

ChildWorld

A photograph of a young girl on the left and a woman on the right. The woman is wearing a white polo shirt with a 'ChildFund' logo and a white headscarf with a green band. She is holding a yellow pencil and looking at the girl. The girl is wearing a light green shirt and blue jeans. A blue circle with white text is in the center. Two white torn-paper-style boxes with green and black text are on the left. The background is a textured, light brown wall.

Small
voices
and big
dreams

From refugee
to aid worker

Saving lives in
the Horn of Africa

Nigel Spence

I would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to the great many ChildFund supporters who have responded with such compassion and generosity to the humanitarian emergency in the Horn of Africa.



With more than 13 million people affected, and thousands of children losing their lives, the drought and ensuing food and water shortages have resulted in the largest humanitarian disaster seen in Africa for 60 years.

At the time of writing, I am relieved to report that the rains have come to many affected districts. However for many families in Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia, the crisis is not over yet. It will be months before crops are ready for harvest, meanwhile food shortages continue and health services are seriously stretched or unavailable.

Many families have left their homes and many of those who remained on the land lack the materials necessary to start again. Thousands remain displaced and in Somalia the brutal civil conflict continues.

ChildFund's response is focused on affected communities in Kenya and Ethiopia. Our emergency operations will remain in place until the crops are harvested, families are equipped to re-start their livelihoods and the food crisis abates.

With the inclusion of matching funds provided by the Australian government's Dollar for Dollar Initiative,

ChildFund Australia supporters raised over \$1 million for emergency relief efforts in the Horn of Africa. This is a very substantial contribution and many lives have been saved as a result. Thank you for your outstanding support for children and communities who are facing such extreme hardship.

With the festive season almost upon us, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the ChildFund Australia Board and staff to wish you and your families a happy and safe holiday season, and all the best for the new year.

Nigel Spence

Nigel Spence
CEO
ChildFund Australia

ChildFund Australia

Working in partnership with children and their communities to create lasting and meaningful change by supporting long-term community development and promoting children's rights

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What do children around the world really think?

While almost a quarter of Australian children want to be sports stars when they grow up, the same number of children from developing countries want to pursue the more traditional professions, such as teachers or doctors.

This finding comes from the Second annual ChildFund Alliance Small Voices, Big Dreams Survey, a sweeping snapshot of the views of almost 4,600 children from 44 countries, aged 10-12 years.

Given the chance to spend a day doing whatever they liked, Australian kids focus on recreation, with 36% saying they would play sport. In contrast, one-quarter of children from developing countries said they would spend a free day helping their family by doing housework, farm work or other chores.

ChildFund Australia CEO Nigel Spence says: "Play is a vital part of a child's development. While kids in Australia have both the resources and time to play, in countries such as Laos and Timor-Leste, children are needed to help their families and may not have access to play or sport facilities."

Children from both Australia and around the world did agree on what they would do as leaders of their country to improve the lives of children, with 45% of kids in developing countries and 31% of Aussie children saying they would improve education.

When you think about staying safe and healthy every day, what is the one thing you worry about most?

"I worry about no rice to eat all year long." (Laos)

Children in Australia were most concerned about their weight and eating a healthy diet (21%), while in developing countries, kids worried about disease and illness (23%). All children were concerned with war/terror/violence (18% and 14%) with Australian children particularly concerned about kidnapping.

A big thank-you to all our young ChildFund supporters in Australia who took part in this survey! You can find out more about Small Voices, Big Dreams at www.childfund.org.au/news



Where do you feel safest?



"I feel safest under the trees." (Guatemala)

Sixty-one per cent of children from developing countries and 69% of Australian kids feeling safest at home, followed by with parents/family, and at school/with teachers.

If you were leader of your country, what is the one thing you would do to protect children from violence?

"I would like to be a policewomen to reduce crime and protect my people." (Ethiopia)

Around half of all children surveyed (43% in developing countries and 54% in Australia) said they would improve safety and security in their country, including measures such as arresting and punishing offenders, more police, and providing kids with safe places. Globally, a quarter of children also felt that it was important to increase awareness.



Climbing for Kids in PNG

Nayland and Kylie reach Mt Everest Base Camp

ChildFund Australia supporter Nayland currently sponsors a boy in Papua New Guinea. So when he and his girlfriend Kylie decided to trek to Mount Everest Base Camp in Nepal, this seemed a great way to raise funds for PNG as well.

