



CHASE AFRICA

# Impact Report 2021





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# Welcome to the CHASE Africa 2021 Impact Report

## A WORD FROM HENRY POMEROY, DIRECTOR

I started working with my friend of 40 years, CHASE Africa's founder, Robin Witt, in 2012. Since then, CHASE Africa has helped thousands of rural women make informed choices about their families. We have enabled access to over 400,000 family planning services for women in poor communities, and these services have cumulatively provided nearly half a million years of protection from unintended pregnancies!

But barriers to accessing family planning remain high, with only 20% of women in sub-Saharan Africa using family planning compared to 57% globally. If more women were able to access family planning, maternal and infant mortality would decrease, poverty would be reduced, and gender equality would make progress.

CHASE Africa believes it is paramount that women understand their rights to make decisions that affect their sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive healthcare. Through grassroots and community-led approaches, CHASE Africa's partners are reaching the most marginalised communities to empower women, young people and whole communities through information provision, advice and accessible health services.

In 2021, our work resulted in nearly 85,000 family planning services and 140,000 healthcare services being taken up – enabling thousands of women and adolescent girls to avoid unintended pregnancies and their difficult lifechanging consequences. We also supported communities to take proactive steps to protect ecosystems and biodiversity and manage natural resources. Our income grew by a fantastic 24% to £678,000, despite a difficult fundraising environment. My heartfelt thanks to every one of our supporters.

This increased funding allowed us to successfully reach many more young people than in previous years. 20% of those taking up services were under the age of 18. This is a reflection not only of the specific difficulties rural young people face in accessing information and modern contraception, but also of the innovative projects our partners put in place to reach them.

I hope that you will enjoy reading about some of the work that has been made possible thanks to your support in 2021.

**Henry Pomeroy, Director**

[Read more on page 14](#)

“CHASE Africa has helped 1000s of women make informed choices about their families”



# At a glance... a 2021 timeline

What you've helped achieve in 2021

## JANUARY

Began working with fishing communities along the Nile in North-western Uganda



## MARCH

Began a new youth project in the Maasai Mara



## APRIL

Partners increased their use of 'Backpack' Nurses, a strategy adopted during covid to avoid large crowds



## JUNE

3 pilot projects launched with conservation partners in Southern Kenya



## JULY

New focus on reaching adolescents and youth begins with several partners



## AUGUST

Published our guide on how to start a community health and family planning programme



## SEPTEMBER

Completed 2-year UK-government FCDO funded project in Vihiga county, Western Kenya



## SEPTEMBER

Started a new project in and around Bidibidi refugee settlement, Uganda



## NOVEMBER

Programmes team visited partners for first time in two years



## DECEMBER

13,513 trees planted in 25 schools around Mount Kenya



## DECEMBER

Hit our highest ever turnover - £678,000. Thank you! This will increase our impact in 2022

Provided 84,415 family planning services and 140,629 healthcare services over the year, including 17,158 family planning services to young people



## A Youth Friendly Centre for the Maasai Mara's young people



“ Before I joined the programme, I was afraid of addressing sensitive sexual and reproductive health issues with my peers ”

In 2021 we launched a new project responding to the needs and desires of young people in the Maasai Mara, Kenya. In this rural and traditional area, 41% of girls have given birth before the age of 19, early marriage is common, and most girls are forced to undergo female genital mutilation.

Responding to the needs and desires of young people themselves, the project aims to support physical and mental health, as well as create opportunities for youth to realise their potential.

Denis is 21, and joined the project as one of 26 peer mentors. His role is to support young people in his village, to refer them to specialist services if needed and to engage schools in child rights clubs.

“Before I joined the programme, I was afraid of addressing sensitive sexual and reproductive health issues with my peers. But after participating in mentorship trainings, I gained knowledge and confidence in addressing the community, particularly youths and adolescents”, says Denis.

### Tackling difficult issues through peer-to-peer support

Issues addressed by the project include social empowerment; female genital mutilation; child labour; early marriages; sexual harassment; adolescent pregnancy; body growth and self-acceptance; peer pressure and social accountability; sexual reproductive health; and communication skills.



