

# Impact Report 2020



## With your help, in 2020

- Over 88,000 family planning services were delivered to rural women and girls, a 38% increase from 2019
- Over 74,500 healthcare services were taken up by remote communities
- 4 new projects were launched, including in the Maasai Mara, around Mount Kenya and in northern Uganda
- 26,612 trees were planted at schools, homes and in forests
- 50 women were trained to build energy saving cookstoves
- Community Health Workers provided vital information to homes to prevent COVID-19 infections.
- A virtual partner conference was held to share knowledge and best practice

### Where our partners work



## Review of the year

CHASE Africa celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2020, and despite all the challenges caused by COVID-19 it was a fitting tribute that we supported our partners to deliver more family planning services than any previous year, with a 38% increase on 2019. True to our roots, we continued to plant trees in schools, homesteads and in degraded indigenous forests.

Our partner organisations work in some of the most marginalised communities in Kenya and Uganda where access to basic health services, including family planning is very limited. The barriers are not just physical distance, cost, or poor-quality services, but cultural factors and misinformation which make it hard for a woman to access and use modern contraception.

The case studies in this report show how we have worked with our fantastic local partners and the Ministry of Health to increase the resilience of rural families during these challenging times. Giving women the opportunity to have their children by choice and not chance, has multiple health, economic and social benefits for the entire family. It is well recognised that completing secondary school is a stepping-stone to a better future, but school fees remain high – multiplying with every unplanned child. Sadly, many teenage girls drop out of school due to unplanned pregnancies, often preventing them from realising their full potential.

COVID-19 has shone a light on the many benefits of working with Community Health Workers. With Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and training, they continued their outreach, providing a lifeline for families stuck at home. This resulted in a high proportion of women and adolescent girls using family planning for the first time, bringing multiple benefits to them and their families.

2020 also highlighted the benefits of combining health, family planning and environmental interventions to create greater impact. In northern Uganda, our project training women to plant trees, build fuel-efficient stoves and access family planning shows how a joined up approach builds household resilience and aligns closely with the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2020, we also witnessed demand rising, and responded by delivering more critical services. In Western Kenya, 52% more women and adolescents accessed family planning than expected, many for the first time, as part of our project funded by the FCDO (formally DFID).

Sadly, there are still 171 million women in low- and middle-income countries without access to family planning. In 2021, we will continue to increase our coverage and encourage other organisations to adopt the model we have developed, ensuring the greatest number of women can have access to better sexual reproductive health and family planning in the future.



## Supporting rural families throughout the pandemic

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked with our partners to continue to offer vital sexual reproductive health information and access to contraception in rural communities in Uganda and Kenya in 2020.

Despite disruptions to health services, and the need to change ways of working, we were able to continue supporting adolescent girls and women who are bearing the added burden of a loss of income, school closures, a lack of access to health services, including sexual health advice, and reports of increases in domestic abuse.

When the pandemic restrictions led to large gatherings being banned, our programmes were adapted. Community Health Workers received training in COVID-19 prevention, hygiene and dispelling misinformation. Armed with this knowledge and the correct personal protective equipment, they were able to continue providing door-to-door information and awareness on family planning, health and COVID-19 preventative measures. In addition, our programmes scaled up the 'Backpack Nurses' outreaches.

This door-to-door approach was well received, leading to an increase in family planning uptake in many of the areas where we work. For some partners, over 50% of services were offered to both adolescent clients and first-time users, ensuring vital services were provided despite the pandemic.

**CHASE Africa is very grateful to the individuals, trusts and foundations who supported our health workers with personal protective equipment which enabled our services to continue safely. This has been a lifeline for many women, adolescent girls and families throughout challenging times.**



## Combining health and sustainability for Ugandan women's groups

In northern Uganda, women have improved their health and resilience thanks to a tree planting, cookstove and health project run with our local partner, the Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment (RICE) West Nile.

The project worked with women's environment groups to train local women to plant trees and make sustainable cooking stoves, while also enabling them to access family planning.