After completing the climb, and raising \$3,000 in the process, the couple said: "We are safely back home,

having survived the earthquake, landslides, unseasonal snow and the dodgy aircraft. In the process we saw some amazing sights, met some inspiring people and quite literally had the adventure of a lifetime.

"We saw first hand the poverty in Nepal and it made us immensely grateful that so many of you made donations to help people living in similar conditions in PNG."

An emergency response

As conditions for children in the Horn of Africa continued to deteriorate this year, we were amazed to see so many of our supporters use their own initiative, energy and incredible imagination to raise funds in such a variety of ways. Here are just a few examples of the hundreds of people who helped us provide emergency support to children in Africa.

UNSW student Wangari and a team of volunteers served up over 200 sausages to their fellow students



Susan Maxton (far right) hosted a dinner party at home, wining, dining and taking donations from her guests!



Susan Bosler from Summer Hill Primary presented ChildFund with a cheque for \$1,000



Lucy celebrated her 8th birthday this year by asking that friends make a donation to ChildFund, in lieu of her birthday gift

Georgia and Thao finally meet after 14 years

A smile says it all

Georgia and Bill Lynn-Robinson began sponsoring Thao 14 years ago. This year, they met for the first time. Here, Georgia writes in her own words of this wonderful meeting

In 1998 I began to sponsor a three year-old girl, Thao, in Vietnam. Over the years, I have corresponded regularly with Thao and watched her growth and development. My hopes for Thao have always been for her to have a good education. With this, she would realise that she has many choices in life and that she can go on to help her family and community. It has always been my dream to visit Thao one day.

In September this year, when Thao had just turned 17, that dream came true. My husband Bill and I finally travelled to Vietnam to visit Thao and her family. It was an incredibly joyous and emotional day.

First, we visited the ChildFund offices in Hanoi, where our interpreter, Phuong, introduced us to the staff, who were so charming and welcoming. We then drove to Hoa Binh Province where we were greeted by the local Mayor and other leading members of the community.

Thao's father drove the whole family to meet us on his motor bike. My first sight of Thao stunned me. In her photos she had always been quite serious, but the huge smile on her face and her laughing eyes, said it all. She was accompanied by her parents, brother and 74 year-old grandmother.

Grandma took a particular shine to me and sat next to me, chatting constantly and giggling, and patting my skin and hair. She told me proudly that she still tends three water buffalo in the fields every day. Her father made a lovely speech with tears in his eyes and then stood on tippy toe to fling his arms around Bill and kiss him on the cheek. It was a very moving moment. Thao sang for us in a beautiful soft voice.

After a couple of hours we were shown the rest of the community. This was terrific as I could see with my own eyes where my money has gone. We saw the new pre-school, medical clinic, as well as the irrigation canals in the fields. Everywhere we went there were signs to say that ChildFund Australia had built this facility and the date.

Sponsoring Thao is one of the most satisfying things I have done in my life. For much less than a cup of coffee a day, I have helped to make such a difference not only to her life, but to the whole community, as everything is shared.

Next year, Thao will hopefully win a scholarship to go to Hanoi for teacher training. In the future she will teach countless others that there is hope in life and that with an education one has choices that can make anything possible.



Three generations: Georgia meets grandmother, mum and daughter

Every year, around 50 Australian sponsors set off on an adventure to meet their sponsored child. To read their stories, visit www.childfund.org.au/sponsor/stories

Kids get behind the camera

On 20 November, Universal Children's day, children from four countries in seven different locations saw the film they helped create for the first time, entitled Our Day.

As part of ChildFund Connect's global education program, 200 children from Australia, Laos, Timor-Leste and Vietnam were asked to film the normal, and not so normal, things about their day. This was done using just a small pocket camera, and unlimited imagination. The result? Over 100 hours of video footage, ranging from breakfast rituals to backflips off buffaloes.

Filmmaker Clinton J Isle then faced the mammoth task of editing the children's videos, and developing the narrative. This was done by working closely with the ChildFund Connect team in Australia and overseas to ensure the film was representative of the children's work.



Supported by Australian Aid and the Queensland Arts Council, the film gave children the opportunity to describe their own world using their own words and visual imagery.

