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POST-ELECTION, WORLD'S POOREST CHILDREN WEIGH IN WITH OWN PRESIDENTIAL PRIORITIES, CONCERNS

ChildFund Alliance's third annual survey of 6,200 children throughout Africa, Asia and the Americas focuses on education and the environment

RICHMOND, Va., Nov. 20, 2012 – Less than a month after the presidential election in the United States, more than 6,200 children from 47 countries around the world are weighing in with their own set of presidential priorities, an agenda that includes improving education, curtailing pollution and planting more trees. And the biggest fear of these would-be chief executives? Animals.

The third annual *Small Voices*, *Big Dreams* global survey, commissioned by the ChildFund Alliance and compiled by GfK Roper, found that 10- to12-year-olds from Africa, Asia and the Americas put an overwhelming emphasis on their schooling, have lofty aspirations for their future and have personally experienced such natural disasters as drought, flood or fire.

"The Small Voices, Big Dreams survey is an ambitious, comprehensive undertaking, carried out largely on a one-on-one basis with children in literally every corner of the globe," said Anne Lynam Goddard, president and CEO of ChildFund International, which is a member of the Alliance. "Although often overlooked and discounted, theirs are important voices. Their perspectives not only help validate the work we are doing on a community level, but also guide us in ways that can enhance our capacity to help improve the lives of children in a self-sustaining way. While this survey is global in nature, the findings provide value on a very human level."

The 6,200 children surveyed responded to six questions, including, "If you were president or leader of your country, what would you do to improve the lives of children in your country?" One in two (50%) respondents in developing countries said they would improve education or provide greater enrichment opportunities. Another 22 percent said they would provide for such basic needs as food, clothing and shelter, which was the answer most cited among children in developed countries (25%).

Consistent with their emphasis on education, a majority of children in developing countries, when asked what they wanted to be when they grew up, responded



with professions that require a college education, with doctor (27%) and teacher (24%) as the top answers.

For the first time, this year's survey included some questions related to the environment. While the survey found that at least one in three children from developing countries has experienced drought (40%), flood (33%) or forest/bush fire (30%), their biggest ecological concern was not a natural disaster but the growing threat of pollution to the environment. One in four children (26%) cited various forms of pollution as the environmental problem they worry about most, edging natural disasters, named by 23 percent of children in developing countries. One in three children (33%) in developed countries singled out pollution as their most-pressing environmental concern.

When asked what one thing they would do to change the environment around their community, 28 percent of children in developing nations said they would plant more trees and build more parks. A similar number (29%) of children in developed countries said their top priority would be to reduce or stop littering.

As for their fears, the top answer among children in both developing (29%) and developed (21%) countries was the same: animals.

For a copy of the 2012 Summary Data Report as well as other materials related to the *Small Voices*, *Big Dreams* survey, including photographs and video, visit http://www.ChildFund.org/dreams2012.

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Methodology

The Small Voices/Big Dreams Survey was undertaken by the ChildFund Alliance from June through August 2012. In the majority of developing countries, and non-English-speaking developed nations, ChildFund staff conducted one-on-one interviews with children in their local language. In some of the English-speaking developed countries, children completed an online survey. All non-English responses were translated by ChildFund employees. The survey was conducted in 47 countries with children aged 10 to 12 years. This included 36 developing nations in Africa, Asia and the Americas as well as 11 developed countries. A total of 6,204 children were surveyed – 3,665 children in developing countries and 2,539 children in developed nations. Five of the six questions were open-ended, meaning the children were not given a list of answers from which to choose, with one closed-ended question. All translated responses were provided to GfK Roper, one of the world's largest research companies, to process the data.



ChildFund International is a global child development and protection agency serving more than 17.8 million children and 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.