

ANNUAL REPORT 2009





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ON THE COVER: ChildFund programs promote positive outcomes for children in every stage of their lives. These children participate in ChildFund educational programs in India.

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Letter from the Chairman

Dear Friends,

In my first year as Chairman of the Board of Directors, I have gained a deeper understanding of what is meant by the words, "Every child deserves an opportunity." I've learned that in developing nations more than 9 million children die before their fifth birthday; 148 million children under age 5 are underweight; and 75 million children of primary school age are not in school.

I have seen children living out the harsh reality of these statistics. Serving on the Board of Directors since 2002, I have had the opportunity to visit programs you support including those in Ethiopia, The Gambia, India and Senegal. I have seen firsthand the progress that is being achieved in the communities where we work. And I have met the children and family members touched by your generosity.

Last fall I was visiting the rural community of Buee nestled in the mountains of Ethiopia, as I was standing near a water tank that ChildFund donors provided. A woman came out to where I was standing and began to cry. I was

confused by her tears until she shared that the installation of the water tank had brought many positive changes. The most impactful for her family was that her children were attending school during the hours they used to have to tote water. Thanks to the water tank, this generation would be the first in the village to consistently attend school. It is a meeting I will never forget.

But we can't do it alone. The number of children living in poverty is growing — fueled by global economic realities. Good stewardship demands that we work in partnership with others — community leaders, governments, corporations, individuals and ChildFund Alliance members — to bring the greatest resources and expertise to bear for children living in poverty. Together, we can assist children who are facing nearly insurmountable circumstances grow to be healthy, happy, contributing adults.

On behalf of ChildFund's Board of Directors, I sincerely thank you. Your support is tremendously appreciated.



Dr. Charles M. Caravati Jr.
ChildFund Board Chairman



Letter from the President

Dear ChildFund Family,

This was a year of both progress and challenge for ChildFund International. We developed a new strategy — one that includes a new name and brand. Our strategy addresses the new challenges and critical trends that are emerging for children such as the growing number of youth in developing countries lacking skills and employment. It also leverages what we've learned through our years of experience working in partnership with impoverished children and their families. It focuses on proven interventions that accelerate positive outcomes for children in every stage of their life, from infancy to young adulthood.

The year was also marked by unprecedented economic challenges for us here at home and for many others around the world. It is estimated that the financial crisis will result in 89 million more people living in extreme poverty — on less than \$1.25 per day. And far too many of them will be children. That's why your financial support is appreciated more than ever. While we worked diligently to reduce operating costs, through your support we received more than \$218 million to provide vital assistance to children. For that I offer my heartfelt thanks.

During this past year through phone calls and gatherings, I had the opportunity to speak with many of you and to personally express my appreciation for your support. During those conversations some of you shared stories of your

own financial hardships. I have been deeply moved by your dedication to improving the lives of children and your commitment to sustain your support and enable progress for children living in poverty even in these challenging times.

Through the year as I met with children and their families on each continent, I saw your support at work. I visited new birthing centers that promote good prenatal care and ensure healthy beginnings for infants. I met children whose lives were being transformed as quality learning opportunities were introduced in their communities, bringing hope and excitement for their future. I enjoyed discussions with young people who had gained the skills and confidence that will help them cope and excel in the world.

This experience, combined with years of working to improve life for impoverished families, reinforces to me that childhood provides the prime opportunity to break the generational cycle of poverty.

You see, children are force multipliers. They are adaptable. They're open to change. And if you change the life of a child, you change the future. With each child who succeeds come a renewed hope and a new way of life — a better life for them, their children and their community. You make that hope possible.

Thank you — you are contributing to positive outcomes and lasting change for children worldwide.

Warm regards,



Anne Lynam Goddard
President and CEO
ChildFund International



HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

A Solid Foundation for Children

Too young to fend for themselves, infants and preschool age children in many developing countries face hunger, disease and minimal living conditions and lack developmental opportunities. Their parents struggle to survive and provide the most basic necessities for their family. Many expectant mothers lack prenatal care and deliver their children without skilled birth attendants. Many live in societies where

the early childhood years are overlooked and where the demands and pressures of everyday survival take over. Parents often lack the time and skills needed to offer young children a solid foundation. Children are left with great amounts of unstructured time while parents plant, harvest, collect water, cook and complete other chores.

ChildFund believes that what happens in the first years of life is the cornerstone upon which the child grows and develops. ChildFund is committed to effective programs that give young children a healthy start in life. To cope with the widely varying needs of infants and young children, ChildFund considers all contributing factors through an integrated developmental approach employing three core programs:

- ▶ Safe Motherhood and Neonatal Care,
- ▶ Integrated Community Management of Childhood Illnesses and Nutrition, and
- ▶ Early Childhood Development and Protection.