Energy-saving 'Shielded Rocket Lorena' cookstoves use less wood to heat and cook. The stoves reduce the amount of firewood needed for cooking, and the amount of unhealthy smoke from open fires which are traditionally used by households. In turn, this improves women and girls' health, as they are responsible for household chores in most rural Ugandan households.

The fifty women who participated in the project also learned how to make briquettes, with the aim that an increased use of cookstoves and briquettes will reduce deforestation in the area, where trees are being cut down for charcoal production.

Overall, 50 women planted trees on their land, 69 homes were using fuel-efficient stoves and over 500 family planning services were provided.



### Florence's story

Florence, 30, from the Madi Okollo District, had her first baby at 16, and now has five children aged between three and 14 years.

Without a main source of income, Florence and her husband are struggling to raise their children.

Florence persuaded her husband that family planning was a good idea, and attended a community day clinic run by the project. There, she received advice about family planning and spacing her children. After some initial problems with a family planning device, Florence was fitted with a ten-year IUD. She says she can focus on bringing up her children, without worrying about having more.



## Community health in the Greater Amboseli Ecosystem

2020 highlighted the value of Community Health Workers as on the ground, community health educators. The team visited twice as many households as in 2019, raising awareness about health, COVID-19 and family planning, providing some basic services, and making referrals to local health centres for others.

One of the biggest achievements from this project run by Big Life Foundation was the scaling up of smaller, more localised services in response to restrictions on large gatherings. The Backpack Nurse service was increased in frequency and introduced into two new areas. This involves a nurse from the local government facility travelling to a remote community by motorbike. They provide immunisations, de-worming, family planning and ante-natal care from a local school or church.



These changes proved successful, with 2,920 family planning services delivered, and 37% of clients using family planning for the first time. There was an 85% increase in the number of girls under the age of 19 taking up family planning compared to 2019.

The project engages closely with the local community and key stakeholders, innovating and striving to become ever more effective. For example, successful youth uptake in one area has led to health facilities in other areas introducing youth friendly sessions.



### Simon's story

Simon is a Community Health Worker who advises families from the Maasai community on family planning.

Simon speaks with both men and women in his area about contraception. 'My wife has been on contraceptives. We only have three kids that we are able to raise comfortably, so in most cases, I use my family as an example of a family planning success and thus women are convinced', says Simon.

'I also talk to men a lot about family planning, since they are the sole decision makers in the family. Once they are convinced they compel their wives to take up contraceptives.'

## Ensuring access to family planning in rural Western Kenya

Throughout 2020, CHASE Africa worked in Vihiga County, Western Kenya, to improve the health of rural communities with our partner Community Health Volunteers. The project was funded with aid from the British people via the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), formally DFID.



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

Despite challenging circumstances, 7,261 family planning services were provided, as well as 4,882 health services. Because mobile day clinics were on hold, more nurses and Community Health Workers were recruited and trained to provide information and services door-to-door, including COVID-19 advice.

This more personal service necessitated by the pandemic has meant Community Health Workers were able to discuss the benefits of using family planning with women and their families in more depth. In doing so, they have helped dispel misinformation, misunderstandings and cultural barriers, ultimately leading to better maternal and child health.

Community Health Workers were also trained to advise families on domestic violence, providing an important link between locked-down families and the outside world.



The number of family planning services provided was 52% above the expected level, and 49% of clients were accessing family planning for the first time, showing just how critical the door-to-door services have been.

### Hendrix's Story

Hendrix, 17, is in her final year at secondary school in Kakamega County. She is sexually active, and after seeking advice from a Community Health Worker, was referred to the closest health centre for family planning to avoid getting pregnant. When Hendrix visited the clinic, it was discovered that she had a sexually transmitted infection. She was treated effectively, and afterwards given a family planning device for five years – which the teenager can have removed when she is ready to have children.

## Our work in the Rwenzori mountains in Western Uganda

The Rwenzori mountains are a highly populated area with rough terrain, making access to healthcare services difficult. Our work has reached many women and adolescents with family planning for the first time.

CHASE Africa and our local partner the Rwenzori Centre for Research and Advocacy have been working together since 2019, steadily increasing our reach. In 2020, group awareness raising, door-to-door information and advice from Community Health Workers, and service provision at home increased significantly.

