Impact Report 2025







Above: Boluwatife, 12, at a training session provided by Education Innovation Awards winner the Creative Kids Zone, which equips young students with digital skills in Lagos, Nigeria.

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Who we are

Theirworld is dedicated to ending the global crisis in education and unleashing the potential of the next generation.

Today, there are 250 million young people out of school and 75 million suffering disrupted learning due to conflict, climate calamities or humanitarian emergencies. On current trends, by 2030 poor quality education will leave more than half of all young people lacking the most basic skills needed for employment.

In response to these challenges, Theirworld delivers hard-hitting campaigns and life-changing projects. We build diverse and active networks of youth, social entrepreneurs, campaigners, businesses and researchers, working together to ensure all young people have the best start in life, a safe place to learn and skills for the future.

Founded in 2002, Theirworld today supports projects and initiatives in more than 140 countries, including the US and UK. The team is based in London and New York, but has regional leaders in Kenya, India, Lebanon and the Netherlands. It includes world-class experts, innovators and campaigners united in the common goal of achieving quality and inclusive care and education for every child and young person.

Theirworld is a UK-registered charity (1092312). Theirworld USA is an assumed name of the Global Business Coalition for Education, a registered 501(c)(3) organization in the US (EIN: 45-4960988).



Left: Two children at Blooming Buds, a group of Early Childhood Development centres supported by Theirworld and run by Indian organisation Jeeva Jyothi in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

A message from our Chair of Trustees and President

The world is at a crossroads and children's futures hang in the balance. The planet is getting warmer. Conflict and displacement are on the rise. Al and new technologies are emerging with the potential to level the playing field or exacerbate inequality. It has never been more important to end the crisis in global education and help children fulfil their potential.

To move the world towards those simple but challenging goals, in 2023 Theirworld launched a five-year strategic framework. It set bold, ambitious yet realistic targets, judged by transparent reporting and evaluation – and subjected to course correction when required – building on our experience of producing systemic change.

In the first two years of the strategy, we have demonstrated our powerful impact. Our Act For Early Years campaign, launched in April 2023, has succeeded in placing early childhood development at the heart of the G20's agenda, through a carefully calibrated combination of research, advocacy, youth activism and public campaigning. At November's G20 summit this culminated in the hosts Brazil including early childhood as a core commitment of its new, landmark Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.

We have maintained our track record of innovative studies and research. In the past year Theirworld studies have revealed a global decrease in young children's readiness for school, and high levels of discrimination against LGBTQ+ youth. Our work attracted media attention around the world, with articles appearing in 2024 in the New York Times, Economist and Financial Times, as well the Chronicle of Philanthropy, local broadcast stations in the US and UK, and media outlets globally. The leading creative and design agencies we collaborate with yet again received industry accolades for their work with us.

Our Global Business Coalition has grown to more than 150 members and our Global Youth Ambassador programme is on course to becoming the largest youth activism network for education.



Theirworld takes pride in how we build coalitions and collaborations; in how we enable the grassroots to flourish so they can influence the summits of power; in how our projects make a difference to young people's lives 'in 140 countries

Our activities involve people from all walks of life because we have learned that only by working together can we create long-lasting change for children and youth.

Theirworld is on an exciting and rewarding journey. We invite you to join us.

Sarah Brown
Chair of Trustees

Evelson

Justin van Fleet **President**

Our story

For more than two decades Theirworld has been dedicated to innovation, campaigning and project delivery designed to give children and young people the best start in life, a safe place to learn and skills for the future.

The charity was founded in 2002 with the initial aim of supporting scientific and community research on the most vulnerable new-born babies and children in the UK.



Above: Professor James Boardman, Scientific Director of the Jennifer Brown Research Lab, at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary's Neonatal ward.

The Jennifer Brown Research Fund was soon set up and named by Theirworld Chair Sarah Brown and her husband Gordon in memory of their first child Jennifer. Founded to invest in the best medical research for safe pregnancy and premature birth, in 2004 the Fund launched the Jennifer Brown Research Laboratory at the University of Edinburgh, which brought together obstetric and neonatal specialists working under one roof.