Kelly Royds, ChildFund Connect Coordinator, said: "We were really proud of the children's efforts and I think the film is fantastic. It is wonderful to see the differences, but also the similarities, in children's lives from such different parts of the world."

To watch the trailer, visit www.ourdayproject.com



Collecting water can be hard work for children in Laos

Water and loos for Laos

More than 90% of the families that ChildFund is working with in Laos, do not have access to latrine facilities.

Currently, children and families in Nonghet Province use the jungle or forest – but given the incredibly high unexploded ordnance (UXO) contamination in the area, this is extremely dangerous in addition to posing hygiene risks to villages.

Water scarcity for drinking and washing is also a significant issue, and has been highlighted as a priority by ChildFund since beginning work in this district.

Currently, many villages rely on local natural springs. However, during the dry season these springs often dry up, and people have to walk further afield in search of water.

This is particularly a burden for children, who are often responsible for water collection. In the dry season, children may have a two-hour return journey in order to supply the family's water. And as some springs are located in areas that have yet to be cleared of UXOs, the risks are great.

In 2012, ChildFund Laos will begin an extensive water and sanitation project to provide villages with both latrines and reliable water sources. This will include the construction of latrines, installation of gravity fed water systems, as well

as training on how to use the new facilities, and hygiene education.

In order to raise additional funds for this vital project, ChildFund Australia and Inspired Adventures have teamed up to create the Laos Water Cycle.

This great trip will give you the chance to discover Laos by bicycle and visit the rural communities that ChildFund supports. Join the adventure and you'll be part of a small group who'll fundraise to cover the cost of your travel and raise funds to provide three water tanks and over 190 household toilets.

To ensure everyone has an amazing experience in the Laos Water Cycle places are strictly limited to 20 participants. Find out more at www.childfund.org.au/cycle or info@childfund.org.au.

Opening doors for youth in Sri Lanka

Nuwara Eliya is the main tea producing region of Sri Lanka, with over 95% of the district covered with tea gardens, a total of 70 tea estates.

Tea was introduced to Sri Lanka during British rule, and large numbers of people were brought to the country to work in the estates as captive labourers, with estate owners providing basic minimum residential facilities and common community facilities.

Today, over 700,000 people live and work here as labourers on the estates. Usually, children spend a few years in the local school, before beginning the same trade of plucking tea leaves as their parents and forefathers. Communities live in a small area provided by the owners, and are largely segregated from the rest of Sri Lankan society. Incomes are low and a lack of educational opportunities means economic opportunities are limited to working on the estate. As a result, social problems such as teen pregnancy, alcoholism and early marriage are significant issues. Families here are among the poorest in Sri Lanka.

As well as implementing traditional programs in health, water and sanitation and education, ChildFund is

providing specific programs for young people on the estates. This includes the provision of vocational training, so that they can find alternative employment to working on the estates, career guidance, and establishing youth centres so that young people have their own space in which to gather, learn and socialise with each other.

In addition, Project Humanity is currently supporting a program aimed at empowering young women, one of the most marginalised groups in the estates, who often move from dependency on their parents to dependency on their husband. ChildFund is running health and education programs which provide guidance on reproductive and sexual health, as well as the impact of early marriage. Girls can also take part in leadership and life skills education, as well as vocational training, such as dress-making, to improve their employment prospects. Language classes are also available to the largely Tamil group, to enable them to learn English or Sinhala.



Children walking to school on a tea estate in Sri Lanka

Providing protein in Papua New Guinea

Three hours from Port Moresby, in the mountainous area of Rigo, villages in the Kokorogoro area have little access to protein. Instead, communities here rely on staples, including sweet potato, cassava, pawpaw, banana and pineapples. Any additional protein sources, such as prawns, eels, black macau from the river Ranukuro and Campwelch, are not easy to catch in significant quantities.

This shortage of protein in the diet means young children and mothers are particularly susceptible to malnutrition. To combat this problem, and using the communities existing skills in agriculture, ChildFund established a goat farming project. This has had a number of benefits. In terms of improving diet, goat meat provides an additional source of protein. Communities used the manure to fertilise existing vegetable gardens, resulting in improved crop production.

The goat farms have also proved to be a valuable source of income, with families selling surplus meat and milk, as well as breeding stock to sell.

In addition to providing the villages with livestock, ChildFund implemented farmer training on goat

husbandry, and held awareness sessions on goat products and by-product use.

