

# ChildWorld

DECEMBER 2012

The Water World  
film festival

ChildFund begins  
work in Myanmar

Small  
Voices, Big  
Dreams: a  
global survey  
of children

[www.childfund.org.au](http://www.childfund.org.au)

**ChildFund**  
Australia



## Nigel Spence

Education is the single best investment that can be made to help communities overcome poverty and it is the fundamental right of every child. For ChildFund, this means we give particular priority to education and it is central to our work in all communities where we operate.

For young children, ChildFund improves access to preschool and primary education by building and equipping schools, training teachers, establishing early childhood centres and educating families about the importance of enrolling girls in school.

For youth, ChildFund develops and implements vocational training programs, provides support for secondary school students, and offers micro-finance to encourage entrepreneurship. We also offer parents a range of training opportunities including maternal and child health, adult literacy, nutrition and income-generation courses.

These initiatives not only improve the lives of children and families today, but are cost-effective investments that enhance the lives of future generations. United Nations agencies estimate that every dollar invested in education generates a return of \$10-15. Research also shows that educated mothers have healthier children who are more likely to survive the critical 0-5 year period, and educated parents are better equipped to transition out of extreme poverty.

Children themselves recognise the value that education brings. The ChildFund Alliance global survey of children (see p4) finds children across the world put education as the number one priority that they would address if they were president of their country. This is most strongly expressed by children in developing countries in Africa and Asia.



During the last decade, efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of giving every child access to primary education have resulted in almost 90% of children now enrolled in primary school. However, progress has slowed in recent years and there are still more than 60 million children who remain out of school. Quality of education is also seriously deficient in many communities.

In order to renew efforts to meet the MDG target, UN secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon recently launched the Education First initiative. He stated: "We must not deny the promise of quality education to any child. The stakes are too high. When we put education first, we can end wasted potential—and look forward to stronger and better societies for all."

ChildFund continues to take up this challenge and strives to ensure that every child's right to an education is realised.

*Nigel Spence*

Nigel Spence, CEO, ChildFund Australia

PS We wish all supporters a safe and happy time over the festive period, enjoyed with family and friends! Thank you for your support in 2012.

## 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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ChildFund Australia is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct. The Code requires members to meet high standards of corporate governance, public accountability and financial management.

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ChildWorld is produced three times annually and sent to all ChildFund Australia supporters. Back issues can be found at [www.childfund.org.au/publications](http://www.childfund.org.au/publications)  
Editor: Larissa Tuohy Designer: Sally Woodward Photography: ChildFund staff Print & distribution: JA Wales Printers.  
All editorial queries should be sent to [ltuohy@childfund.org.au](mailto:ltuohy@childfund.org.au)

## An important day for girls



On 11 October, ChildFund Australia CEO Nigel Spence joined Prime Minister Julia Gillard and other aid agency representatives at Parliament House for the inauguration of International Day of the Girl Child. A United Nations observance, this day has been introduced to recognise girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world.

Speaking at the launch, the Prime Minister said: "I don't want to see young girls working in sweatshops. I want to see them in the classroom - well fed and clothed, immunised, safe from harm and free to learn."

Despite gains made in primary school enrolments, girls continue to face obstacles to education with nearly 20%

of girls in developing countries not completing primary school. In a joint call to action, ChildFund Australia and other charitable groups, including World Vision, Oxfam and Plan, have called on the Australian government and other world leaders to put girl's education at the centre of the global development agenda.

Nigel said: "Economic hardship, cultural practices, and social values can result in the education of boys taking precedence to their sisters. Yet it has been proven that girls who complete secondary school are less likely to become child brides, earn better incomes and in turn will encourage their daughters to be educated."

"It is absolutely vital that we prioritise education strategies that include girls and address the barriers to their education if we wish to see a significant reduction in poverty for children and their families in developing countries."

Every year in Papua New Guinea, ChildFund-supported communities hold a Children's Day festival. Children take an active role in planning the event, which usually includes performances in traditional dance (pictured), drama, and a variety of games and sports. It is also a wonderful chance for children to enjoy a day of festivities with their family, friends and local community.





# What do children around the world really think?

The ChildFund Alliance's annual Small Voices, Big Dreams survey for 2012 reveals that children around the world are deeply concerned about pollution and the risk of natural disasters.