Many of these issues are experienced by young people in the area, but they are often missing in the school curriculum, and are not traditionally discussed at home. This project has started to make changes through peer-to-peer learning, access to quality services and child rights clubs.

245 people aged 12 – 24 have been matched up to a mentor like Denis for regular one-to-one chats, focusing on psychosocial support as well as careers and employment advice. In addition, nearly 500 participants from 10 villages have taken part in lively discussions and games, and 300 children are involved in child's rights clubs at school, aiming to equip them with awareness and confidence to make informed decisions and know their rights.

According to Denis, youth have long felt ignored in decision making, even concerning issues which directly affect them. He hopes this project will make a lasting change in empowering young women and men to have their voices heard.

### A central 'Youth Friendly Centre' and safe space

Alongside the network of peer mentors in villages and schools in the area, a Youth Friendly Centre (YFC) was built in Talek town, and officially opened in November. The centre is a hub of professional and approachable services responding to the needs of young people, which mentors like Denis can refer young people to for more specialist advice.

The Talek YFC is a safe space where it is easy to access confidential advice and services including child counselling, positive parenting sessions and contraception. The building also houses an ICT room and library, which were resources identified as lacking in the area.

Ruth Samson, a Nurse at Talek Health Facility where the new centre was built, is impressed by the improvements it has brought to her practice.

“The YFC has contributed to improving client confidentiality, particularly for young mothers under the age of 18 who have visited for both Antenatal Care and Postnatal Care. These young mothers could easily open up about their health and how they want their lives to change during their monthly visits. Some of them leave counselling sessions with a positive mind-set on how to improve their life, both socially and economically.”



### Youth transforming their community

By spring 2023, the project will reach many more children, adolescents, young people and adults. When there is a shared understanding of child rights, and support services are easily accessible, life will be substantially changed for young people in this part of the world.

Denis is optimistic. “I believe in generational development through information sharing. Together with my other peer mentors, we look forward to seeing the transformation that this will bring to the community.”

The project is funded by the Addax and Oryx Foundation and is a partnership between CHASE Africa and local partners The Maa Trust, Talek Youth Association and Talek Health Centre.



# ‘Upscale and Upskill’ brings family planning to three new areas

One of CHASE Africa’s key objectives is to ensure everyone can easily access quality family planning and health services. In 2021, we delivered a new project called ‘Upscale and Upskill’ to share our learning, especially that of working with locally based conservation organisations. The project aimed to encourage other organisations to introduce community health and family planning programmes into their work.

## Sharing learning for greater impact

The project aimed to share the knowledge and processes our partners have developed over many years, so that our model can be replicated across East Africa. It highlighted the important role conservation organisations can play in remote and rural areas and demonstrated how family planning and healthcare can be included within the work of conservation organisations, and the huge benefits this brings to families and communities. It supported three new pilot projects.

CHASE Africa published a 40-page practical guide, showing the benefits of combining ecosystem conservation and community healthcare. It articulated and demonstrated how conservation organisations, that already have strong links with local communities,

are often uniquely placed to facilitate community dialogues, including on health issues. They can improve access to health services by partnering with the local Ministry of Health facilities, clinicians and staff.

Through conversations, presentations and the dissemination of the guide, many conservation charities were reached. Three organisations based in southern Kenya were then chosen to receive in-depth support, learn from our model and set up pilot projects within their communities. These were Save the Elephants, Wildlife Works and the South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO).

## Exchange visits and pilot projects

From July 2021, exchange visits were organised to CHASE Africa’s partners in the Greater Amboseli Ecosystem, and around the Mount Kenya Forest Reserve. The new organisations were able to see first-hand how different partner organisations deliver their work, and to engage with project staff and the Ministry of Health.