Its pioneering work continues today with the **Theirworld Edinburgh Birth Cohort**, which is following 400 new-borns from birth to adulthood. Its goal is to find new ways to prevent and treat brain injuries in new-borns, deepen understanding of how being born too soon affects health in later life, and to amplify these findings to influence health policy and practice.

In 2004 **Theirworld's Small Grants Programme** was launched, focusing on enabling breakthroughs in health and education at the community level. Since its inception, more than £1 million has been invested in

local grassroots organisations supporting thousands of young people.

In 2012, Theirworld's work turned global with a movement, **A World at School**, created to galvanise support for education financing and especially for children caught up in emergencies. In the same year, the **Global Business Coalition for Education** was founded as an initiative of Theirworld to boost education by collaborating with the business community.



education.

It would go on to build a membership of more than 150 influential private sector companies, all of whom recognise the importance of supporting quality education and learning for children and young adults.



In 2015-16 Theirworld's leadership on education in emergencies had a major early success with the **double-shift school scheme** for Syrian refugees in Lebanon, a plan backed by UN agencies and taken forward by the Lebanese Ministry of Education. It led to more than 300,000 displaced children receiving an education in Lebanon.

Shortly thereafter we set up our Global Youth

Ambassador programme, a network of young people

global level. The initiative now trains more than 2,000

passionate about improving education at a local and

young people annually and is on course to become

the largest trained cohort of youth advocates for

Our projects in Greece, Turkey and Ukraine have so far benefited more than 1.6 million children facing serious educational challenges because of conflict or humanitarian emergencies. Our campaigning on the issue led to the establishment in 2016 of Education Cannot Wait, the first global fund for education for displaced and refugee children.

Left: Rapelang Rabana , Co-CEO of Imagine Worldwide at the Global Business Coalition for Education's annual luncheon, 2024.

Over the years, Theirworld's campaigns have generated the world's largest petition for education ever delivered to the United Nations, and supported a new financing facility set to deliver billions of dollars of investment into lower-income countries. Our Act For Early Years campaign has gained global attention, placing the early years at the heart of new G20 commitments and demanding at least \$1 billion for early childhood education and funding.



Above: Singer and campaigner Shakira, with Theirworld Global Youth Ambassadors, deliver the #UpForSchool petition with 10+ million signatures to UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown.



Learn more about Theirworld

Our global reach

You can find Theirworld at work in communities around the world.



Michele is a business representative from HP Inc in New York working with our business coalition to invest in digital equity for youth in Ukraine.



Louise is a mother whose child, Cooper, is participating in cutting edge research through the Theirworld Edinburgh Birth Cohort.



Natalya teaches children from Kyiv, despite the challenges of war, using technology provided by Theirworld.



Maysa is our senior advisor on education in emergencies who has drafted a plan for children in Gaza following a ceasefire.



Niña provides underrepresented students in public housing in Los Angeles with comprehensive college and career advice.



Sonia is an education policy expert who coordinated a massive refugee education initiative in Lebanon.



Lara is a Theirworld Global Youth Ambassador who meets with local political leaders about early childhood education in Brazil



Tasila is a teacher in Zambia integrating a climate action curriculum into her classroom in the hope of combating deforestation.



Gilbert leads the Act For Early Years campaign in Kenya and brings together local civil society organisations, youth leaders and businesses.



Gideon is an entrepreneur scaling up a new reading initiative in Nigeria.

Our five-year strategy: The impact so far

In 2025 we embark on the third year of our five-year strategy. We have set ourselves demanding targets. We are on track to achieve our goals and are proud of what has been achieved to date. We have...



34 million

learners, educators and caregivers through our projects, emergency responses and innovation awards



...mobilised a network of campaign partners around the world, leading to commitments to the early years at Brazil's

G20 Summit



...trained a further 2,204 young people in our Global Youth Ambassador programme, bringing the total to

8,477 youth



...invested in

40 projects,

36 community grant initiatives, and thousands of young people in 141 countries



...invested in regional hubs and partners, with more than

80%

of our projects locally run and managed



our Global Business Coalition for Education, including household names

Google, Microsoft and Stellantis

10 1:

Why I support Theirworld

Supporters of Theirworld and GBC-Education include global corporations and executives, major social enterprises, charitable foundations, and prominent entrepreneurs. Throughout our history we have also succeeded in galvanising their commitments with financial action from donor governments such as the UK, the Netherlands, Canada, Scandinavia and the EU.