For Australian children, pollution is the biggest environmental issue (33 per cent), followed by natural disasters (19 per cent) and climate change (15 per cent). Australian children say they want to see action to improve their own communities by putting a stop to littering (31 per cent) and planting more trees (18 per cent).

This year's survey includes the views of 6,200 children aged 10 to 12 years in 47 countries – from Australia to Nicaragua to Zambia – and not only provides a global snapshot of children's views but sheds light on the commonalities and differences between the developed and developing worlds.

Secretary-General of the ChildFund Alliance, Jim Emerson, commented: "We should be putting children at the heart of the climate change debate. This young generation will inherit the

world we leave them so it makes sense that we listen to their concerns about the environment."

While children in both developed and developing countries are united in their environmental concerns, a stark contrast is evident when looking at their future career aspirations. In developed countries, children most value careers as a professional athlete, entertainer or creative professional, while in the developing world they mainly aspire to be doctors, nurses or teachers.

Jim said: "ChildFund is committed to learning from children in the communities where we work. Listening to children contributes to our understanding of how they view and experience the world, and helps guide our priorities and programs.

"We are reminded that children can think beyond themselves and consider how their world can be improved. We've also gained insight into their hopes, dreams and fears so that we can help them reach their full potential."

Lily, age 12, Australia



Lily (left) playing soccer

**If you were the leader of your country what is the one thing you would do to improve the lives of children?**

"I would make sure that every child goes to school and has an education. It would make my life better because I would know that every child can go through the same experience as I am now."