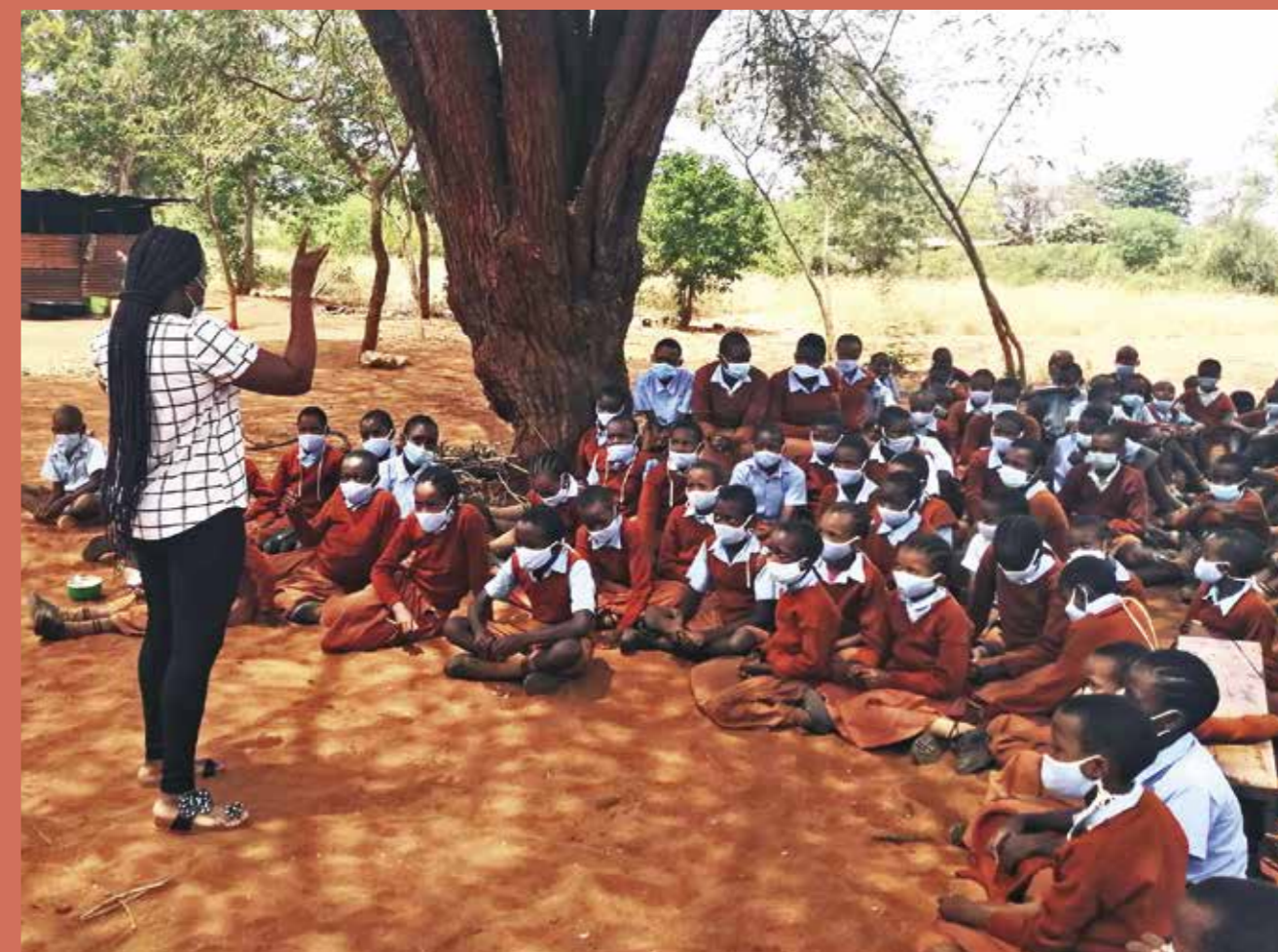
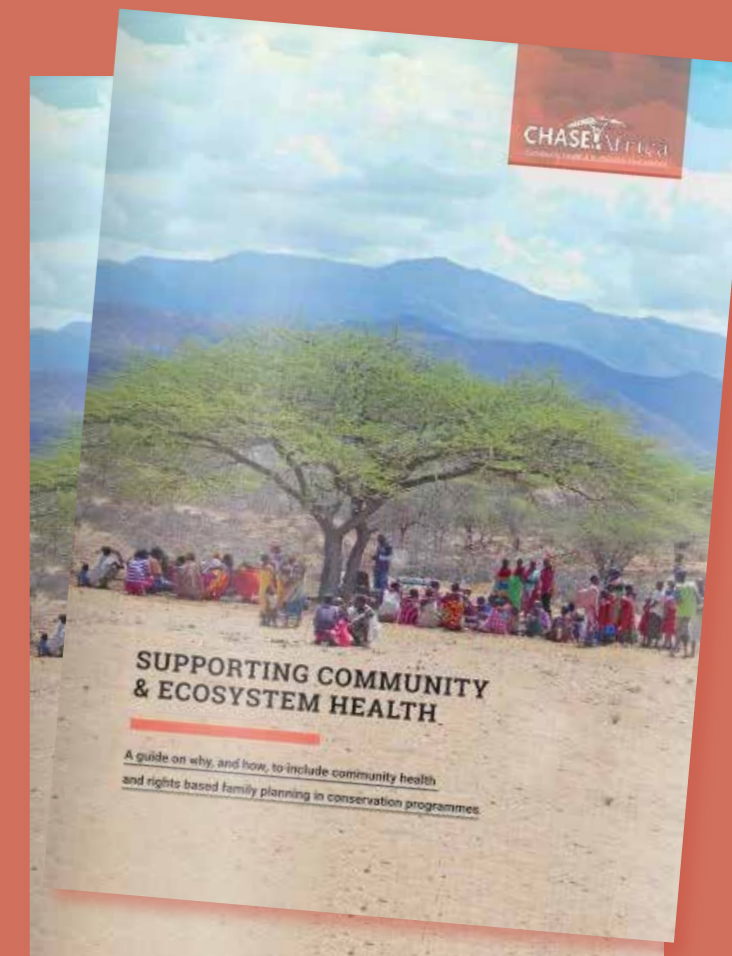
Back in their communities, the new partners were able to use this information to design and implement their own projects.