Whatever category our supporters fall into, we like to think that they have been attracted by our ambition backed by sharply directed research and our ability to deliver impact at scale - and by how we offer a variety of ways to support, whether backing an initiative, a campaign or a project.

Here, three of our supporters explain why exactly they chose Theirworld.



"Investing in Theirworld has high returns for young people throughout the world. By championing the Big Give, I have been able to leverage my contribution 4:1 – making a greater impact towards ending the global education crisis."

Stuart Roden

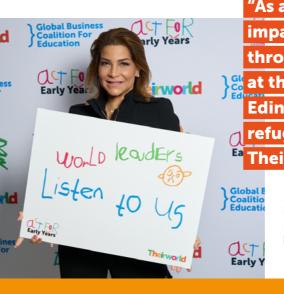
Stuart is non-Executive Chair of Hetz Ventures, Tresidor Investment Management and Chair of Lewis Advisors. Until 2019 Stuart was Chair of Lansdowne Partners having previously co-managed the Developed Markets Fund since their inception in 2001. Within the non-profit sector, Stuart is Chair and Founder of Unlocking Potential and Chair of The Design Museum.



"When supporting a charity, it is important to believe in the mission, leadership and strategy. That is why I support Theirworld's work which continues to make an impact in the lives of children around the world."

Kate James

A former Chief Corporate Affairs and Global Marketing Officer for Pearson and Chief Communications Officer for the Gates Foundation, she is an active leader in the non-profit and impact investing community. She heads Kairos Philanthropy, her family foundation, chairs the Board of Vital Voices, and serves on the boards of Unreasonable, the US Board of the King's Trust and World Reader.



"As a Theirworld Trustee and donor, I believe in the impact the organisation makes for young children throughout the world. From the incredible work at the Jennifer Brown Research Laboratory in Edinburgh advancing the best start in life, to the refugee education projects I have seen firsthand, Theirworld is unlocking big change."

Lucy Doughty

Lucy is a Trustee of Theirworld and Chair of the Doughty Family Foundation, an organisation working in the areas of health, financial hardship, and education.

Our projects: Highlights from around the world

Our mission is to ensure every child has:

The Best Start in Life



Jennifer Brown Research Laboratory (UK)

Our landmark project, the Jennifer Brown Research Laboratory, works to improve understanding of what causes early labour, how we can develop treatments to prevent it and how we can better help new-born babies in those first crucial hours and days. The Theirworld Edinburgh Birth Cohort is following 400 children from birth into adulthood to develop new treatments to support the healthy development of premature babies.

A Safe Place to Learn



Education in Emergencies (Ukraine)

Over the past two years, we've contributed to the distribution of more than 195,000 laptops and tablets to keep children's learning on track despite the ongoing conflict. Theirworld is collaborating with the Ukrainian government on a state-of-the-art Museum of Mathematics to help children who have fallen behind in school accelerate their understanding of mathematics and be prepared with the skills to rebuild the country.

Skills for the Future



Youth Skills and Employment Accelerator (US)

The Youth Skills and Employment Accelerator helps non-profits working with young people from underserved communities to connect with other organisations, businesses and funders to improve young people's skills and employment prospects. To date, this programme has invested in 28 non-profits in 22 U.S. states to positively impact more than 200,000 young people.

Across these three pillars, we harness the potential of education in five vital areas:

Climate action



Earth Warriors (southern Africa)

Our work with Earth Warriors provides climate education to children aged three to eleven in southern Africa where they face urgent environmental climate challenges such as droughts and floods. To date the programme has reached nearly 3,000 students with 100% of teachers wanting to continue climate change education work.