Safe Motherhood and Neonatal Care

Poor prenatal care and unattended births with little follow-up or emergency care result in high maternal and infant mortality. ChildFund has improved maternal and newborn care in Bolivia, Honduras and Guatemala, providing training and support to traditional birth attendants and involving the local community. Studies show that after only two years, prenatal care visits have increased by as much as 21 percent in each community where we work. In addition, neonatal mortality has decreased by



A child born in a developing country is almost
14 times more likely to die during the first month of
life than is a child born in a developed country.

31 percent in the Guatemala program, 16 percent in the Bolivia program and 13 percent in the Honduras program.

In the Philippines, six new birthing centers opened in September 2008 in the Camarines Sur community. In an area where rural women usually receive little or no care from health professionals and where they are not informed of the common dangers of pregnancy, these centers enable women to give birth more safely.

Elisa, 38, was the first resident to give birth in one of the new facilities, delivering a healthy 7-pound baby girl in October 2008. "The health attendant and the midwife took good care of me before and after delivery," Elisa said.

Another program that benefits infants and young children is the ACCESS program in Kenya (Achieving the Continuum of Care with Effective, Sustainable Maternal and Child Health Services), which is making progress in

the battle against pediatric HIV infection. Trained volunteers visit expectant mothers who are living with HIV and teach the importance of regularly taking the antiretroviral medicine, which helps prevent HIV transmission to their unborn children.

Once stigmatized by their community, mothers often hid their illness. Today, they have the tools to cope, and even help each other — a huge change that will lead to healthier communities. Working with the government, local faith-based organizations and others, volunteers reached almost 6,000 people in the program areas between January and March of 2009.

Making Headway in Combating Malnutrition

In Senegal, working with the Ministry of Health has led to a dramatic reduction in malnutrition rates. Severely malnourished children are provided vitamin A or iron supplements, and ChildFund regularly weighs and measures a child's growth. Families learn to eat a variety of foods at meals to better meet their children's nutritional needs. As a result, malnutrition rates for children under age five have dropped from nearly 40 percent to about 9 percent in the communities where ChildFund operates. Even in communities outside our program areas, ChildFund has contributed to Senegal's overall reduction of malnutrition from more than 30 percent to a current level of about 12 percent as families learn the importance of varying their diets.

Tuberculosis, known among many families as the "disease of dust," is another common threat.

The disease spreads rapidly, affecting both parents and children.

ChildFund's Health Hut program has established small clinics in communities where trained volunteers offer basic health care, especially addressing tuberculosis. When the health hut program began, only 67 percent of 1,000 mothers interviewed were able to name at least one danger sign of tuberculosis, but three years later, that number has risen to 98 percent, saving the lives of many.



Early Childhood Development and Protection

A child's ability to develop through play and exploration, while also learning to establish strong relationships with caregivers, is critical for a healthy beginning.

In Ecuador, education and support groups were formed for parents to learn about all aspects of a young child's development. They were introduced to new concepts about such wide-ranging topics as nutrition and why positive interaction with other children is important to their development. Parents gained insight into the importance of a child's early years, learning about the use of positive discipline instead of negative discipline. In many countries, corporal punishment is considered not only acceptable, but crucial to a child's development as well.

One mother in Ecuador said, "I didn't know there were better ways than hitting my child. I didn't know I should tell her I love her. Now I know and my daughter is happy."

Programs for children are implemented either at their homes or in early childhood development (ECD) centers. At home, ChildFund promotes programs such as Guide Mothers, community volunteers who are trained in developmental activities for young children. They also learn to monitor children's development using our Child Development Scale. These Guide Mothers then teach parents how to stimulate their children's development.

As children graduate to preschool, many attend ECD centers that address their holistic development. These centers often are staffed by trained community volunteers and preschool teachers, who also have learned to target specific individual needs as they arise, based on ChildFund's Child Development Scale. ChildFund encourages community and parental involvement and participation in the governance of the centers.

In Ethiopia, when asked why she brought her young son to the ECD center, one mother said, "It's the beginning of an education. I have learned Amharic and English here so I'll be able to help him with his studies when he goes to school."

The centers also provide protective environments for children while their parents work. Otherwise, children are left unattended or in the care of siblings often not much older than they are. As one elderly caregiver in Uganda explains, "The older ones stay home from school to care for the young ones. But they start playing and leave the young ones. Many of the young children are not found until night."