This new area of work has influenced the way many organisations consider integrating community health and family planning into their approach. In particular, it has given three conservation organisations the resources and support to start new activities changing perceptions around sexual and reproductive health, and the use of modern contraception. These nascent projects have brought women, men, youth, schools and opinion leaders together to support increased choice and access to health services.

After initial hesitancy to get involved in health and family planning programmes, all three partners are keen to continue. They have come to realise the role they can play and the powerful effect of community dialogues and facilitating service delivery. We are currently seeking funding to scale up these projects in 2022.

This programme was made possible due to funding from the Weeden Foundation.

Read more about our pilot project with Save the Elephants on Page 14.





# Project Spotlights

Our partner organisations work in very diverse communities across East Africa. They are constantly innovating and finding new ways of reaching the most rural and marginalised groups.

Here is a snapshot of some of the fantastic work that was carried out in 2021 thanks to our supporters and donors.



## NDOTO MOUNTAINS AND NORTHERN KENYA

In the Ndotto Mountains where our partners Milgis Trust and Communities Health Africa Trust work, drought caused much suffering amongst communities this year. Reaching families during the day was difficult, as they spent long hours away from home with their cattle, searching for water.

Mary, who raises awareness about family planning through the project, found new ways of reaching people. She accompanied the Milgis Trust staff during vet outreach sessions and other development work and visited schools. In this way, the project was able to raise awareness among new groups, reaching 4,775 people during the year.

## WESTERN UGANDA

In the Rwenzori Mountains and surrounding areas in Uganda, our partner the Rwenzori Centre for Research and Advocacy put a new focus on reaching young people. 180 peer mentors were trained and proved extremely successful in engaging young people with information on sexual and reproductive health through group sessions and door-to-door visits. An estimated 35,427 people under the age of 18 were reached with information and awareness, and 10,135 adolescents decided to use family planning.



## NORTHERN UGANDA

Our partner the Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment – West Nile worked with several fishing communities near the River Nile. They used radio shows to address myths about family planning, as well as face-to-face meetings run by Community Health Workers. Of all CHASE Africa's work this year, this project saw the highest number of people taking up family planning for the first time. There were also large numbers of clients under the age of 18. Due to the proximity of homes to wetlands and waterways, many cases of malaria were also detected and treated at mobile day clinics.