Gender equality



ZanaAfrica (Kenya)

We work with the ZanaAfrica Foundation to deliver lessons in traditionally "taboo" subjects such as puberty and reproductive health to help girls understand their bodies and their rights. The programme has trained 1,000 teachers reaching 200,000 girls across Kenya and supporting their self-belief and confidence.

Inclusion



LGBTQ+ Taskforce (Global)

In 2024 Theirworld commissioned research that revealed the shocking extent of bullying and discrimination that young LGBTQ+ people face at school and university in the UK and US. We immediately launched a global youth task force on safe schools and learning opportunities for LGBTQ+ youth.

Peace and security



Post-ceasefire early years plan (Middle East)

In response to the conflict in the Middle East, Theirworld is preparing several reports and projects for Lebanon, Gaza and Israel, building on our expertise in early childhood development and education in emergencies.

Health and nutrition



Blooming Buds (India)

With Theirworld's support, the Jeeva Jyothi civil society organisation has set up three early childhood development centres for children living in India's slums and rural villages. Each centre supports 30 children aged two to six. Children at these centres receive nutritious meals to help reduce stunting and enhance learning.

Featured campaign: Act For Early Years

More than half of all young children, a staggering 350 million, do not have the access they need to childcare, and at least 175 million children are not enrolled in preschool programmes. Yet during these crucial years before the age of five, 90% of brain growth occurs. Underinvestment therefore has profound consequences on a child's prospects, with millions left behind from the start.

Theirworld's Act For Early Years campaign aims to mobilise \$1 billion in new pledges for the early years, increase political will, and ensure that early childhood development is a cornerstone of the post-2030 agenda.

The campaign was launched in 2023, when we met Brazil's President Lula da Silva in New York during the 78th United Nations General Assembly and presented a letter signed by 150 global early childhood organisations urging the G20, which Brazil was then chairing, to put the early years at the heart of its agenda.

end the early exists!

Left: Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva with UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown and Theirworld team members Christianne Cavaliere and Ben Hewitt.



Right: Aron Accurso, composer & music director, with YouTuber Ms Rachel at Theirworld's event "Act For Early Years: Accelerating the Movement to Unlock Investment in the Early Years" during the 2023 United Nations General Assembly.





Left: Manfred Kyenkyehene Osei, GYA and Roger Federer, Founder and President, Roger Federer Foundation at Theirworld's SDG VIP Dinner, 2023.



When the 2024 G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro launched a new Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, it therefore included a strong focus on early childhood, and major financial commitments to the early years were announced.

The campaign showcases Theirworld's unique ability to harness local momentum to drive global action.





Above: An Act For Early Years billboard in Times Square, New York, during the United Nations General Assembly, 2024.

In addition, the campaign has:

Recruited major celebrities such as actor and comedian Matt

Lucas and former Pussycat Doll Kimberly Wyatt to pretend to be toddlers in videos supporting a 'Global Tantrum' campaign.





Published research, briefings and policy reports covered by the Financial Times, Economist, New York Times and Politico Europe.

Mobilised our Global Youth Ambassadors to amplify the voices of young children at national and local levels in countries throughout the world.



Run major public advertising campaigns with our partners Omnicom to capture the attention of leaders during global summits in New York and Rio de Janeiro.





Built a high-level campaign advisory groups with stakeholders from business, government, academia, civil society and the nonprofit community.



The Act For Early Years campaign, provides a global platform for local action



"There are now more than 150 early-years focussed organisations, including Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation and others in Brazil, who are backing the Act For Early Years campaign. This vision aligns with Brazil's ambition for the G20 and its new national policy. It will finally tackle the root causes of complex challenges that world leaders vowed to challenge nine years ago but have yet truly to confront."

Mariana Luz, CEO of the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, Brazil



"We want to see increased financing in education, with 10% of all education spending by states going to early childhood education and development."

Poloko Nuggert Ntshwarang, African Union Special Rapporteur for Education



"We made it a point to include in this combination a series of programmes and policies targeting early childhood... We also want to take note of the Act For Early Years campaign and the open letter sent to the G20 by organisations that are fighting for better conditions for early childhood, including organisations represented here today."

