



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ChildFund International opens first Interim Care Center for children orphaned by Ebola**

**Monrovia, Liberia – Oct. 6, 2014** – The first dedicated children's Interim Care Center (ICC) has been opened in Monrovia for children who have lost one or both parents to Ebola. The center is being run by [ChildFund International](http://ChildFundInternational.org) in collaboration with Liberia's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) and will serve as a safe place for children during the 21-day quarantine period after the child last had contact with someone infected with Ebola.

"More than 2,000 children have been orphaned by Ebola in Liberia," said Billy Abimbilla, ChildFund International's national director for Liberia and Sierra Leone. "In addition to the tragedy of losing parents, these children are being traumatized by the stigma associated with the virus. They have nowhere else to go."

The center will provide support and protection to 20 children at a time who don't have family or relatives who can care for them. In addition to housing and meals, the children will receive play and reading materials, psychosocial support and compassionate caregivers who can focus on them.

Staff at the ICC will observe and monitor the children through twice-daily taking of temperatures and will use a checklist to identify Ebola symptoms. Staff will take immediate action to refer children suspected of being infected to the nearest Ebola Treatment Unit/ Ebola Care Center as appropriate.

While the children are at the center, staff will be actively looking for each child's family to help reunite the child with family members immediately after the quarantine period is over or determine an alternative care option such as foster care.

"The Interim Care Center is a supportive, safe place where the children can grieve while the staff tries to connect them with surviving family members," said Abimbilla.

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The center is staffed with a nurse, social and mental health workers, and eight Ebola survivors who serve as caregivers and work with children to alleviate the grief of losing a family member to Ebola.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, with assistance from ChildFund, will establish additional Interim Care Centers in Monrovia and throughout Liberia, as the number of children orphaned by Ebola increases by the day.

ChildFund International, operating programs in Liberia since 2003, is working closely with NGO partners and the government to respond to the Ebola emergency.

To make a donation to assist those affected by Ebola, please visit [https://www.childfund.org/Ebola\\_Emergency/](https://www.childfund.org/Ebola_Emergency/).

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**About ChildFund**

ChildFund International is a global child development and protection agency serving more than 18.1 million children and family members in 30 countries. For 75 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. For more information about ChildFund visit [www.ChildFund.org](http://www.ChildFund.org).