## PILOT PROJECT IN SOUTH KENYA

Save the Elephants work across Africa to secure a future for elephants and to sustain the beauty and ecological integrity of the places they live; to promote man's delight in their intelligence and the diversity of their world, and to develop a tolerant relationship between the two species.

The team in Sagalla, southern Kenya, piloted a community health project with support from CHASE Africa as part of the Upscale and Upskill project.

### Low awareness leading to unintended and early pregnancies

A survey of homes within the project area highlighted high levels of early and unplanned pregnancies. 38% of women gave birth when they were teenagers, and one in four women said they had not wanted their last pregnancy. Knowledge of family planning methods was mixed, but lower for men. For example, 66% of men believed that using modern contraception can give you cancer.

After visiting several of CHASE Africa's partners to learn how they are combining environmental and health programmes, Save the Elephants borrowed strategies to ensure an inclusive community approach.

A lively meeting with local leaders kicked off the project, and highlighted low awareness about the types of contraception available in the area. Leaders left agreeing to spread the word about the project to their communities.

Next, Community Health Workers were given 10 days of in-depth training. Their role is to provide information and advice to individuals and groups, to challenge misinformation and to refer clients to health centres or hospitals for services.

### Community-based outreach

Community Health Workers reached 1,247 households through door-to-door visits and provided 77 referrals. They were also involved in 16 group dialogue sessions, where local people come

together to openly discuss all aspects of family planning. 161 students from three local schools were also reached, with talks on personal hygiene, drug abuse and teenage pregnancies.

Rachel was one of the women who benefitted from speaking with a Community Health Worker. She was married at 17 and had her first child aged just 18. She only learnt about family planning after giving birth and wished she had been aware of it before she got married.

Now aged 44, she had given up on contraception due to high blood pressure and bad reactions to hormonal contraception. When she learnt about the inter-uterine device (IUD), Rachel immediately took up the offer of a referral to have it inserted. She doesn't want any more children and is no longer worried about conceiving.

Rachel's story is a great example of how our Community Health Worker teams are providing women with the knowledge and support they need to make informed, choices about their reproductive health and choose family planning methods that work best for them.

### An appetite for more

Overall, more women than men joined discussions and dialogues. Male and youth engagement are both areas that could be strengthened in future, learning from the many innovative projects CHASE Africa's partners are conducting across Kenya and Uganda.

After just six months, there remains a lot to do in the Sagalla community and in neighbouring villages. But the project has kicked off well with the community themselves requesting more dialogue sessions to better understand the benefits of family planning.

We hope that the success of this project will inspire more organisations to consider integrating community health programmes into their approach.



## GREATER AMBOSELI ECOSYSTEM

Big Life Foundation continued to engage in conversations with communities suffering the effects of drought, floods and the pandemic. Their use of 'dialogue' meetings to openly discuss the pros, cons, fears and hopes surrounding family planning continued to attract large numbers of people. The project team also engaged new and influential individuals, including traditional birth attendants, teachers and young people.

During 2021, 3,835 households were visited by a Community Health Worker who provided information on family planning and health. 15 youth peer mentoring talks were held, and 20 schools were engaged in child rights' clubs and sexual and reproductive health rights talks.

## WESTERN KENYA

Our partner CHV completed work on a 2-year project funded by the UK government's Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (formerly DFID). Aiming to ensure families could plan their pregnancies and access family planning, the project worked through Community Health Workers disseminating information and providing referrals, and large mobile day clinics offering services.

An independent evaluation found that the innovative use of Community Health Workers seemed to have led to measurable positive results. Modern contraceptive use by currently married women increased steadily, by between 7% and 18% in 2020 and 2021.



## CENTRAL KENYA

In the Rift Valley, Dandelion Africa continued to find innovative ways of reaching young people, alongside their existing adult programme.

