

# CHILDWORLD

WINTER 2010



Millennium goals  
fighting global poverty

ChildFund begins development work in Laos  
Giving youth a voice in Mexico  
Two tales: growing up in India and Australia

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

**ChildFund**  
Australia



# FROM THE CEO

Nigel Spence

Dear ChildFund supporters,

In September 2010, world leaders will meet to review progress on the fight against global poverty. Ten years have passed since the largest-ever gathering of nations took place at the United Nations headquarters in New York. At that unprecedented summit, the 188 member states adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to reduce extreme poverty over a 15-year period.

Since that historic meeting, significant achievements have been made, including an increase in the number of children attending primary school, and improvements in child health, thus reducing the number of child deaths under the age of five. HIV infection rates have declined by 30% globally and the goal to reduce by half the number of people without access to clean water is largely on track.

However, progress is uneven. Several of the MDGs are likely to be missed globally and some countries may fall short of all goals. Some hard-won achievements have been stalled or lost due to the global financial crisis, food and fuel crises, and natural disasters such as the Haiti earthquake.

At the close of the financial year, and as ChildFund Australia marks its 25th anniversary, I sincerely thank all ChildFund supporters, sponsors and donors for your concern, commitment and support. Together with the sustained efforts of the global community, we can make the MDGs a reality for the millions of children and their families who continue to live in poverty around the world.



## African children tell their stories online

### Learn how communities are overcoming the challenge of HIV

Next month, ChildFund Australia will launch its first ever online African village. This interactive experience will allow supporters to meet some of the children and communities we work with, and see for themselves some of the challenges they face.

ChildFund Australia, with funding support from AusAID's Australian Partnerships with African Communities (APAC) program, has been working with communities in Kenya, Uganda and Zambia since 2004. In these communities, more than 75 per cent of children have lost one or both parents due to AIDS.

ChildFund's program has increased awareness of HIV and AIDS, provided education on prevention and care, and worked in partnership with local and district community structures to ensure that support is available for orphans and vulnerable children impacted by the disease.

In the six years since the program began, there have been many positive changes, and the online village provides a voice to those children, families and community members who have benefited. In total, over 11,000 people have been assisted by ChildFund, and the program has been successful in increasing school attendance, establishing caregiver support groups, and providing youth with vocational skills.

Most importantly, the stigma around HIV and AIDS has been significantly reduced, more people are being tested for HIV, death rates have decreased and children are now receiving the care they need, both physically and emotionally.

Visitors to the online village can get access to program successes, case study materials, and educational content. To take a tour, visit [www.childfund.org.au/africa](http://www.childfund.org.au/africa)



# Mixed results for millennium goals

## More action needed to reduce poverty worldwide

World leaders will attend a UN Summit this September to accelerate progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs provide a set of decisive organising principles for ending extreme poverty. With only five years left until the 2015 deadline, the United Nations has released a report saying that progress has been uneven and additional efforts are needed to realise the MDGs in many countries.

ChildFund Australia's international program director, Mark McPeak, says the impact of the MDGs has been positive. "For the first time, the international community has a common and agreed set of targets for building a better future."

According to Mark, ChildFund Australia's work fits well with the MDG framework. "The organisation's holistic focus on the causes of child poverty, and work for some of the most deprived, excluded, and vulnerable children across the world, has contributed to the progress we've seen."

### The Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty & hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other disease
7. Environment stability
8. Global partnership

He adds: "We have to remember that, while the world has achieved a lot on average, with great progress in India and China masking slower progress elsewhere. The poorest and most excluded people – including children in the countries where ChildFund Australia works – still have a long way to go. That's where we're focusing now." According to statistics published in the Millennium

Over 93% of girls in India now attend primary school



Development Goals Report 2010, the developing world is on track to meeting the poverty reduction target by 2015. This translates to around 920 million people living under the international poverty line – half the number in 1990.

Overall, death among children under five years of age has been reduced from 12.5 million per year in 1990, to 8.8 million in 2008. Eighty-nine per cent of children worldwide are now enrolled in primary school. Enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa remains the lowest of all regions, but has increased from 58% to 75% between 1999 and 2008.