Wellington Dias, Minister of Development and Social Assistance, Brazil



"Investing in a child's life is an opportunity to impact not only that child but also the world. By investing early, we reduce the long-term costs of educational and development programs, and we enhance the skills and potential of our future workforce."

Lynette Okengo, CEO, The African Early Childhood Network

Our Global Youth Ambassadors

Theirworld established the Global Youth Ambassador programme in 2012 to train, connect and support the next generation of youth campaigners for social change. The programme has grown from a handful of young people to a trained network of 8,000 ambassadors from more than 140 countries.

The initiative elevates the voices of young people by giving them the skills and confidence to lead in their communities and on the global stage.

Programme graduates have gone on to win global prizes, run successful social enterprises, work at UN organisations, author books and specialise in corporate sustainability.

2,000

Global Youth Ambassadors

Theirworld's Global Youth Ambassador programme is a network of 2,000 young education activists who build their skills as advocates and campaigners with bespoke training modules, workshops, and resources designed to enhance their campaigning and advocacy skills.

140

countries

Young people from 140 countries have joined the programme to become catalysts for change within their communities and countries, shedding light on the importance of education.

2-year

programme

Theirworld's programme is the go-to network for youth campaigners who want to be at the centre of shaping the future of education. Graduates stay connected once they finish and remain a part of the organisation's ongoing mission to unlock big change for children everywhere.

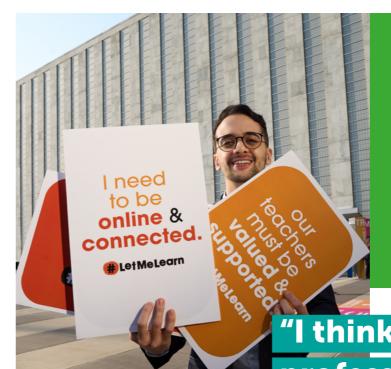


Andressa Dos Reis Ferreira, Brazil, 22

Aged just six years old, Andressa became a climate refugee following catastrophic flooding in Brazil that also disrupted her education. In 2024, she was selected for Theirworld's Global Youth Ambassador delegation to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.

"Being at UNGA was more than just a transformative way to empower my activism. It was a unique and powerful experience that I never imagined I would have access to at such a young age."





Gabriel Maciel Rocha Monteiro, Brazil, 27

Gabriel Monteiro is an activist, lawyer and sustainability professional from Brazil passionate about helping people from diverse backgrounds and communities. In 2022, he led local youth consultations in Brazil with national NGO leaders as part of Theirworld's 'Let Me Learn' campaign.

"I think I'm a more fearless professional since getting this opportunity."

Why we unlock big change with Theirworld



"The Postcode Lottery Group has a model of trust-based funding, which allows Theirworld to implement innovative programs that not only provide immediate educational resources but also advocate for systemic changes in education policy. This flexibility allows them to respond quickly to emerging challenges, such as the disruption caused by global crises, ensuring that children's education remains a priority."

Sigrid van Aken,

CEO, Postcode Lottery Group

"We were so impressed we made Theirworld a beneficiary in our Wills."







"For more than 20 years, Reed Smith has been a proud partner of Theirworld, harnessing our firm's expertise and talent to advance the cause of ending the global education crisis and promoting the potential of the next generation"

Casey Ryan,

Global Managing Partner, Reed Smith LLP

"Now more than ever we need to ensure that every child can learn and thrive, and to raise a generation who can protect our planet better too."



David Tennant, actor

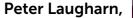


"I liked Theirworld's ability to get things done. Children should be getting an education, not working in factories or getting married young. I wanted to help raise awareness and money for a cause so close to my heart."

Nicola Haxby,

musician and long-time fundraiser for Theirworld

"Theirworld's ability to combine innovation, campaigning and convening power has led to successful commitments from global leaders that will ensure that every child has the right to a good start in life."



President and CEO, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation





"As a mother myself I know of the power of education and the opportunities it can provide...and that's why we're proud to support Theirworld."

Clara Govier,

Managing Director and Chair, People's Postcode Lottery

"If not for Theirworld, we would not have been able to accomplish many things. After the Chibok girls, it was Theirworld who came in to support us and help us to put into place the programme for safe schools in Nigeria."



Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Director-General, World Trade Organization



"Dubai Cares is privileged to be a main supporter to Theirworld since its inception."

Dr. Tariq Al Gurg, CEO, Dubai Cares









"I've been fortunate to support Sarah Brown and the work of Theirworld for over 20 years since they started as a tiny charity. Today, they are making a huge difference in the lives of children all around the world, ensuring that the youngest kids in some of the toughest parts of the world get the best start in life possible."

June Sarpong, broadcaster, entrepreneur and author

"We're excited to announce our expanded partnership with the Global Business Coalition for Education to harness the power of technology to support learners around the world. Our goal is to help more people - especially those in underserved communities - benefit from the promise of technology, in the classroom and beyond."



Kevin Kells,

Managing Director, Google for Education



"They've really challenged us to think on how we find the right balance between the broader issues around education as well as the more immediate and more long-term business needs and values that education can create"

Alexandra van der Ploeg,

Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, SAP

"I support Theirworld because I know that everyone involved is honourable and because I can't think of many more important issues than the fact that there are 240 million children worldwide not in any kind of education."



Bill Nighy, actor



"Their biggest strength is not only the platform they give young people but also how it's structured to guide rather than instruct. I've been given a platform to use my voice and story in my own way to advocate"

Blessing Ahmodu,

Global Youth Ambassador from Nigeria

Our policies



Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change

Climate awareness is a cross-cutting priority for Theirworld's five-year strategic framework 2023-2027. Theirworld is in the process of signing the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and is committed to a number of initiatives that work to significantly reduce our carbon footprint and ensure we operate in a sustainable fashion. Since 2020 we have offset 300 tonnes of CO2 via a range of projects run by an expert CO2 compensation provider, which include afforestation, reforestation and peatland, clean cooking in India, and innovative climate solutions with a focus on engineered solutions to create scalable solutions to fight global warming.



Safeguarding, antislavery, no child labour, exploitation or abuse

We have extensive policies which seek to keep children, young people, staff, consultants, Global Youth Ambassadors, volunteers and representatives of the charity safe and have a dedicated Safeguarding Director and Trustee. Theirworld promotes the welfare of all children and young people and requires all suppliers of services or goods to Theirworld or its projects to confirm their adherence to our child protection policies. These include anti-child labour and anti-slavery policies.



No unpaid

Theirworld believes that individuals should be paid for their work and have the opportunity to gain experience and advance their careers regardless of financial status. We do not allow unpaid internships and only hire individuals for paid roles at the organisation.



Work-life balance and family friendly policies

As part of our commitment to work-life balance and supporting family friendly policies for our staff, we have introduced a four-day working week. This is in addition to our hybrid working model, which offers flexibility for family commitments alongside ensuring increased productivity, career development and impact for all our teams.



opportunities

Theirworld is committed to preventing discrimination and promoting equality, diversity and mutual respect. This applies to Theirworld's relationships with its employees and other workers and in its business dealings with its suppliers and other third parties. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment.

Join us

Theirworld is more than an organisation. It is a network of youth, social entrepreneurs, campaigners, businesses and researchers striving to ensure all young people have the best start in life, a safe place to learn and skills for the future.

We have set bold ambitions – from mobilising **\$1 billion for the early years**, to supporting a record-number of learners, teachers and caregivers through our projects, and building the largest dedicated network of young people campaigning for education.

Our **Global Business Coalition for Education** offers companies around the world the chance to support quality education, place education at the heart of their social policy, and make a different to millions of lives.

We need you to be part of our team.

If you are a young person, join our

Global Youth Ambassador programme

If you are a business, join our

Global Business Coalition

If you are a philanthropist, invest in us



Above: Students at a training session held by Education Innovation Awards winner The Creative Kids Zone (TCKZone) in Lagos.



Read more about our annual audited accounts and financial statements online.

www.theirworld.org www.gbc-education.org

Theirworld

A charitable company limited by guarantee Company Number 4422413 Charity Number 1092312

Theirworld

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