rates. Local authorities in Africa are increasingly confronted with a rising number of street children and all too often do not quite know how to deal with this growing problem."

## Men's Active Presence in children's lives - Exchange visit

Partners from South Africa and Uganda met to discuss the state of fatherhood. This happened at the Crowne Plaza Hotel- Johannesburg.

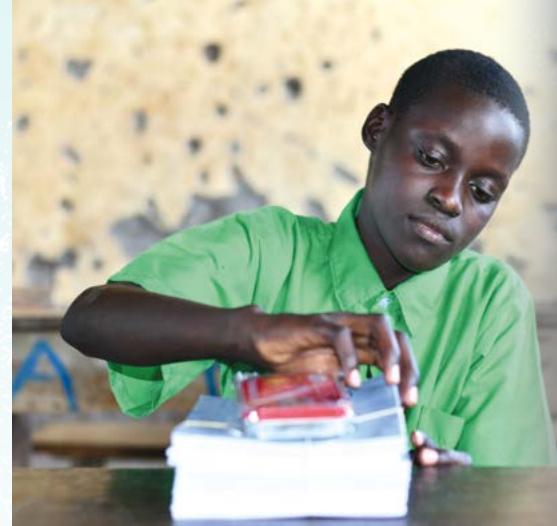
Fatherless children are 5 times more likely to experience physical abuse than those with fathers. Fatherless children are also more likely to abuse substances as adults - Dr. Garth

## National Learning Symposium on creating a safe and positive learning environment

A healthy & safe learning environment enables students, adults & the school system to learn in powerful ways. Such an environment promotes innovation, inquiry & risk taking. Is your school fostering a healthy, safe & supportive learning environment? This was the key question at the National Learning Symposium on creating a safe and positive learning environment.

Safe to Learn is an initiative dedicated to ending violence in and through schools. It presents an opportunity to unlock the multiple win of improving learning outcomes & raising awareness and change attitudes towards violence against children. #Together4SafeSchoolsUganda

11 countries have endorsed Safe to Learn's Call to Action which sets out what needs to happen to end violence in schools. These are: Cambodia, Georgia, Ghana, Honduras, Mexico, Moldova, Nepal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan and Uganda.



## Challenges and Lessons Learnt

*It has been another remarkable year for the AfriChild Center in which the organization has successfully navigated through emerging challenges.*

*The Covid-19 pandemic has without doubt been the most challenging issue during the year. It caused great disruptions in the organization plans and activities testing the resilience of the organization. As an organization we learned the following;*

### Risk mitigation planning:

It's imperative to undertake early scenario and risk mitigation planning to be able to withstand the shocks that could arise from situations such as the covid-19

Flexibility and critical thinking are important especially, in identifying how the organization can quickly adapt and remain relevant during a crisis situation.

### Prioritising Child protection in times of COVID-19:

The decision to undertake the media campaign enabled AfriChild to contribute to the protection of children in the country in direct alignment to the institutions vision and mandate.

### Adapting to COVID-19:

COVID-19 required AfriChild to rapidly revise the way we work and how we deliver on our outputs. With the closure of schools and government restrictions on group gatherings, new approaches to program delivery had to be devised.

Team work remains critical to the success of the Centre. By drawing on everyone's unique strengths we can move the Centre forward and achieve more for the African child.

### Collaboration and partnership:

Collaboration with various actors at international, regional, national and community has been a key success factor in implementing our activities. These partners include including government ministries and agencies, CSOs, academia, media and communities. Going forward, we need to engage them more and build stronger relationships.

**AFRICHILD CENTRE LIMITED  
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020**

	2020	2019
	Ushs 000	*Restated Ushs 000
<b>Income</b>		
Grant income	1,261,524	334,223
Other income	<u>80,572</u>	<u>113,330</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,342,096</b>	<b>447,553</b>
<b>Grant Expenditure</b>		
Travel Costs	(96,880)	(102,461)
Training Costs	(10,704)	(839)
Research Costs	(136,739)	(43,587)
Communication and media costs	(55,726)	(46,294)
Contract costs	(145,185)	(44,597)
Other program costs	-	(1,015)
Workshops/Seminars/Conferences	(4,635)	(26,965)
Personnel Costs	(464,466)	(54,000)
Fringe Benefits	(94,069)	(9,156)
Advocacy	(14,945)	-
Administrative Expense	<u>(262,710)</u>	<u>(5,309)</u>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>(1,286,059)</b>	<b>(334,223)</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>56,037</b>	<b>113,330</b>

**AFRICHILD CENTRE LIMITED  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 30 JUNE 2020**

	2020	2019
	Ushs 000	*Restated Ushs 000
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current assets		
Accounts receivable	258,631	19,352
Cash and bank balances	<u>801,522</u>	<u>349,839</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>1,060,153</u></b>	<b><u>369,191</u></b>
<b>RESERVES &amp; LIABILITIES</b>		
Accumulated surplus	169,367	113,330
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	61,846	9,472
Grants payable	<u>828,940</u>	<u>246,389</u>
	890,786	255,861
<b>TOTAL RESERVES &amp; LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,060,153</b>	<b>369,191</b>

# The Africhild Centre

the African Child

## THE AFRICHILD CENTRE

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