Another mother tells us, "Every month there is at least one case of a child being raped. It happens when the

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

The number of children affected by HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa is staggering. One of the crippling effects of AIDS on children and youth is the loss of one or both parents. The loss of parents effectively removes the primary social structure protecting children and youth. ChildFund believes that every child deserves an opportunity, and HIV/AIDS puts millions of children at risk of not reaching their potential. ChildFund is focused on supporting communities to address the needs of children and youth who have been affected by HIV/AIDS.

ChildFund's Weaving the Safety Net project is supported by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Weaving the Safety Net aims to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on orphans and other vulnerable children and youth through supporting structures that respond to educational, health and economic needs. ChildFund partners with community based initiatives and organizations to create an environment of care and support to vulnerable children and youth.

parents can't be in the home to protect the child." The ECD centers provide a solution, offering supervised care which not only offers protection, but helpful activities as well.

Successful Transitioning to Primary School

ChildFund combines special activities for children along with training for early childhood development and first grade teachers as well as parents. Known as our Stepping Stones program, a child's transition from early childhood centers to primary school is greatly improved. Visits to these centers and first grade classrooms for parents and children promote their understanding and expectations of each environment, while encouraging a greater level of involvement with the teachers.

Specially designed training opportunities are provided for teachers to learn improved techniques. One teacher in Zambia named Nancy said, "I have taught first grade for many years. This year I thought I would request to change to another grade. I now understand how important all this is. I want to try all these new things. I know first grade is where I will make a real difference for children." And making that difference is the foundation for healthy beginnings. ■

KNOWLEDGE, CONFIDENCE

Build Hope for the Future

On the opening day of school, a young girl in rural Zambia attends class for the first time in her life, traveling the eight-kilometer journey with her older siblings. But when they finally arrive, what they see quickly bursts the wonderful image of the school she hoped was there. The Mukupi Primary School was nothing more than a dilapidated building with three overcrowded classrooms. There were few books, no chalkboards, and little laughter among her peers. The other

children whisper that they call this place the “graveyard.” The teachers yell at the children to file into class; the tone in their voices is startling. After several days, the young girl decides not to return.

Today, the Mukupi school is a vibrant center of learning where students eagerly return. The old Mukupi school was the norm and is a common story for children in many countries.

That is why ChildFund focuses on improving education for all children in its programs. With nearly 75 million school-age children around the world not enrolled in school, education is a critical priority. Close to 60 percent of these children are girls, most of whom are illiterate. Moreover, in many developing countries, children fortunate enough to go to school drop out before they develop reading, writing, math and other critical skills.

Improving learning opportunities for children is intricately complicated, but can be addressed with a comprehensive approach. ChildFund’s educational programs target change within the entire educational context, working with educators, community groups, parents and children alike, to transform schools like Mukupi from desolate institutions to places that motivate and support students.

We know that the key to increasing a child’s willingness to learn depends on offering quality learning opportunities and educational programming that consider the child’s per-





STRENGTH IN PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering with the local government and UNICEF in Sierra Leone, ChildFund has helped establish 312 community schools to serve 28,900 children in remote and underserved areas. The program has helped fund school construction and provided teacher training and supplies. In addition, ChildFund's community partnerships help localities build schools and strengthen school management committees.

spective and experiences. Students need access to quality schools that are supportive and safe. The curriculum must encourage participation by both girls and boys and also be inclusive of children with special needs. To enhance the learning process, families and even entire communities are encouraged to participate in their children's education. This level of participation means looking at the cultural and economic barriers that both girls and boys face.

Children Learn in Active, Supportive School Environments

ChildFund employs numerous approaches to enhance the educational opportunities afforded to children in the communities in which it works. One initiative is ChildFund's school model, Children Learning in Active, Supportive School Environments (CLASSE), which is designed to make schools more child-friendly and child-centered. Another is the ATLAS program (Active Teaching and Learning Approaches in Schools). Countries in the Americas, Africa and Asia are using the CLASSE approach to systematically improve education using proven evidence-based research and best practices.

Mukupi Primary School was one of the first to implement the CLASSE approach successfully. In collaboration with the Zambian Secretary of Education and the community, ChildFund assessed the critical needs of Mukupi Primary School. In less than four years, the school converted from

a place that the children referred to as a graveyard to a building more than double its original size, with enhanced infrastructure, including ample classrooms, a sports field, sanitation facilities and a communal area. More teaching staff was recruited and trained, and the community provided housing for the staff. Local children and their families quickly recognized the change in school environment as it became more inviting. Within two years, the student population nearly doubled in size. Children who had never entered school, or who had dropped out earlier, began attending the Mukupi school, including female children and those with disabilities.

Alternative Education

ChildFund focuses its attention on children who are the most affected by poverty and crisis. We use alternative education programs as a way to provide an education for children who have been unable to attend school for various economic or cultural reasons. Some worked as child laborers, others were "skipped" since they were girls and many more live in post-conflict areas where turmoil was overwhelming and schools could not be established.