To overcome the difficulties of reaching out-of-school youth in this rural area, the team organised sports tournaments and music in public areas. This was successful in attracting young people, contributing to 6,179 out-of-school youth being reached with information and advice. 10 'youth peer providers', or peer mentors, were trained and provided over 900 referrals for family planning services towards the end of 2021.

In schools, sexual and reproductive health sessions were held, and teachers were trained in youth-friendly services. 12,960 condoms were also distributed.



# Our Financial Year

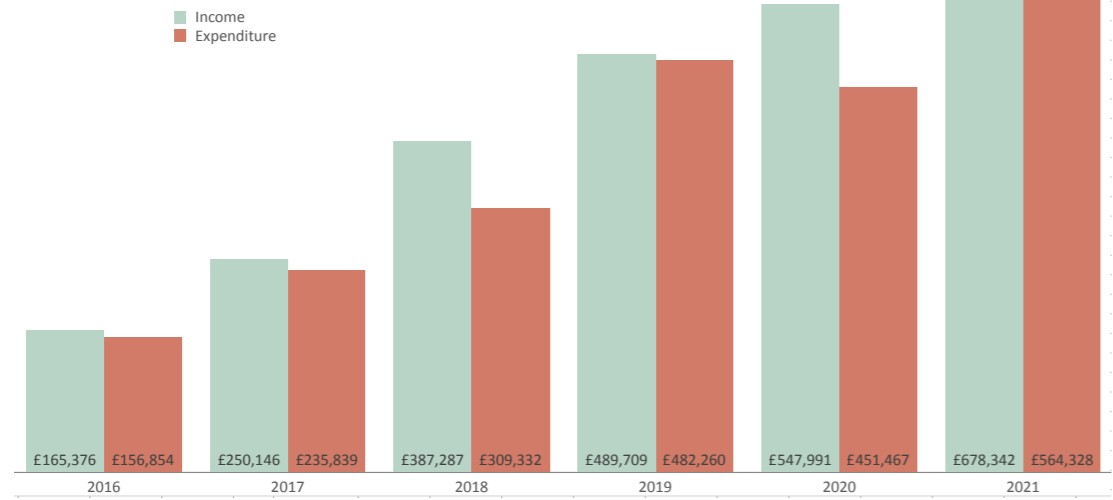
This year saw fantastic growth in our fundraising, which allowed CHASE Africa to invest in innovative new programmes, organisational systems development and capacity of our partner organisations in Kenya and Uganda.

Our income grew to £678,342 in 2021, a 24% increase on 2020. The majority of our funding continues to come from generous grant funders. However, 2021 also saw increasing support from individuals donating to fundraising campaigns, actively fundraising in their communities and setting up regular monthly donations.

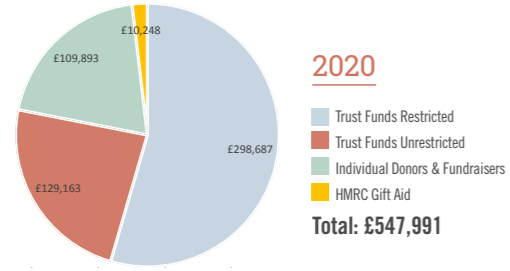
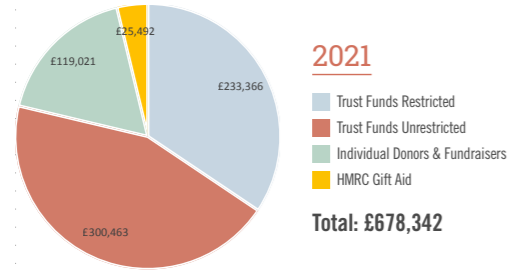
Expenditure in the year amounted to £564,328, a 25% increase on 2020 figures. Grants to partner organisations rose by 25%, and overall partner support increased by 30% compared to 2020.

As in previous years, fundraising and administration costs were kept low at 12% of annual expenditure. This is partly due to CHASE Africa benefitting from considerable pro-bono support, including free office space and an unwaged Director.

