



Save the Children US

Unit4 Business World delivers increased flexibility, accountability and access to timely information to speed delivery of services to millions of children.

Since 1919, Save the Children has been fighting for children's rights. We believe every child deserves a future, and we work every day to give children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm. We do whatever it takes for children – every day and in times of crisis – transforming their lives and the future we share.

Fast forward to today, when Save the Children has helped more than 185 million children in 120 countries. Audited financials for last year showed that 87% of funds were spent on programs and services for children and families in need.

The mission

Save the Children is dedicated to reducing the impact of disasters on children, through effective preparedness, response, recovery, and advocacy. The organization is a national leader in emergency response, serving more than 1 million children affected by U.S. disasters.

2016 was another big year for Save the Children, with many emergency response efforts taking place across the United States and abroad.

“All roads lead to finance,” says Ken Murdoch, Vice President of Information Technology and Building Operations for Save the Children U.S. “Before we could determine the depth of our involvement in Louisiana, our team had to understand and evaluate what secured funding we had, and the targets and visibility of what was being booked for the Emergency Response Team.”

And this was just one of dozens of missions in the U.S. in 2016.

- Save the Children was a major player on the scene, responding to the on-going [water poisoning crisis in Flint, Michigan](#). The city is facing a lead poisoning crisis that is threatening the health and well-being of more than 26,000 children. Young children are particularly vulnerable as lead has a significant and devastating effect on children’s brains. Save the Children had been able to quickly move in and help assist over 11,000 people in Flint, including over 3,000 young children, by providing access to nutrient-rich food, 79,000 gallons of water, as well as early childhood development support.
- As a result of [historic flooding on the Gulf Coast](#) last spring, Save the Children moved quickly to put together Child-Friendly Spaces in emergency shelters to address sheltered children’s urgent needs during a time of extreme stress for their families. At the same time, two of Save the Children’s own Louisiana Head Start centers, which aim to provide children living in poverty with opportunities to succeed in school and in life, were damaged by the flooding and needed to be saved from closure to continue their work at a critical time.
- In June of last year, [West Virginia](#), where more than 25% of children already live in poverty, was hit by powerful, destructive floods that caused power outages and killed several people. During the ensuing state of emergency and recovery, Save the Children raised over \$1.3 million and worked with more than 44,000 children and caregivers in 3 counties to protect their safety and wellbeing. Toward the end of the year Save the Children, with help from actor, activist, and Save the Children Board member Jennifer Garner, brought its Journey of Hope program to the state to help children and their families cope with the trauma they experienced.

- In the aftermath of category 4 Hurricane Matthew last fall, Save the Children deployed teams to help affected children in both North and South Carolina, and in Haiti. In the Carolinas disaster recovery support and aid was slow to help childcare businesses reopen to help children and families return to normalcy. Save the Children worked to close that gap by helping critical childcare centers recover and reopen.
- [Haiti](#) was even more severely hit by the hurricane and Save the Children, which has been the lead response agency in the country for over 30 years, mobilized to help 600,000 children and their families cope with the effects of the storm, including providing needed supplies, opening child-friendly spaces in shelters, helping reunite lost children with families, and deploying health units to prevent cholera outbreaks, as well as getting 130,000 vulnerable children back to school.





- The Eastern [Tennessee wildfires](#) in November 2016 affected more than 14,000 people who were displaced from their homes. Save the Children conducted urgent assessments of the fires' impact on the area's schools and childcare centers to meet the urgent needs of Tennessee children.

The needs

Before implementing Unit4 Business World, Save the Children U.S. had been operating on a 20-year old legacy system. That presented a number of challenges, including:

- Monitoring and reconciling program funding and financial information across 120 countries.
- Using a standalone asset manager solution that was on a separate legacy server, subject to crashes and couldn't be shared by multiple users.

"We have a responsibility to our donors, corporate sponsors and board to accurately report how we use funds and to build credibility through accurate financial reporting," Murdoch said, and yet financial reporting was difficult and cumbersome, adding to the finance team's workload.

The solution

In 2013, Save the Children's global headquarters, Save the Children International, decided to put all countries and regions on one system and hired a consultant to do a needs analysis. The recommendation came back to secure a global enterprise software vendor that could scale and grow with the organization as it grew or changed operations. Cloud deployment was also identified as an optimal situation.

After an RFP and careful selection process, Save the Children selected Unit4 Business World, citing its focus on people-centric organizations and post-implementation agility as key influences in the decision.

Save the Children US went with a standard installation at first, and in 2015 decided to add Asset Manager, with plans to implement the Procurement Management in their next strategy plan 2016-2018.

The benefits

"We [now] have a financial system that is very much like our own organization: it is present, and up and running at all times. It allows us to roll up information across our North America locations at any time from any device," says Murdoch. "As a result, we can accurately forecast and predict our financial information to the public."

Murdoch also points to the efficiencies of mobile technology. “If I’m travelling and have to approve a travel and expense request or an expense ledger, Business World allows me to do that from a mobile device. I’m not pinned to the office. That makes us more efficient.”

And efficiency is the goal when you are monitoring and reconciling program funding that spans 120 countries and 30 member organizations. To Murdoch, efficiency means consolidated financials, easier workflow, consistent, accurate information, and real-time access anytime an auditor or donor wants an update.

Business World also enables Save the Children to look further down the road with respect to infrastructure. Unit4 needs far less “care and feeding, allowing my IT resources to be focused on the next enhancements and make our use of Business World even better,” Murdoch added.

Thanks to Unit4 Business World, this important work can be done in an atmosphere of control and efficiency. Save the Children can clearly evaluate allocated and restricted funding, and continue to achieve 4-star ratings from auditors. At the end of the 2014-15 calendar year, funds allocated to programs increased from 88.4% to 89.4%.



About Unit4

Unit4 is a leading provider of enterprise applications empowering people in service organisations. With annual revenue of over 545M Euro and more than 4200 employees worldwide, Unit4 delivers ERP, industry-focused and best-in-class applications. Thousands of organisations from sectors including professional services, education, public services, not-for-profit, real estate, wholesale, and financial services benefit from Unit4 solutions. Unit4 is in business for people.

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