

# 2023 IMPACT Report



# INTRODUCTION



Hello my Name is King from Mtoto News . Let me help you know Mtoto news from a childist perspective.

We as children make up half of the African population. Africa has the highest number of children, 650M, which is estimated to reach 1B by 2055. Yet, our voices on all matters are mostly ignored as we are perceived as immature to participate in local, national, and international dialogues. However, research has shown that we are disproportionately affected by all issues and we face unique problems that don't necessarily affect adults, and yet our voices are ignored. Child participation is a fundamental concept in child rights and development, and it holds special significance in the context of African children. The right to child participation is articulated in international instruments the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).



However, a recent Study on Child Participation in Eastern Africa reveals that while there is a general recognition of the right of children to participate and its usefulness for the broader protection of children's rights, the measures to ensure that the right is implemented are generally insufficient, inadequately coordinated, and not institutionalised through national structure structures and systems. Furthermore, there is no common strategy to ensure the achievement of child participation in the region.

The year 2023 marked a significant milestone in Mtoto News ongoing efforts to improve the lives of African children by providing safe spaces to have their voices heard. It strongly anchored our commitment, born in February 2017, to empowering and advocating for the rights and well-being of Africans and all children.



## Who we are

Mtoto News is an Integrated information and media company that is leveraging technology to improve the lives of children by making them visible. Established in February 2017 and registered by the office of the Attorney General, Mtoto News was born out of a need to fill a gap of the lack of a platform dedicated to reporting children's issues and giving children a platform to voice their concerns. We aim to make significant changes in the lives of children by making them visible in political, corporate, economic, social, and development discourse.

We are leveraging technology to reach and connect policymakers, project implementers, and children. Our online platforms and communities are designed to trigger conversations with children and come up with solutions, within the shortest time possible. Best Interest of the Child and Child Participation are at the core of our business, hence we ensure to bring in Children's voices in every conversation.





# Who we are

The core of our business is an approach that puts the best interests of the child first, while our DNA is child participation. Our vision is a world where children are seen as players and not as spectators. We do this by:

*Curating, creating, and circulating content;*

on children in different ways, including audio, video, written materials, and infographics. We also train journalists on ethical reporting of children's stories, considering the child's best interest, and safeguarding.

*Child participation:*

We believe that children should be seen as players and not spectators and hence we capacitate children, create platforms, and allow them to participate. We are working to create a child-led initiative where children take the lead in matters that affect them.

*Research and Data;*

Research has a way of making children visible who are invisible, more so in child-led research. Mtoto News is working to enable children to inform policy, program, and practice using children's voices, child-led and child-informed research.



## CHILD PARTICIPATION

“At Mtoto News, we the children are the ones that are focused on a lot. This is because the organisation is aware that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) calls for children to participate in different sections of the legally binding documents.”

As a result, Mtoto News makes children's voices heard on matters that affect them by providing platforms and lobbying for safe spaces where they can advocate their issues.

“To ensure that we are able to meaningfully participate, Mtoto News ensures that we are trained on advocacy and effective communication. The training is called Sauti Zetu Digital Literacy and Child-Led Advocacy Program and is done at the end of every school term in April, August and December. I have been part of the over 2,000 children, between the ages of 7 and 17 who have been trained under this program. In the one week training, and a mentorship that went on for three months, my voice as a young person has been empowered, I have gained essential skills and a sense of responsibility has been instilled in me as a right holder. Like the different other children that have undergone the program, I have had key achievements and I am able to stand on ground advocating for issues affecting me as a child.”

The background is a light purple color with several handprints in green, orange, and black. A blue cloud with a black handprint inside it is in the upper right. There are also some black birds flying in the sky. The text is on a piece of torn paper.

2023 was one of my best years at Mtoto News, this is because I was able to be connected to children not only in the country but also from the East African Community and the whole of Africa at large through different initiatives. The initiatives focused on the rights of the child, our wellbeing and the impacts of issues that affect us..

I am happy to hand you over to my fellow child, Nanjala to take you through these initiatives starting with my favourite one which was the ACS, come along as she tells you what it is in full and what it was all about.

## The Inaugural Africa Children Summit (ACS)

The African Children Summit was held from 10th to 12th April 2023 and was a pivotal event in the organisation's mission to improve the lives of children across the continent. Together with 500 other children from across Africa, we joined stakeholders from governments, NGOs, and civil society for the inaugural Africa Children Summit. The summit provided a platform for discussing and advocating for the rights and well-being of us, as African children. Mtoto News had three main goals for the 2023 initiatives. They included; creating a platform for children's voices to be heard in matters affecting their lives, fostering dialogue and collaboration among African countries to address child-related issues, and developing a roadmap for the implementation of children's rights through international agreements and national legislation. Have a look at the summit report' Africa Children Summit 2023 report

<https://www.mtotonews.com/african-children-summit/>

I was witness to the fact that the ACS achieved quite a number of things which I, as an empowered child, could see.