We were able to reach new communities, including a large number of adolescent girls through home visits. For young people, there is often a fear of being found out by neighbours or relatives when accessing family planning from a health centre. In addition, health centres are often far from home and it is common to queue for long periods of time. Centres also run out of stocks, meaning that the desired method of contraception is unavailable.

During the year, 17,569 family planning services were delivered, of which 45% were to clients under 18 years. 58% of services were provided to women who had never used modern contraception before, showing the importance of increasing awareness around family planning and improving access to quality services in rural areas.



### Masika's story

When the government imposed restrictions on travelling due to COVID-19, Masika was able to receive family planning at home through the project.

Masika used to walk long distances to access health services for her children. The outreach day-clinics have helped her speak to a qualified doctor. Masika says she is now confident raising her three children, and will not be stressed trying to find further food, clothes and school fees for another child.



## Plans for the year ahead

In 2021, CHASE Africa will continue to work in biodiverse landscapes of Kenya and Uganda.

We will expand into new areas to address the lack of health services available to rural communities, and to address misconceptions and myths about the use of family planning. Alongside this crucial work, we will develop our holistic approach, through integrating environmental protection and sustainable livelihoods into our projects.

Working hand in hand with local partners who are trusted by their communities, CHASE Africa will strive to engage and access opinion leaders, men (who are often key decision makers in the home), young people and people with disabilities.

2021 will see the launch of new projects to address particularly marginalised groups, including adolescents. Young people have high unmet needs for sexual health education and services, and unplanned pregnancies are common amongst this age group. This often leads to an end of schooling, lost opportunities and a cycle of poverty.

After 20 years of work, and recognising that we are stronger together, CHASE Africa will actively seek to encourage and support more organisations to integrate community health projects, including sexual reproductive health, into their programmes.

A manual, exchange visits, training and pilot projects will provide more organisations with the knowledge to begin their own mobile health and family planning services in areas where barriers are particularly high. We see this as one of the best ways of sharing our knowledge and reaching communities with the greatest need.