Alejandra, age 11, Paraguay



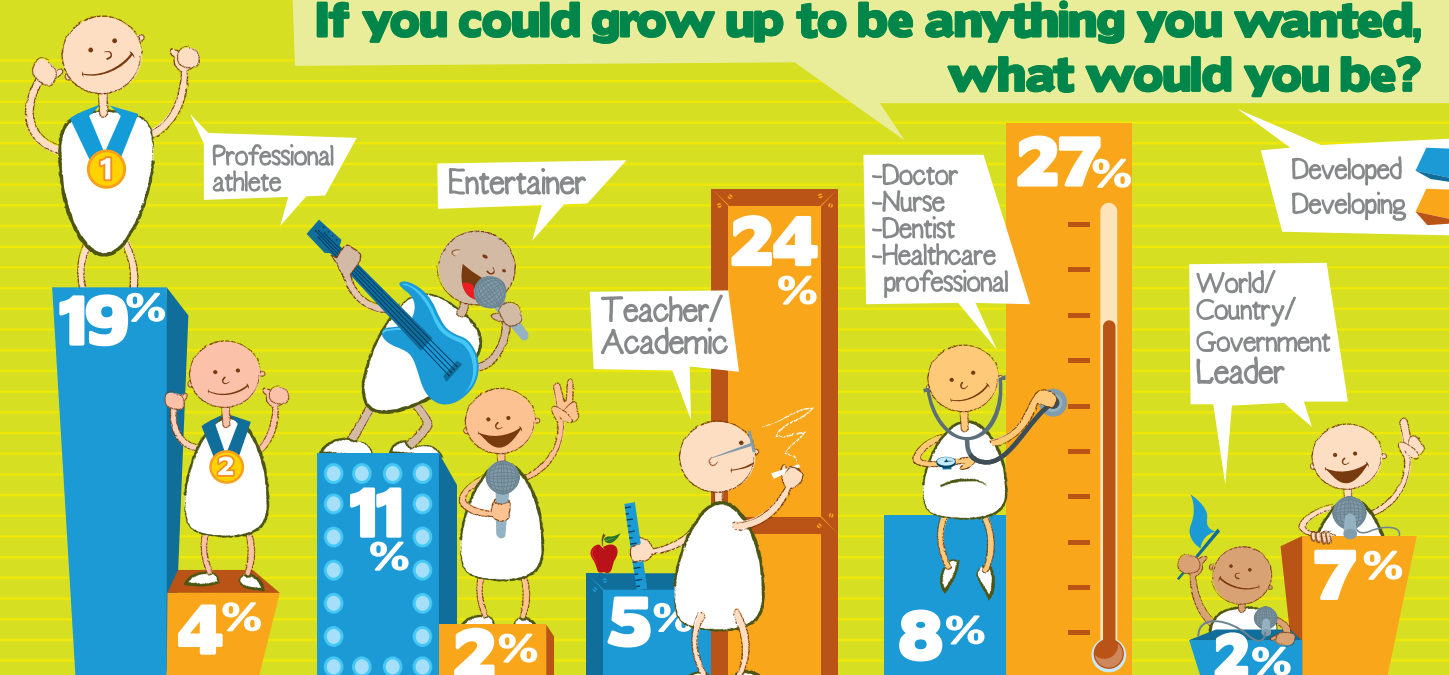
Alejandra with her mum

**What is the environmental problem you worry most about?**

"The problem in my community is the lack of paved streets. In the rainy season you can't walk, and a lot of garbage is swept along by water, and there is the problem of flooding."

Thank you to all our young ChildFund supporters in Australia who took part in this survey! You can find the full report at: [www.childfund.org.au/news/latest/ChildFund-Survey-Small-Voices-Big-Dreams-2012](http://www.childfund.org.au/news/latest/ChildFund-Survey-Small-Voices-Big-Dreams-2012)

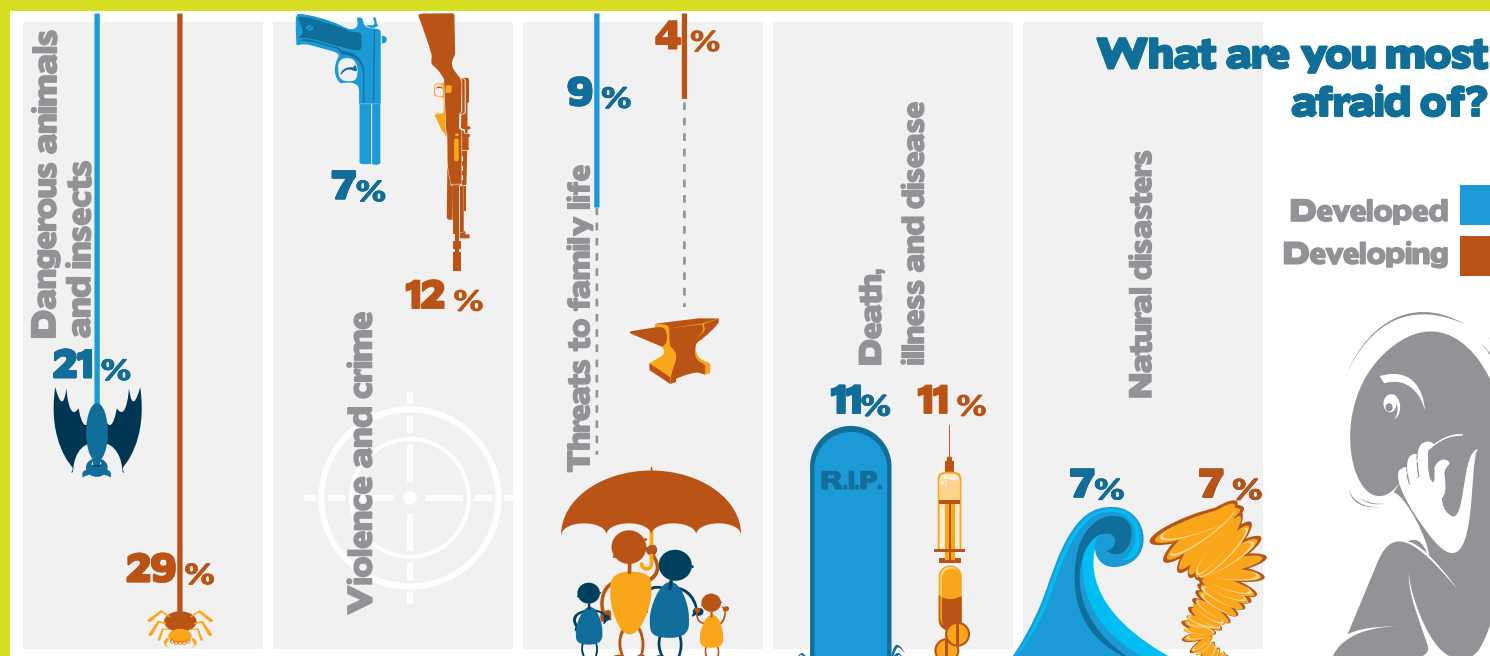
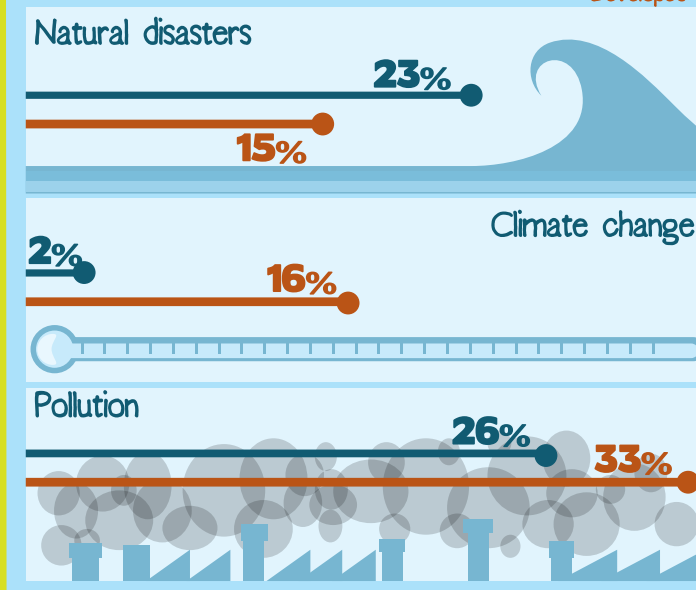
**If you could grow up to be anything you wanted, what would you be?**