## Key Achievements

The participation of over 500 children from 30 African countries, shared their experiences, concerns, and hopes, leading to a deeper understanding of the issues they face.

The development of the "African Children's Declaration," a document that outlines the collective aspirations and rights of African children.

The commitment of governments, civil society organisations, and international partners to take concrete actions to protect and advance the rights of children in Africa.



Notable impacts of the summit included:



### “ African Children’s Outcome Statement:

For the first time, African children drafted an outcome statement highlighting issues affecting children and recommendations on making Africa Fit for Children.



### “ Policy Advocacy:

Through collaborative efforts and evidence-based presentations, the summit contributed to the development and adoption of child-friendly policies in various African nations. These policies addressed issues such as access to quality education, healthcare, and protection from violence and exploitation.



### “ Children Empowerment:

The summit recognized the importance of involving children’s voices in decision-making processes. Children delegates actively participated in discussions and presented their ideas, fostering a sense of empowerment and engagement among young African leaders.







### “ “ Regional Collaboration:

The summit promoted collaboration between African nations, fostering a sense of unity in addressing common challenges and sharing best practices. This collaboration resulted in increased cross-border initiatives to improve the lives of African children.



### “ “ Capacity Building:

Workshops and side-events sessions held during the summit enhanced the skills and knowledge of attendees, enabling them to better advocate for the rights of children in their respective regions.





# Africa Children Climate Summit 2023

I told you that 2023 was my best year so far at Mtoto News. I was also able to participate in another big event - The Africa Children Climate Summit. The African Children Climate Summit was a significant step towards raising awareness about climate change and its impact on African children. The summit underscored the urgency of climate action and its direct connection to the well-being of children. Over 300 children drawn from various African countries attended this two-day summit on September 2nd and 3rd, 2023, in Nairobi, Kenya. The main objectives of this Summit were to empower children to voice their climate change concerns, educate and raise awareness about sustainable practices, and urge African governments and stakeholders to take effective measures to protect children from the impacts of climate change.

## Key Achievements

**The engagement of over 300 children in discussions and workshops focused on climate change and its effects on their communities.**

**The creation of the "African Children's Climate Declaration," which emphasises the need for sustainable practices and climate resilience in Africa.**

**The commitment of governments and organisations to support children in their efforts to address climate change through policy and funding initiatives.**

Notable impacts of the summit included:



### **The Nairobi Children's Declaration:**

At the end of the Summit Children drafted the Nairobi Children's Declaration highlighting the climate change crisis effect on children and recommendations on mitigation. The Declaration was presented to President William Ruto and the African Union chairman during the African Children Summit..

### **Awareness and Advocacy:**

The summit succeeded in raising awareness of climate change and its consequences on African children, leading to increased advocacy efforts for sustainable and climate-resilient development.

### **Education:**

Participants discussed the importance of integrating climate education into the curriculum of African schools. This discussion influenced policymakers to prioritise climate education, ensuring that the younger generation is well-informed about climate issues.

### **Child-Led Initiatives:**

The summit catalysed numerous child-led climate initiatives across the continent. Young activists from different African countries came together to work on projects aimed at mitigating the impact of climate change on their communities.



## Partnerships:

The summit facilitated partnerships between NGOs, governments, and international organisations, resulting in the allocation of resources to support climate adaptation and mitigation efforts in communities where children are most vulnerable..

Here are some of the fruits Child Participation has borne:

### Inaugural Africa Children Summit:

Children were part and parcel of planning, organising, and participation in the inaugural Africa Children Summit held in Nairobi, Kenya, where they had the opportunity to express their views and ideas. They were the MCs, group leaders, presenters, and entertainers..

### Children's Climate Summit:

Children from various African countries were able to secure their voices in the formulation of child-sensitive climate change policies, actions, and programs in Africa. They read and presented their declaration on climate action at the Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, ensuring their perspective was heard.



## United Nations General Assembly Participation:

Mtoto News Prodigy, Brian Mwangi represented sub-saharan children's voices during the 78th United Nations General Assembly sessions, amplifying their voices on an international platform. He participated as a TikTok panellist in the youth engagement UNGA session.

## Leadership forums and initiatives:

Many children have been enrolled in various leadership forums and initiatives at the national, regional, and international levels, demonstrating their capacity to lead and effect change. Four of our children from three countries, Sierra Leone, Lesotho, Botswana, and Kenya presented the African Children Summit outcome statement to ACERWC in Lesotho.