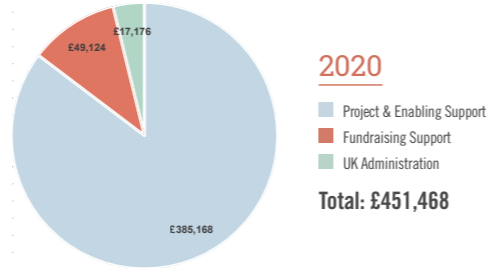
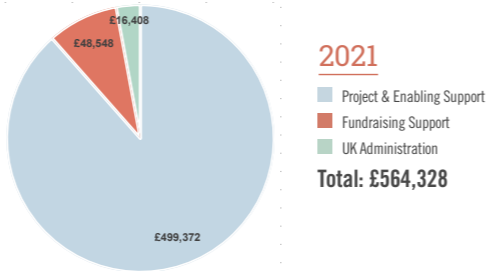
### OUR FINANCIAL GROWTH



### INCOME



### EXPENDITURE

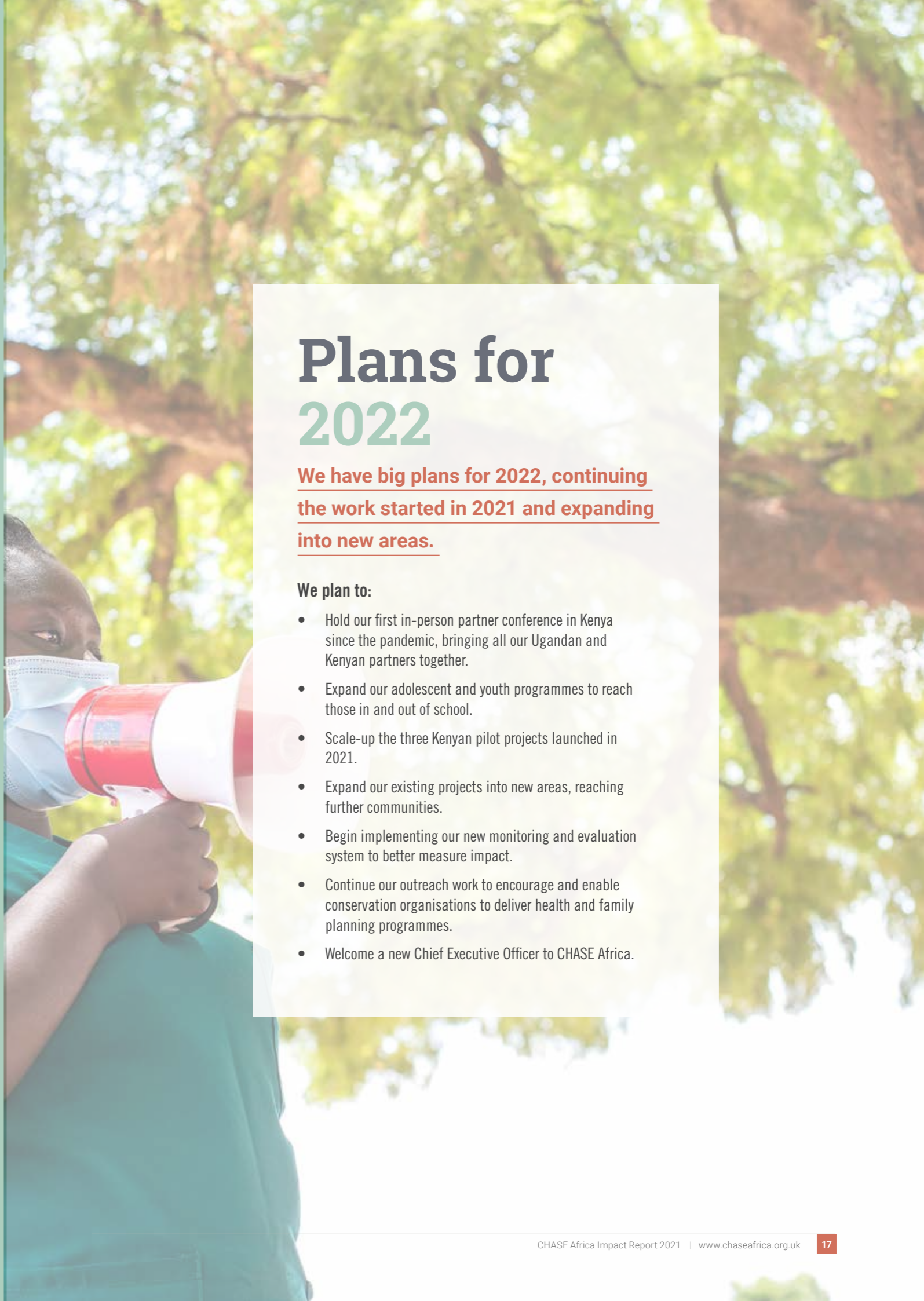


# Plans for 2022

**We have big plans for 2022, continuing the work started in 2021 and expanding into new areas.**

### We plan to:

- Hold our first in-person partner conference in Kenya since the pandemic, bringing all our Ugandan and Kenyan partners together.
- Expand our adolescent and youth programmes to reach those in and out of school.
- Scale-up the three Kenyan pilot projects launched in 2021.
- Expand our existing projects into new areas, reaching further communities.
- Begin implementing our new monitoring and evaluation system to better measure impact.
- Continue our outreach work to encourage and enable conservation organisations to deliver health and family planning programmes.
- Welcome a new Chief Executive Officer to CHASE Africa.





# Looking Forward Looking Back

*(Continued from page 4)*

On my first visit to CHASE Africa's partners in January 2013, I saw a rural mobile clinic in operation and started to understand just how important family planning is.

We met a woman who wanted a 3-year subcutaneous implant. She was given a standard test to establish she was not pregnant before the implant was inserted. To her shock, the test came back positive. Amid tears and confusion, she left. The nurse explained to me that she would in all likelihood seek an abortion, which is illegal in Kenya and would probably be unsafe, possibly causing serious health complications.

That incident made me understand the devastating impacts of being unable to access timely information and contraceptive services, which we take for granted in the UK. This is the awful reality for so many women in rural East Africa.

Many years later, it remains a great inspiration to see the very significant contributions our partners make to the communities they serve.

2021 was my last full year at CHASE Africa. As I prepare to retire in mid-2022, I am excited to see CHASE Africa innovate, expand and share learning. I am delighted to hand over my role to Harriet Gordon-Brown. Harriet joined CHASE Africa in August 2020 as a Programme and Partnership Manager. Her past experience as well as her understanding of CHASE Africa's work make Harriet ideally placed to take CHASE Africa forwards.