**If you were president or leader of your country, what is the one thing you would do to improve the lives of children in your country?**



**What is the environmental problem you worry about most?**





# Premiere of Water World Film Festival

This December, children from 23 communities in Australia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Vietnam will showcase their films in the ChildFund Connect Water World Film Festival.

ChildFund Connect is a global education program that provides opportunities for children to connect and learn with overseas peers using multimedia technology. Each year, ChildFund Connect participants take part in a collaborative film project and share their stories with children around the world.

This year, children were asked to think about what role water plays in their life and to get creative in expressing this with pocket video cameras. More than 50 films were scripted, storyboarded, filmed and edited by over 700 children.

Children voted on their favourite films and supported teachers and ChildFund Connect coordinators in organising their local film festival events. The result? Seventeen short films that capture what water means to children in different parts of the world – from the silly to the surprising to the serious.

Kelly Royds, ChildFund Connect Coordinator, says: “We challenged the kids, and ourselves, this year by delving deeper into creativity, story-telling and film. There were some writer’s block moments, but ultimately the kids came through with ambitious, fun and dramatic ideas.

“It was also great to see them get involved in the editing. Some had experience with computers and some had never touched a keyboard – so it was fabulous to see them work together in groups and edit their own films.

“Every short film produced is interesting and unique, and the children should be incredibly proud of their achievements.”



Lights, camera, action: Barraba students begin filming



The film editing process gets underway in Laos

## OUR DAY NOMINATED FOR ATOM AWARD

Our Day, a film made by over 300 children in Australia, Laos, Timor-Leste and Vietnam, was nominated for Best Documentary – Short Form at this year’s Atom Awards, which recognise film and media excellence in education and industry.

While ChildFund didn’t take home the winning prize, over 10,000 people have now watched this wonderful film online. If you haven’t had a chance to see it, visit ChildFund Australia’s YouTube channel at: [www.youtube.com/user/childfundaustalia](http://www.youtube.com/user/childfundaustalia)

It is a year since Typhoon Washi struck the island of Mindanao in the Philippines, sweeping away entire neighbourhoods in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan.

Despite the country being battered by up to 20 typhoons each year, communities here have little defence against the storms – Washi claimed the lives of over 1,400 people and left thousands of children and families without homes, businesses or schools.

Thanks to donations raised through Project Humanity, ChildFund delivered food and non-food items to 2,000 families living in evacuation centres and relocation camps over a period of six months. This included rice, dried fish, soap, blankets, nappies and school supplies. Two hundred families were also provided with ‘starter kits’ to help re-establish their businesses.

During an emergency the focus is often on delivering food, water and other basic essentials – but equally important is reducing the trauma experienced by children and their families. This is why ChildFund established 35 child-centred spaces in the evacuation centres and camps, providing safe spaces for children to play and resume some sense of normal life.