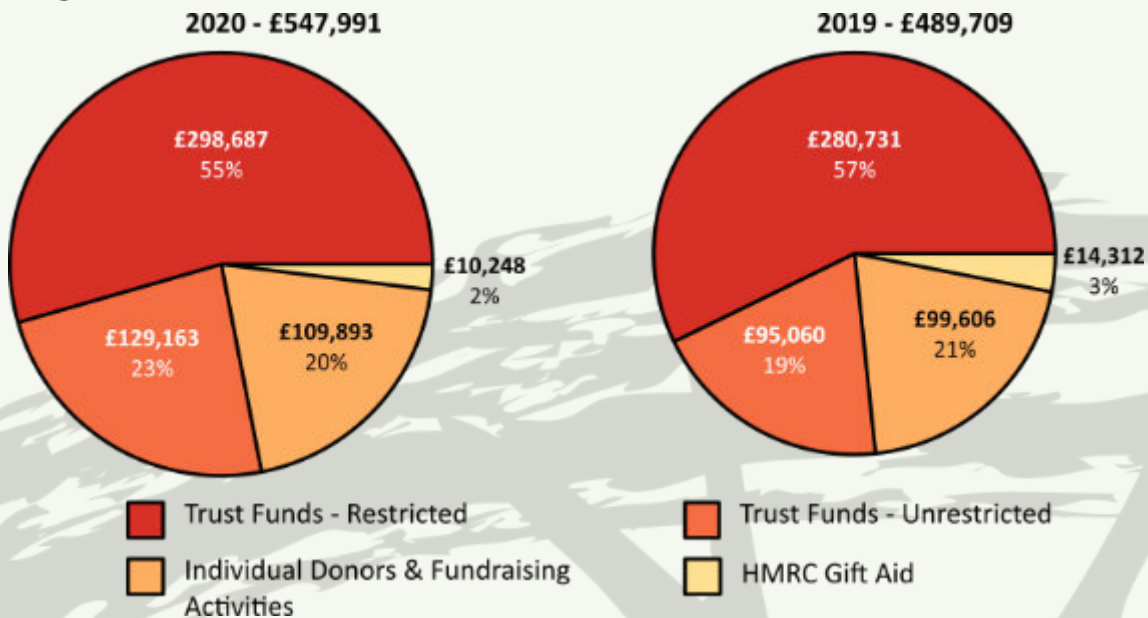
# Our financial year

Our continued expansion in service provision was enabled by further growth in CHASE Africa's income during 2020. This amounted to £547,991 as compared with £489,709 in 2019 – an increase of 12%. Expenditure during the year amounted to £451,467 (2019: £482,260) with 85% spent on direct project implementation and support for our partners' work. Some activities, particularly the mobile primary healthcare services, were reduced due to the pandemic. This meant we spent less funding overseas as compared to 2019.

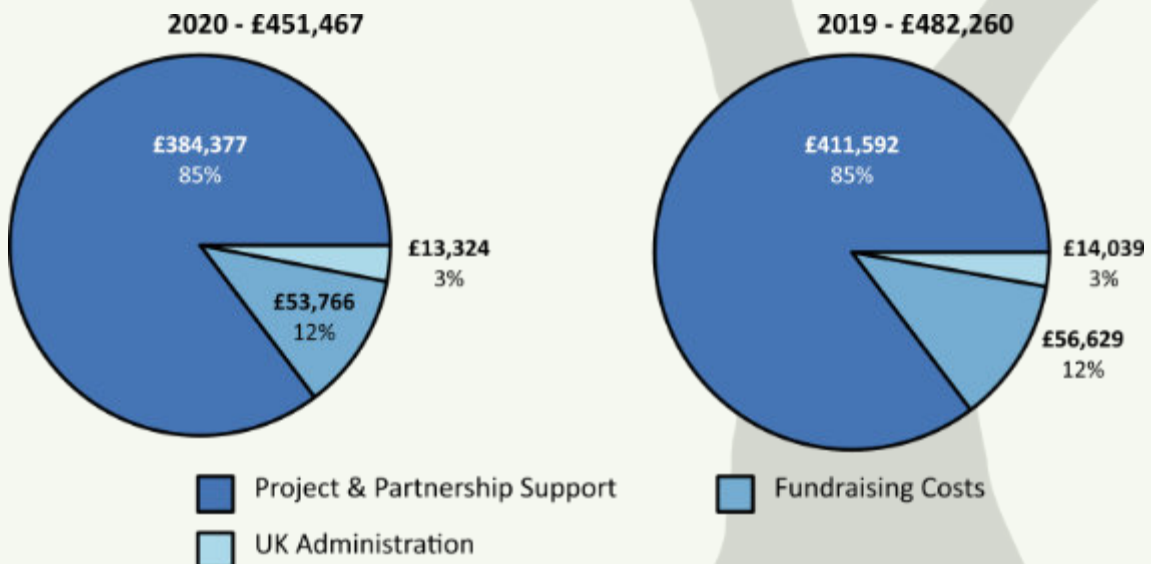
15% of expenditure was spent on raising vital funds to continue to grow our impact, and on UK support costs.

We changed the basis of accounting from 2019 onwards to a full accruals and repayments basis. Therefore, the figures for 2019 have been amended to take into account this change in basis.

## Income



## Expenditure



# Thank you for transforming the lives of so many in 2020

Our work is made possible because of your fantastic support. The impact of our projects can change a woman's life, and each gift we receive helps us to support more remote and marginalised communities in East Africa.

Your support is improving life for rural families in Kenya and Uganda, by bringing vital healthcare, family planning and improved natural resource management to some of the most underserved and fragile environments. We simply couldn't do this without you!

## How to help

Join us in breaking down the barriers and supporting healthy, wealthy communities to live in harmony with their natural environment.



You can make a regular donation or a single gift, run a marathon, create a fundraiser on your birthday, or leave a lasting gift in your will. Visit our website to find out more.

## Leave a lasting legacy

Leaving a legacy to CHASE Africa will empower women to make informed choices, support better health for rural communities and protect critical ecosystems. Join the increasing numbers of people leaving a lasting gift to support a better future.

Please contact CHASE Africa if you would like advice about how to make your gift.

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



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