However, the report also notes that children continue to bear the brunt of poverty. Over 25% of children in the developing world are underweight for their age, with children in rural areas more likely to be underweight than urban children.

The UN Report concludes that although positive steps have been taken, greater action is needed to reduce poverty and to meet the MDGs by 2015. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said falling short of the goals "would be an unacceptable failure, moral and practical".

He added: "If we fail, the dangers in the world – instability, violence, epidemic diseases, environmental degradation, runaway population growth – will all be multiplied."

# ChildFund around the globe



## Senegal

Over one million people die each year from malaria – many of them children. Currently, around 90% of malaria deaths occur in Africa, with children under the age of five the most vulnerable to infection.

Fortunately, malaria can be prevented. ChildFund Senegal, a partner of ChildFund Australia, is actively involved in a variety of education and health initiatives to prevent the incidence of infection, and to provide proper healthcare to those who do contract the disease.

This includes the creation of over 1,300 community health huts, which provide prevention and treatment services to over four million people. Local volunteers are provided with healthcare training, so they can offer support to their own communities.

ChildFund Senegal also hopes to empower children to become the agents of change. This includes drama and dance activities, where children perform educational skits about the dangers of malaria, and how to seek proper treatment.

Community clean-up campaigns organised by ChildFund have been successful in eliminating standing water, a breeding ground for mosquitos, and the distribution of mosquito nets; a simple yet extremely effective preventative measure.



## Mexico

Youth in La Higuera, Mexico are now developing and producing their own radio programs. With support from ChildFund Mexico, a member of the ChildFund Alliance, young people aged between 12 to 18 years are learning to use the technical equipment involved in broadcasting, and developing their skills in journalism.

Many of the radio shows address youth issues and lifestyle choices, such as avoiding early pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and improper drug use.

Youth also share ideas on coping with social stigmatisation and relationship difficulties. One program is called 'Renacimiento' which is Spanish for rebirth or renewal.

Youth have also been involved in creating more lighthearted programs, which offer listeners popular music, writing contests and discussions on local concerts and sporting activities.

The radio programs have become so popular among both broadcasters and listeners, that ChildFund is now replicating the project in over 30 communities in Mexico. By providing young people with a voice in their community, radio is proving to have a huge impact in creating awareness of youth issues, and changing attitudes.



## Vietnam

To celebrate World Environment Day, ChildFund Vietnam planted over 3,000 trees in the provinces of Hoa Binh and Bac Kan. ChildFund also organised a number of public awareness campaigns, with the theme "Many pieces. One planet. One future."

Wearing environment-friendly designed white hats, over 1,000 community members participated in parades on the day. "We want to raise public awareness about environmental issues, which people completely ignored in the past", said Mai Phuong, a water-sanitation promoter.

Key messages included "Ensuring water and sanitation in school is realising child's rights" and "Destroying the environment means ruining your life's security". Participants planted acacias, which are beneficial in improving impoverished soils, as well as other popular trees on hills and public places, such as community health centres and schools.

"Planting trees is not merely an action responding to the World Environment Day. It's a reminder to everyone to keep the environment green and clean for disease prevention and a sustainable future", said Nguyen Van Phuong, Hop Think commune's vice president.

The ChildFund Alliance works where aid is able to flow, implementing community development programs in 55 countries. ChildFund Australia thanks its supporters and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).



## Indonesia

Ade and Warsito, two young boys living on the island of Java in Indonesia, have rediscovered the joy of playing 'egrang' (pictured).

Egrang is a game of balance. Like stilts, a person walks with their foot bound to a coconut shell or a long pole. Part of the fun is in making the equipment for the game. For many children in developing countries, toys are a luxury item. However, play is still considered a critical part of child development and is encouraged at many ChildFund community learning centres and schools around the world.

Making toys from common household items or discarded trash is a great way to stimulate children's creativity and problem solving abilities. Sticks and strings become kites, while discarded sandals can be transformed into boats.

"My parents helped in finding the materials to make this toy" explains Warsito. "They also taught me the right technique to play with the 'egrang'."

His friend Ade adds: "The game looks easy at first but after people try it, they realise it is a difficult game. I want to show this game to more children in my village so they can know how much fun this game really is."