To date, ChildFund has distributed nine goats to two villages. From the original nine, four additional kids have been born, with more on their way.



Children in PNG get to know the new residents in their village

Saving lives one day at a time

In drought-stricken parts of Kenya, hundreds of children have been arriving every morning at ChildFund's early childhood centres to receive the only meal they will eat that day. Without the generous support of our supporters, we could not provide this one meal.

Children under the age of five are receiving specialised support, as the most vulnerable group during a food shortage. They are not only physically less able to cope, with malnutrition and dehydration impacting them more rapidly, but there is a serious risk of long-term physical, intellectual and psychological harm.

ChildFund's emergency response includes the following initiatives:

- Nutrition: Providing supplementary food at early childhood centres and nutrition education to parents.
- Water and sanitation: Improving access to water through trucking of potable water, providing water vessels and water treatment chemicals. To reduce the risk of disease, ChildFund is also providing hygiene education
- Health: Continuously monitoring children's nutritional status, providing vitamin A and iron supplements, deworming and treating minor illnesses, referring cases that require further attention to the appropriate healthcare centres.

Emergency relief in Kenya

In Kenya, our emergency response is targeting 50,000 children, as well as pregnant and nursing mothers, in the nine affected areas where ChildFund works. Our staff are distributing Unimix (a nutrient-rich porridge mix for young children), cooking oil and safe drinking water.

In addition, our network of community health volunteers are monitoring children for early signs of malnutrition and providing vitamin supplements and medical referrals where needed. So far, in Kenya alone, ChildFund has sent almost 200 tons of food and 100,000 litres of water to the nine affected communities where ChildFund works.

In the north and north-eastern districts, it is unlikely that there will be any improvement in food security until late 2012. At the same time, late rains and flooding in other districts have washed out roads, interrupted food supplies and created conditions ripe for disease, including dengue fever. For an already malnourished population, the spread of disease poses a much higher risk than at other times. ChildFund is closely monitoring the situation and providing additional support where needed.

Emergency relief in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, we have been able to provide two rounds of emergency food distribution for 16,500 people in Siraro district, and 1,200 malnourished children and 355 pregnant and nursing mothers in Buee and Belaya districts.

Leaving a bequest to ChildFund Australia can be the gift of a lifetime to a child, their family and community in a developing country. To find out how you can leave a gift in your will, have a look at our wills guide at www.childfund.org.au/act/bequest or call us on 1800 023 600.

A third round of food distribution in Siraro has now begun and the situation in this area is showing some improvement. "I will no longer have to sell my things to feed my family because of the timely assistance of ChildFund," one father, Shabadir, told us.

The prolonged La Niña conditions have disrupted two consecutive rainy seasons for many regions, but late rains have finally arrived in some areas. Unfortunately, the wet conditions are creating disease risks for children and families already suffering from the impact of malnourishment, including many case of acute watery diarrhea. For young children in particular, this is a serious health risk.

Planning for the future

Over the coming months, ChildFund's will continue to focus on saving lives and supporting communities until the next crops are planted, produce is harvested, and the food shortage abates. By focusing relief efforts within drought-affected rural communities, ChildFund is aiming to prevent the forced migration of families to over-crowded refugee centres in search of food and aid.

Australian support

Thanks to donations from Project Humanity partners, ChildFund Australia was able to send \$100,000 to our partners in Kenya and Ethiopia as soon as we were alerted to the seriousness of the food crisis.

As the crisis continued to worsen we launched an Emergency Appeal to which Australians have so far generously given over \$841,584 with donations still coming in. Coupled with the Australian government's Dollar for Dollar Initiative, over \$1 million has now been raised.

To everyone whose kind donations made this possible, and on behalf of the thousands of children, their families and communities who have received life-saving food, water and medical care, we thank you.



Ethiopian mothers and children receive emergency rations



ChildFund Kenya staff distribute medical supplies in Turkana



Unimix is provided to Ethiopian children in Belaya



ChildFund Ethiopia staff distribute emergency rations in Siraro district



A Kenyan child is monitored for signs of malnutrition



Kenyan brothers Echakule and Ngisoowa are fed at a ChildFund early childhood centre

Growing up in different worlds



Maria

How do the childhoods of two 11 year-old girls from Australia and Timor-Leste compare?