Incredibly, 234 youth and parent volunteers (like Dens, below) put their hands up to assist in the child-centred spaces, working with ChildFund staff to provide ‘normalising activities’ for over 6,000 children such as group play, games, art, song and dance.

ChildFund Australia CEO Nigel Spence says: “It was truly inspiring to see the community come together in this way. This is a great example of community members leading the response with support and resources from ChildFund. The thousands of community volunteers worldwide are the real heroes and the frontline in disaster response.”

## Typhoon survivor turned volunteer

Eighteen-year-old Dens survived Typhoon Washi but had to deal with the trauma of losing his girlfriend and seeing family members injured. After the typhoon, with his family taking



# Shelter after the storm

shelter at an evacuation centre, Dens was lost in grief and despair. When ChildFund’s call for volunteers rang out, Dens was quick to step up. “I didn’t know just what it entailed, but I wanted to see if I could help,” he says. Assisting in the child-centred spaces, Dens and his peers would hop aboard the ChildFund Jeepney (a type of passenger bus), joining ChildFund and local partner staff visiting the centres and camps. Within seconds of pulling over at a camp, the Jeepney would be swarmed by young children, delighted at the sight of their kuyas and ates (big brothers and sisters).

The volunteers unloaded tarpaulin mats and plastic crates filled with toys, paper, pencils, crayons, flash cards, games and musical instruments, before leading the children in games, singing and other activities.

Through facilitating the child-centred spaces, Dens says he felt a renewed sense of purpose. “I feel that as I help these little children overcome the fear and trauma of their experience, I’m also helping myself grow out of my grief,” he says.

## Hit by further floods

In August this year the Philippines was again hit by typhoons and flooding,

with a State of Emergency declared in parts of the country – mainly in and around the capital, Manila. ChildFund has provided over 1,200 families with food and safe drinking water, and 2,200 families with items such as blankets, first aid and hygiene kits as well as roof repair materials.

In addition, 573 children who lost school materials in the floods were given new supplies, while 392 children received new shoes and uniforms. Ongoing work includes a livelihood recovery program to help families get back on their feet, and play and learning activities for children in 26 child-centred spaces.

Thank you to our Project Humanity partners and those who generously donated to our Philippines Flood Emergency Appeal for making this possible.

## NEWS FLASH: TYPHOON BOPHA

At the time of press, The Philippines had been hit by its 16th typhoon this year, causing thousands of families to flee their homes on Mindanao island and in the Visayas. Please visit our website for updates.





Lend your support to  
an entire community

ChildFund Australia has launched Global Community, a new way of connecting that allows Australians to support children and families in Nonghet, Laos.

Nonghet is one of the poorest districts in the country. Half of all children under the age of five are chronically malnourished, only two-thirds of children finish primary school and families face the daily risk of injury or death from undetonated bombs.

“Laos is the most bombed country in the world per capita, with an estimated 270 million tonnes of sub-munitions from cluster bombs being dropped during the Vietnam War,” says Nigel Spence, CEO of ChildFund Australia.

“One in three of these bombs failed to detonate, resulting in thousands of poor families unable to use much of the land for farming or infrastructure, and living in fear of their children

accidentally treading on unexploded bombs. By joining Global Community, you will be supporting 12 villages in Nonghet, contributing to long-term solutions such as establishing quality education facilities, improving healthcare and nutrition, increasing access to clean water and sanitation, and providing safe spaces for children to play and families to farm without the threat of undetonated bombs.

A dedicated Facebook group will allow you to keep up-to-date with the progress of the community and supporters will also have the opportunity to visit the Nonghet community twice a year, during H’mong New Year and Children’s Day.

Mr Spence adds: “At ChildFund, we’re continually looking for new ways to create more meaningful experiences and interaction between supporters and community members in developing countries.

“As we continue to grow community sponsorship, Australians will be able to support, connect with and learn from families in poor communities, no matter how distant or remote they may be.”

#### COME AND VISIT!

Every year our Global Community supporters will be given the opportunity to travel to Laos to take part in special celebrations, such as H’mong New Year and Children’s Day.

This is a wonderful way to meet the people you are supporting and see first hand how Nonghet community benefits.

