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ChildFund Responds to COVID-19's Collateral Crisis: Child Hunger

Richmond, Va. (April 8, 2020) – As ChildFund works to protect the children and families it serves worldwide from the spread of COVID-19, the organization is also anticipating a potentially even greater threat arising from the global halt to commerce and mobility. The child-focused international development organization, which reaches 13.6 million people in 24 countries worldwide, is undertaking urgent efforts to ensure that vulnerable families can keep food on the table during and after the pandemic.

“The COVID-19 outbreak is a health crisis causing an economic crisis that will bring another health crisis, and that’s child hunger,” says Anne Lynam Goddard, ChildFund President and CEO. “We see how commerce has slowed in the U.S., and how that’s hurting our economy. The economies in ChildFund’s program areas are much more fragile. For example, I’m hearing from my colleagues in Ethiopia about destitute mothers whose livelihoods have already collapsed. They have no way to feed their children.”

To stabilize families facing financial ruin, ChildFund is providing them cash for food and other needs. “Parents know best what their children need,” says Goddard. “Even in areas on lockdown, cash will allow families to sustain and protect themselves until the crisis subsides.”

Easing financial stress will also reduce children’s risk of abuse or being forced into child labor, early marriage or other desperate tactics for coping with financial setbacks. A leading voice on child protection issues, ChildFund supports formal protection systems and services as well as community-based efforts to identify, respond to and refer cases of abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation.

The organization is also delivering hundreds of handwashing stations to countries that requested them. It also coordinates closely with government ministries of health and education and other partners to protect children from COVID-19 and its related risks.

“This pandemic is an undeniable reminder that we really are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers,” says Goddard. “It’s a terrible irony that distancing ourselves from each other is how we must fight it, and that in doing so we cut off the most vulnerable, children, from the basics they need to survive. We have to support them until those essential, lifesaving connections are restored.”

To learn more, visit [ChildFund’s COVID-19 response page](#).

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ChildFund International works throughout Asia, Africa and the Americas — including the United States – to connect children with what they need to grow up safe, healthy, educated and skilled, no matter where they are. Last year, we reached 13.6 million children and family members in 2* countries. About 200,000 Americans support our work by sponsoring individual children or investing in ChildFund programs. Find out more at www.ChildFund.org.

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