Today, programs include accelerated learning and courses with flexible schedules for working children. They establish community-based schools where there are none. In Mwembeshi, a sister school of Mukupi, ChildFund helped parents build dormitories, water and shower facilities and a kitchen so that those students who lived too far away could remain on campus. A science lab and a library were constructed at Mwembeshi to ensure that this school met government standards, allowing students to take high school examinations and earn certificates. With improved school infrastructure and nonformal education programs that aid in mainstreaming at-risk children, schools like Mukupi and Mwembeshi have experienced a sudden surge in their student population.

75 million school-age children around the world are not enrolled in school — almost 60% of them are girls.



To further strengthen our educational work, we seek valuable partnerships. ChildFund Zambia and ChildFund New Zealand have partnered with the International Reading Association (IRA), an organization that also focuses on improving the quality of education. It targets the quality of teaching and encourages the participation of students, a new concept in many cultures. Instead of using only a traditional teacher-centered approach, this partnership, along with ATLAS, empowers educators to implement student-centered learning activities. Children are encouraged to participate actively, whether by conducting group work or using learning corners for creative activities. The students talk about, question, explore, evaluate and debate what they learn, all in a supportive and friendly environment.

Fostering an ongoing culture of reflective teaching and professional development, teachers and school directors are encouraged to form Teacher Quality Circles. Here, they meet regularly to share, discuss and solve classroom issues and identify new, effective teaching practices. Lead teachers train their colleagues in these new methodologies, supporting the growth and expansion of the program.

One teacher said, "Before, I was not confident as a teacher; now I am more literate in teaching [methodologies]. Now children are freer in their class learning. There are more work groups, with children's voices heard, and freedom. I look at our school as a family."

Participatory School Governance

ChildFund's global education programs engage students' families and communities in the educational systems, increasing support and accountability. Community members, including parents, community leaders, teachers and students, support their schools through participatory school governance committees. ChildFund works closely with these school committees to develop school improvement plans with quality teaching and learning elements. Community support enables school staffs to understand the conditions in which children and their families live so they can facilitate child and family participation. The committees also help schools identify risks and threats to children's education and develop strategies to minimize those risks. Community networks allow for advocacy, policy change and social awareness of quality education.

Research shows that school quality often improves when communities support their local schools. Community organizations are especially effective for schools that have little support from the government. ChildFund's community-supported schools consistently demonstrate increased learning performance. Schools like Mukupi and Mwembeshi have improved student scores and graduation rates, and student attendance is more regular than in previous years. Teachers also say they feel more motivated as they have a support network and know that their school will have adequate resources because of community buy-in. Parents serve as agents of change and support for both teachers and students alike.

ChildFund also promotes meaningful children's participation in school and their communities. Today, Mukupi has a children's culture club, whose members are taught traditional dancing and song by mentor teachers. There is also a children's rights club, which raises awareness and advocates for students' rights. This year, members strongly advocated for more governmental support for education within their communities. In the spring of 2009, ChildFund helped organize community events and the children made speeches to government representatives, including the Ministry of Education. Speeches focused on improving literacy programs and asking the government to work with teachers to end the national teacher strike, which had brought the academic year to a sudden halt for more than two months. Similar advocacy activities were held by children's clubs throughout many ChildFund countries, including Mexico, Ethiopia, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste. ■

TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD

Enabling Youth to Become Successful Adults, Parents and Leaders

Simon was a teenager when he lost his mother. Suddenly, this Kenyan youth became head of his household with the responsibility of caring for his younger siblings. After the death of his mother, Simon's usual happy personality quickly deteriorated; he was overwhelmed by his situation. Fortunately, a community member trained by ChildFund's Weaving the Safety Net program — a program designed to help children,

caregivers and communities affected by HIV/AIDS — recognized that he was grieving and unable to deal with the pressure of having to provide for his family.

Simon soon began receiving guidance and emotional counseling to help him through this difficult time in his life. He also began vocational training to become an electrician, completing an electrical course and serving as an apprentice in a local shop. Today, he is a successful 20-year-old businessman, who manages the electric repair shop and has also started a small pig farming business. From this, Simon can take care of his family, and he has become an "agent for change" in his community.

"I would like to eventually own a wholesale electronics shop and create employment for other orphans like me," he said. "It breaks my heart to see them idling around the market, because I know how bad it is out there. I could also help them acquire a skill just like I was helped."

As Simon's experience shows, vulnerable youth need a set of life skills that help them cope with the challenges they are facing. Youth employment is low in the countries where ChildFund works, and this typically leads to poor

