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ChildFund International Ramps Up in Most Vulnerable Areas of Drought-Stricken Africa, Mobilizing Aid to Women and Children

Richmond, VA – July 22, 2011 – ChildFund International has launched a massive emergency effort in response to the worst drought in 60 years, placing 11 million people in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somalia at risk, according to the U.N. — and the youngest suffer the most.

In addition to providing food and water, ChildFund is also working to keep families and children in their communities. "We don't want these vulnerable children and their families to have to relocate," says ChildFund president and CEO Anne Lynam Goddard. "We know how detrimental that is to their development."

Malnutrition rates are becoming alarming. In the Turkana region of northern Kenya, malnutrition rates currently stand at 37 percent -- more than double the 15 percent World Health Organization threshold for emergencies.

Because the drought is so severe – the area's rainfall average was less than one-third of the average from the last 15 years – it is expected the conditions will only worsen.

ChildFund is focusing its efforts on those in the 0-to-5 age category, as well as expectant and lactating mothers. Our efforts are trained squarely on those groups, says Victor Koyi, national director of ChildFund Kenya, "because of the vulnerability of this age group and the lifelong implications of inadequate food intake at this stage."

"Childhood is a one-time opportunity," says Goddard. "It's about survival now."

ChildFund needs your help — quickly. You can donate via our website at www.ChildFund.org or **1-800-776-6767**.

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ChildFund International is a global child development and protection agency serving more than 15.2 million children and their family members in 31 countries. For more than 70 years, we have helped the world's deprived, excluded and vulnerable children survive and thrive to reach their full potential and become leaders of enduring change. As a member of ChildFund Alliance we create supportive environments in which children can flourish. To sponsor a child in need, visit the ChildFund website.