To find out how you can join ChildFund Australia’s Global Community, please visit [www.childfund.org.au/nonghet](http://www.childfund.org.au/nonghet)

## ChildFund begins work in Myanmar

ChildFund Australia is in the process of establishing child-focused development programs in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma). The country is experiencing significant change since the military relinquished power to a newly elected government last year. ChildFund will initially work with local partners, providing funding and technical support.

“We will be working in Yangon and Mandalay at the start – these are big cities with some sub-urban slum areas – and also in Shwebo, a more rural district,” explains ChildFund’s Myanmar program coordinator Win May Htway. “We are assessing different partners we can work with and doing child protection workshops with them, so that they have their child protection policy in place when they start working with us.”

Political isolation has left Myanmar the poorest country in South-East Asia, with almost a third of its population estimated to be living in poverty. In 2011 it ranked 149th out of 187 states in the Human Development Index, lagging behind all of its neighbours in the Asia region for indicators on poverty, health and education.

For the country’s 18 million children, life is particularly tough. Despite recent increases in government spending on healthcare and education, most villages lack basic health services and only half of all children complete primary school. Malnutrition is a serious concern with 40 per cent of children suffering from stunting and 10 per cent affected by wasting. One in 10 children in Myanmar do not survive their fifth birthday.

ChildFund Australia CEO Nigel Spence says: “While it is devastating to see the level of poverty for children in Myanmar, it is encouraging to see the country opening up and creating new opportunities for its people. By working with local communities and grass-roots organisations, ChildFund can contribute to improvements for children, particularly in health and education.”



Photos: Reuters/Damir Sagolj, courtesy Thomson Reuters Foundations- AlertNet

#### MYANMAR STRUCK BY EARTHQUAKE

A 6.8 magnitude earthquake has left thousands of families without homes, schools and businesses. ChildFund has launched an emergency response to communities affected in Shwebo district, Sagaing region, which is among the worst hit.

“The main aim of our response is to enable children in Shwebo district to continue their education while their schools are being rebuilt, and to provide emergency food rations to families,” says ChildFund’s Mandalay program coordinator, Thiha Sane.

We would like to thank our Project Humanity partners whose ongoing support enables us to respond quickly to emergencies like this. ChildFund is not offering child sponsorship in Myanmar at this time, but you can find out more about how you can help by visiting [www.childfund.org.au/act/donatemyanmar](http://www.childfund.org.au/act/donatemyanmar)



# How lucky we are to be mums in Australia

As the communications manager at ChildFund Australia, I have the wonderful privilege of immersing myself in the many incredible and life-changing stories that come from the countries in which we work.



At times too, I must read heart-rending accounts of the difficulties children face in so many developing countries around the world. These stories never get easier to digest or comprehend, and make me feel so lucky that an accident of birth has given myself and my own children the joy of an Australian childhood.

One of our newest programs, though, has really made its mark on my consciousness. Our fantastic staff in Zambia are now in the process of implementing the Start Strong, Stay Strong initiative. The objectives are simple – to give mothers in rural communities a place where they can take the newest members of their family for regular check-ups.

As a mother of a three- and five-year-old, I have spent many hours over the past five years with my local community health team. In those first weeks after the birth of my daughter, a maternal health nurse visited my home, not only to check on the health of my baby, but to give me, a brand-new and very nervous mummy, much-needed guidance and advice. This was repeated with the birth of my son and, while I had greater confidence in my skills (and a much better sense of how those first sleep-deprived weeks were likely to pan out!), it was still reassuring to have a sounding board available.

Every mother and infant has the right to at least a basic level of healthcare, writes Larissa Tuohy

Over the years, my children have had regular, routine check-ups and my community health service has also been available for any ad hoc concerns. My children are healthy and strong, but during that time the nurses identified my daughter's failure to put on weight during her first weeks of life and my son's slow progress in reaching certain development milestones was also monitored. In each instance, I was referred to specialists and felt confident that my children had the best of care.

It turns out that my son's late walking and talking was probably just due to having an older sister ready to fetch and interpret on his behalf, but I feel incredibly lucky that even these most minor development anomalies were picked up by a qualified professional, and that actions were taken to investigate further.