**Henry Pomeroy, Director**



# How you've helped us...

Our work is made possible because of your incredible support

Thanks to you, thousands of lives have been positively impacted this year.

Every gift, grant and donation goes towards reaching more rural communities in rural East Africa. For women and girls in particular, being able to give birth at a time of their choosing can transform the rest of their lives.

With your support, 2021 saw us reach the largest number of young people with advice and services. East Africa has particularly high numbers of teenage pregnancies, and investing in adolescent sexual health projects was only possible because of the increasing gifts we received.

A huge thank you.

## Can you help us do more?

Will you join us in tackling myths about family planning? Can you help us inform couples about their options? Would you like to give more communities access to health and family planning across rural East Africa?

You can support our work through making a regular donation, fundraising with your community or leaving us a gift in your will. Visit our website to find out more.

## Leaving a gift in your will

Leaving a legacy to CHASE Africa will empower women to make informed choices, support better health for rural communities and protect incredibly important natural resources.

By making a pledge to us, you will leave a lasting legacy, helping us to continue serving women and communities in remote and marginalised areas of East Africa for generations to come.

Please get in touch if you would like to discuss how you can help us increase our impact.

Visit

[chaseafrica.org.uk/donate/](https://chaseafrica.org.uk/donate/)



**Community Health and Sustainable Environment (CHASE Africa)**

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Rockfield House, Horn Street, Nunney, Frome, Somerset, BA11 4NP, UK

Tel: **+44 (0) 1373 836012**

Email: [info@chaseafrica.org.uk](mailto:info@chaseafrica.org.uk)

**[chaseafrica.org.uk](http://chaseafrica.org.uk)**



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