## Philippines

ChildFund Australia's partner organisation in the Philippines has been providing support to families and children impacted by typhoon Ketsana (known locally as Onday). The typhoon destroyed and damaged the homes and livelihoods of many people in the Southern Luzon region, leaving over 700 people dead.

ChildFund has also been involved in the renovation of damaged houses, and has established Child Centred Spaces in evacuation centres. These centres provide non-formal education and play activities, and additional support to children who have lost their homes.

Living beside a creek, Joyce Ann and her family were flooded as a result of the typhoon. ChildFund helped the family by providing school bags and uniforms for the children, as well as groceries, rice, kitchen utensils, water containers and other items to support their immediate needs.

ChildFund Philippines also provided the family with emergency livelihood assistance in the form of a Pedicab, a common form of employment in this area. Joyce Ann's mother now drives the Pedicab to earn additional income for the family. It also means she can transport her children to and from school and ensure their safety. Teachers and pupils have become her frequent passengers.



## Laos

ChildFund Laos has begun field operations, establishing a head office in Vientiane, and a regional office in Nonghet District, Xieng Khouang province, where it is working with four villages.

In Laos, approximately 40% of children under the age of five years are malnourished, and Xieng Khouang is considered one of the poorest regions of the country.

ChildFund's work is focused on improving children's access to education, and includes the construction and improvement of school facilities.

ChildFund will also be running teacher training activities, and working with communities and parents to highlight the importance of child education. The program also has a research component that is engaging with villagers and district and provincial government with a view to planning activities beyond 2011.

Recently, ChildFund ran consultative meetings and activity groups among the villages, where community members were invited to participate and give their input and ideas on future ChildFund initiatives. This included a puppet show, where children highlighted the importance of education to their community.



# TWO TALES

## Growing up in different worlds

How do the childhoods of two 7 year-old boys from Australia and India compare?

Louis and Praveen are both seven years of age. Louis' family has been sponsoring Praveen for five years.

### Home town

**Praveen:** A rural community near Chennai, India, home to around 200 families.

**Louis:** Brisbane; Australia's third largest city with a population of almost 2 million.

### Family residence

**Praveen:** Lives with his parents in a modest concrete house with a corrugated iron roof. The house is about 10 square metres, and consists of one room separated into two by a partition. This gives the family an eating/cooking room and one bedroom.

**Louis:** Lives in a four-bedroom house with a garden and swimming pool. Louis lives with his parents and brother and sister, and has his own bedroom. Louis has lots of room to play and lives close to a river and parks.

### Education

**Praveen:** Praveen attends the local school called Good Sheppard, which is approximately 5km from his home. The school sends a van to pick up children, so it is safe for Praveen to attend.

**Louis:** Louis goes to the local state school

which has about 600 children. The school has very good facilities including a music room, swimming pool and an oval. Louis goes to school with his older brother. He sometimes walks to school but often his mother drives him there.

### Occupation of parents

**Praveen:** In Praveen's community, most families support themselves with 'day work' - jobs that are unsecure and pay little. Parents often have to leave their families to work in towns. Some people work as servants, cleaners, or laborers

**Louis:** Louis' dad works in a professional job in a mining company and his mother takes care of the children at home.

### Health and wellbeing

**Praveen:** The sanitation system in Praveen's community is non-existent with families using undrinkable bore-water for washing. Once a day a water truck arrives for them to purchase drinkable water. There are no toilets; families go to the toilet near the railway line that runs through the centre of the community. Praveen also lives in an area where malaria is a constant danger. Through ChildFund health training, Praveen's mother has learnt to give him boiled water and to treat malaria early. Praveen has been immunised against common childhood diseases.

**Louis:** Louis is a healthy young boy who has been immunised against common childhood diseases. Brisbane has excellent hospital facilities and local doctors who are readily accessible if Louis gets sick. The standard of sanitation is very high with very good public services including fresh water piped to houses, waste management and public garbage disposal.

### Hobbies and dreams

**Praveen:** Praveen is a confident and happy boy. He is a very good dancer, and has won many awards at school for his dancing. He dreams of becoming a policeman, while his mother hopes he will one day become a doctor.