Maddison

Home

Maria: lives in a small hamlet close to the larger village of Camanasa. She lives with her father and mother, who are subsistence farmers, and her older sister. Maria's home is a traditional Timorese house, and is made of materials found locally.

Maddison: lives in Erskineville, an inner city suburb of Sydney, with her mum, a beauty therapist. She lives in a two-storey house, made of brick.

Health and well-being

Maria: has three meals a day, usually rice and vegetables. Her favourite food is goreng, a Timorese fried rice dish. She weighs 25kg and has been immunised against tetanus and measles. It is about 1.5km to the nearest doctor.

Maddison: has three meals a day; usually toast for breakfast, bread, fruit and snacks for lunch, and chicken and vegetables for dinner. Her favourite food is chocolate. Maddison weighs 35kg and has been immunised against polio, chicken pox and measles. The doctor is 10 minutes from Maddison's home.

Daily life

Maria: goes to school, studies after school finishes, plays and then helps around the house. Her chores at home include washing the dishes, fetching and carrying water for the house, and helping with the cooking. Maria loves playing football.

Maddison: wakes up, has breakfast and gets ready, spends the day at school, does her homework, eats dinner, watches television and then goes to bed. Maddison's chores are making her breakfast and her bed. Her favourite toy is her iPod touch.

Pets

Maria: has a pig, chickens and dogs.

Maddison: has a fish named Bubbles.

Favourite sayings

Maria: Colege (which means friend).

Maddison: Do I have to eat my vegetables?

Hopes and dreams

Maria: is very proud that this year she passed grade 4, and will start grade 5 at school next year. Maria would like to be a doctor when she grows up.

Maddison: would like to be a dance teacher when she grows up.



From refugee to aid worker

Forced to flee his country at age 13, Ahmadullah Zahid is now 28 years old and working for ChildFund Afghanistan assisting other returnee families and their children. He tells us his story.

I was 13 when we fled to Pakistan. At this time, the security situation in Afghanistan was very bad. There was fighting everywhere. I remember when I was a kid, every night suddenly a fight would start between two commanders – very huge fighting around our houses and we were unable to sleep.

Even I remember several times at school, we were busy studying and suddenly the fighting started and everybody started jumping from the windows and running out the doors, running towards home. Then slowly, slowly the school was closed and there was no school to go to and it was also very difficult to work. So that's why we decided to go to another country. At least we can study and we can live safely.

We returned to Afghanistan in 2005. I came back first to repair our house – the doors, windows, everything was broken. Of course, we were very happy to return, very excited. After a long time, we're returning to our home country and the situation was completely different. We were seeing the changes in the faces of the people – good changes, happy changes.

I first started working for ChildFund in my home province, Kunduz, as monitoring officer for one of their projects. When the project was completed I was promoted to operations officer. Now I work at the head office in Kabul as the program support manager. I love my role because I go to the field and talk to the people who are served by ChildFund and see the happiness on their faces, and I really feel that ChildFund is doing something for them.

The situation now for children in Afghanistan depends on where they live. In some places. It's still very hard, especially in areas where the security's not good because the government and aid agencies still don't have access to these places.

So you can imagine there's no school for the children. Most of them are helping their father with the farming work. From the age of seven, they are taking their cows and goats in the morning and returning in the evening, without any break.

They would prefer to go to school but they also feel, 'If I don't do this, who will? I have to support my father. He's all alone feeding our family.' It is usual to have a big family – the average number of children is seven – with only the father earning income.

In other areas, where the security is good, children still support their father but go to school part-time – girls included. Most areas, especially in the north where ChildFund is working, there is access to school.

I recently started working on a new project named Resettlement Support for Afghan Returnee Families, in Nangarhar province, bordering Pakistan. There is a special camp established by the government of Afghanistan for these returning families – currently around 3,500 families are living there, but there is capacity for 10,000 families.

ChildFund is building five early childhood centres, especially for three to five year-olds. These centres will run three-hour sessions twice a day, preparing the children for school. The other priority in that community is that they don't have drinking water. It's a mountainous area so we are building seven solar-powered water systems. From that, we'll be able to provide water for around 1,400 families.

The children who returned some two, three years ago, they are very happy now. They say, 'Before we returned, we were very much afraid we don't have a place to live, we will not have any income.' But when they returned, the government provided land. Then UNHCR came and built houses. And now they are going to school and receiving assistance through ChildFund. It is very nice.



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