## Research and Publications:

Children have actively participated in our research and publications which have contributed to informed decision-making and increased awareness of child-related issues.

## Day of the African Child Celebrations:

Children actively participated in the Day of the African Child celebrations, spreading awareness about their rights and advocating for change.



### **International participation:**

Brian King participated in the FGM Summit in Tanzania, and will participate in a panel on climate justice in South Africa.

### **International Appointments:**

2 children who have been trained by Mtoto News in digital literacy and child rights advocacy have been selected as children representatives to the TikTok Global Youth Council.

### **Local partnerships:**

Mtoto News Karen was adopted into the NCAJ access to the justice committee.

### **Initiatives funding**

3 children who have been trained by Mtoto News in digital literacy and child rights advocacy got funding to support their initiatives from KidsRights.





# CONTENT CREATION, CURATION AND CIRCULATION

Mtoto News social media performance from January 2023 to October 2023.

Our social media campaigns averaged a reach of 2,500,000 people and over 2,000 users

 **Facebook Reach 250,125 and Engagement 121,609,** 

**Twitter reach 2,058,700,** 

**Instagram reach 250,893 and engagement 139,029**

**LinkedIn reach 265,500,** 



YouTube views 30,300,



Live stream reach 122,100



Watch time 1,800 hours



Live stream views 14,100





## Knowledge and safe information Dissemination

As part of our ongoing commitment to promoting access to safe information, we embarked on a mission to distribute child-friendly materials to children online and offline. Mtoto News is dedicated to providing child-friendly materials, including educational content, stories, and resources for children. These materials are designed to be engaging and informative, making learning enjoyable for children.

### Child friendly Materials include



Shajara Magazine



Get to Know More



Hadithi Fupi







These materials can be sourced from our website <https://www.mtotonews.com/>, and were tailored to suit the needs and preferences of African children.

## Utilisation of Child-friendly Materials

Thousands of children across Africa accessed child-friendly materials from [mtotonews.com](https://www.mtotonews.com) to support their education and personal development.

Children with limited access to formal education found these materials to be an invaluable resource for self-learning and skill development.

## Impact on Children

The child-friendly materials from [mtotonews.com](https://www.mtotonews.com) had a profound impact on children's education and overall development:

Improved literacy and social skills among children who had access to these resources.

Enhanced creativity and critical thinking in children through engaging stories and activities.

Increased access to quality educational content, particularly for children in underserved and remote areas.

Increased awareness on issues that affect children such as climate change and cyber security

**The impacts of this distribution effort include:**

- 1** **Enhanced Learning:** The child-friendly materials, including booklets, and visual aids, have enhanced the learning experience for thousands of African children. These materials have made education more engaging and accessible.
- 2** **Increased Literacy:** Improved access to age-appropriate reading materials has resulted in increased literacy rates among children, particularly in underserved areas where access to books was limited.





# RESEARCH

## 1. **Adultism Report**

Mtoto News, in collaboration with the Elevate Children Funders Group, developed a report on Adultism in philanthropy with a focus on the global South. The report sought to change the mindsets of funders to involve children and young people in their funding strategies, from design to implementation by using childist approaches. The project engaged 9 representatives of philanthropic organisations from the global North through key informant interviews, and 10 young people between the ages of 20 and 29 years from the global South through focus group discussions..

## 2. **Guidelines for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and Education in Emergencies Programmatic Integration in Kakuma and Dadaab Refugee Camps**

Mtoto News contributed to the development of these guidelines as consultants, led by Liz Amandla Busisa and Daniel Mulati, to enhance safeguarding and protection measures for children in humanitarian settings within the camps. This project aimed to harmonise the reporting and response mechanisms for protection and education actors within the camps. The project was done in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council and Terres des hommes Lausanne.

The guidelines will be used by over 14 refugee-serving organisations.



### 3. Technical Working Group on Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

Mtoto News, represented by Liz Amandla Busisa, is part of the TWG on OCSEA with representatives from the Directorate of Children Services, CSOs, the private sector, and government parastatals. In being part of this working group, we have contributed to the development of a Training Manual and its accompanying Standard Operating Procedures for the national social service workforce on OCSEA. The training manual was launched during the commemoration of the 2023 Day of the African Child in Busisa. The impact of the training manual is to build the capacities of the social service workforce in Kenya to identify (spot) and respond to (stop) OCSEA among children in this digital age.

### 4. Child-friendly documents

Mtoto News has been instrumental in developing child-friendly materials for our target audience, children. In enhancing child participation, we involved children in developing a child-friendly version of the National Plan of Action to Tackle OCSEA (2022-2026). Their input informed the language and design of the document. This project has been done in collaboration with the Directorate of Children's Services.