We can often be heard complaining about Australia's public health system, but we are so fortunate that we do at least have a system in place – whatever its failings may be. My community health team provide a free service, are located near my home and are staffed by a fantastic group of women, who have provided my children with a wonderful level of care, and helped me to become the mother I am today.

In comparison to so many mothers and their infants in Zambia, I am extremely fortunate. One in nine Zambian mothers will lose their child before they reach the age of five years. Not from complex conditions with long scientific names, but from everyday, preventable illnesses.

Through the Start Strong, Stay Strong program, ChildFund will give Zambian families the reassurance that I have so often taken for granted – children will be monitored, life-saving immunisations will be administered, and mums will get the support they need.

Becoming a mother is exciting and frightening and wonderful and life-changing. The birth of your first child is also the day when worry becomes a constant feeling in your daily repertoire of emotions. The least we can do for women in Zambia, and other countries around the world, is lessen those worries. Basic healthcare is the right of every mother and child, and we should support those who are most vulnerable.

To lend your support to ChildFund's Start Strong, Stay Strong program for mums and bubs in Zambia, visit [www.childfund.org.au/act/donatezambia](http://www.childfund.org.au/act/donatezambia)

## A marathon effort

ChildFund Australia supporter Brett flew halfway across the world to take part in the New York marathon.

Unfortunately, Hurricane Sandy made its way to the Big Apple at the same time, and the marathon was cancelled – the first time in its history. But Brett still has much to be proud of – by raising over \$8,000 he will help ChildFund immunise hundreds of children in Papua New Guinea.

In Dublin, our runners were more fortunate with the weather conditions, with James, Karly, Anjelique and Deni completing the race, along with ChildFund Ireland supporter Cathal. The Australian running team raised over \$29,000 for healthcare programs in Timor-Leste, which will support hygiene and hand-washing initiatives for children.

Thanks to all our runners for such a mammoth effort!



ChildFund staffer Rachel farewells our Dublin marathon runners

## Looking for adventure?

Planning an overseas trip for 2013? In partnership with Inspired Adventures, you can discover Sri Lanka by bicycle, meet welcoming locals and learn about ChildFund's child-focused development programs as you visit rural communities.

By taking part in the Sri Lanka Cycle Against Poverty challenge, you'll fundraise to provide poor families with goats – 200 to be exact! For families living in poverty, a single goat can improve child nutrition, by supplying a regular source of milk, and allow families to improve their family income through breeding. To find out more, call Kristen on 1300 905 188 or email [kristen@inspiredadventures.com.au](mailto:kristen@inspiredadventures.com.au)

Places are limited to 20 participants, so be quick. Visit [www.childfund.org.au/act/SriLankaCycle](http://www.childfund.org.au/act/SriLankaCycle) for more details.

For our supporters who are looking for an adventure without spending days on a bicycle, ChildFund is also offering a discovery tour to Vietnam, in conjunction with Raw Travel. With sightseeing in Hanoi, Vietnamese cooking classes, and visits to ChildFund-supported communities, this trip will give you a taste of Vietnamese culture and show how your donations are used to help local families.

You can find out more at [http://rawtravel.com/trip/childfund\\_vietnam\\_discovery](http://rawtravel.com/trip/childfund_vietnam_discovery)



Visit communities in rural Vietnam

## The face of fundraising

Nima (left) with ChildFund staffer Win May



Nima has been representing ChildFund Australia as a fundraiser for over five years, during which time she has introduced over 1,300 new supporters. She is incredibly dedicated to her role, and recently took the time to show our new Myanmar staff and other overseas ChildFund staff how we raise funds in Australia. They were incredibly impressed and so are we – thanks for your hard work Nima!

### Leave the gift of a lifetime

When it comes to making your will, your loved ones should come first. But that doesn't mean you can't make a difference to vulnerable children. To find out how you can leave a gift that will provide children and the generations to come with the chance to break free from poverty, visit [www.childfund.org.au/act/bequest](http://www.childfund.org.au/act/bequest)



# Donations with a Difference

*Your gifts change lives*

Donations with a Difference are gifts for children and families living in poverty. When you give a Donation with a Difference on behalf of your friends and family, we'll send you a beautiful gift card for your loved ones, telling them all about their gift and what a difference it will make.



## Last minute Christmas gift ideas!

Make your donation online and you can choose to receive ecards meaning you can do all your last minute Christmas shopping in minutes!



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