### 5. Research and Opinion Papers

In our efforts to enhance child rights advocacy, we have produced several papers and infographics that bring to light several child rights issues in Africa. These papers are building evidence on pertinent issues surrounding children in Africa in order to influence policies and programmes that will address the issues.





## 6. Stakeholder Engagements on Child Protection

Mtoto News has participated in several stakeholder engagements on child protection, the key being the International Conference on Child Protection. Jennifer Kaberi and Liz Amandla Busisa contributed to the conversations by submitting 5 research abstracts on the following topics:

- ✔ Technology and VAC;
- ✔ Legal and Policy Framework for the Prevention and Response to VAC;
- ✔ Child-led Participation in the Digital Age;
- ✔ PLAYERS: A Family Guide to the Digital World; and
- ✔ Securing African Children's Voices in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Aint No machine Gonna Speak in My place.





# Production

At Mtoto News, we recognize the profound impact of visually narrating stories to inspire change. As a media powerhouse, we leverage the potency of visual storytelling through documentaries, live streams, and short videos to captivate audiences and drive meaningful conversations. These impactful endeavours underscore Mtoto News' commitment to amplifying children's voices, advocating for their rights, and fostering positive change through compelling visual storytelling. Through our documentaries and live streams, we continue to inspire action, spark dialogue, and drive progress towards a better future for children in Kenya and beyond..





Here's a glimpse into the transformative events we've documented:

### Children Devolution Conference (2023)

By live-streaming the three-day event during the Council of Governors devolution conference in Kiambu County, we reached over 1,300 viewers, amplifying the voices of young advocates and policymakers.

### Early Childhood Development Education Conference (2023)

Our live stream from the ECDE conference in Turkana County garnered significant attention, spreading awareness and insights to a wide audience.

### African Climate Summit (ACS)

The live-stream coverage of ACS, viewed by over 2,500 people, facilitated crucial discussions on climate action, engaging global audiences in the urgent need for environmental stewardship.

### National Launch of the Day of the African Child

Through live streaming, we brought attention to the celebration of African children, making their voices heard and emphasizing the importance of their recognition and rights.



## Inaugural African Children Summit

the voices of African children resounded in a powerful two-day summit preceding the main event. This groundbreaking gathering was broadcast live across all our social media platforms, drawing over 2000 views.

## Nairobi Region Education Dialogue:

Mtoto News had the privilege of serving as the live streaming partner for the Nairobi Region Education Dialogue. Through our coverage, we reached over 1000 individuals, facilitating critical discussions and insights aimed at improving education in the region.

## Launch of National Children's Month

Annually, the Judiciary designates November as Children's National Service Month across all court stations, prioritising cases involving children. Mtoto News played a pivotal role as the live-streaming partner for this significant event, spotlighting efforts to safeguard children's rights within the legal system.

## 2nd International Conference on Child Protection:

Mtoto News partnered as the live-streaming provider for the three-day 2nd International Conference on Child Protection, held in September of the previous year. Our coverage reached over 2000 individuals, fostering global dialogue and collaboration to ensure the safety and well-being of children worldwide.





Mtoto News live-streamed the African Union Child Participation Consultative Meeting to continue our commitment to amplifying children's voices and promoting their active involvement in shaping policies and decisions affecting their lives.

## PODCAST

We produced 13 podcast episodes dubbed TOTO ON PODCAST discussing various issues affecting children. The podcasts garnered 1500 views.

2023 Young Scientist Kenya National Exhibition:

Teaming up with YSK, Mtoto News showcased the innovative endeavors of young Kenyan scientists at the National Exhibition, captivating over 1500 viewers. This collaboration highlighted the ingenuity and potential of young minds in addressing pressing societal challenges through science and technology.

## ECPAT

Mtoto News was privileged to be a live streaming partner for ECPAT regional workshop under the theme Sharing experiences and lessons learned in combating sexual exploitation of children.



# Conclusion

2023 has been a year of remarkable progress in our efforts to advance the rights and well-being of African children. The African Children Summit and the African Children Climate Summit have made significant strides in advocating for policies and initiatives that directly benefit children. These initiatives not only empowered children to voice their concerns and aspirations but also led to concrete actions by governments, civil society organisations, and international partners to improve the well-being of African children.

As we reflect on the achievements of 2023, we remain committed to our mission, working tirelessly to create a brighter and more promising future for African children. We thank all our partners, sponsors, and volunteers for their unwavering support in making these accomplishments possible. Together, we will continue to stand for the rights and well-being of the youngest members of our African community.