**Louis:** Louis loves outdoor sports and particularly likes to go to the beach to surf and swim. Louis is very good at arts and crafts and enjoys making things with lego and odds and ends he finds when he goes exploring. When he grows up he wants to be a builder with a dog for a companion.

Praveen reading a letter from his friend Louis





# IN PROFILE: Bob Brooks

Twenty-five years ago, Bob Brooks OAM founded ChildFund Australia. We look at how times have changed



**How does it feel to see ChildFund Australia today?** It's a great feeling - like seeing your child grow up. I have a very personal emotional link with the organisation - it was one of the most significant achievements of my life. I got a tremendous amount of emotional fulfilment from doing a job that really helps people. Most people just work for money - working in this field, you get emotional satisfaction.

**Had you been involved in anything like this before?** I had a lot of experience in charities, and had been involved in organisations providing programs for disabled people. That's why I received the Order of Australia medal.

**How did you find supporters when you first began ChildFund Australia?** We used direct response advertising on television. Straight after the ad

aired, the lights on the phone would start flashing and the seven office staff, including myself, would pitch in and start taking calls. I would say to everyone: "Whatever you're doing, stop, answer the phone and take the calls!"

**What are your greatest memories of that time?** The whole thing was a series of steps, like climbing a staircase. It was absolutely thrilling to see the growth in the organisation.

**Did you visit many program countries?** I visited programs all over the world. It was very interesting to see the programs in each country. I can remember meeting people who not only didn't know what they'd be eating tomorrow, but they didn't know whether they'd be eating at all. The situation for many was so desperate. So it was good to see the money was being used wisely and well.

**Do you have a message for our supporters?** I can say honestly, from having visited many programs in numerous countries, that the help ChildFund gives is really appreciated; that the people who are targeted by ChildFund as people in need are *really* people in need.

## Saying thanks to Dad

### The perfect gift for Father's Day

Stumped on what to give your dad this Father's Day? Then why not buy him a Donation with a Difference? A cricket ball and bat will bowl over your dad, and will be a real treat for kids in India.

For those DIY-types, why not purchase a carpentry set for a family in Guinea? This kit includes a wood saw, nails, glue, a tape measure and a set square. Or if your dad's a keen angler, a brand new net for a fisherman in Papua New Guinea might be the perfect choice.

Each Donation with a Difference creates a new opportunity for communities, families and children in desperate poverty. Buying your gift is easy.

Just visit [www.childfund.org.au/gifts](http://www.childfund.org.au/gifts) and choose your present from the online catalogue. You will then receive a gift card so you can write a personal message to your dad, and show them the unique act you have made on their behalf.

# NEWS IN BRIEF



## Project Humanity

### Extra support to communities in need

ChildFund Australia's Project Humanity program is designed to assist communities when they are most in need of help – this includes both emergency relief and long-term solutions to major challenges confronting struggling communities.

In Papua New Guinea's Central Province, many communities do not have access to safe water sources, resulting in waterborne illness, particularly for children who are susceptible to diarrhoeal disease. ChildFund trained local youth in well and latrine construction, and installed 10 new wells and 50 latrines.

In Vietnam, agriculture and livestock training provided to farmers in Bac Kan province has led to improved rice and maize yields, as well as better pig husbandry. As a result, family incomes have improved, and new sustainable farming practices have now been

introduced. ChildFund has also established a number of community-based savings and credit schemes, providing loans to women from farming households.

Out-of-school youth in Cambodia took part in vocational and leadership training programs run by ChildFund. This gave young people aged 14-22 years the opportunity to develop their leadership skills while also receiving income-generation skills. Participants were responsible for establishing household fish ponds as well as chicken farms.

In addition to these and other projects, Project Humanity funds were also used to provide emergency relief to sponsorship communities in the Philippines impacted by major flooding. ChildFund would like to thank all our Project Humanity partners for their continued support.

## Get ready to run!

Challenge yourself and raise money too! As the weather cools down, running season fires up. There are a number of running and walking events going on around the country and your involvement could mean the world to thousands of vulnerable children.

Register for your local event and ask your friends to sponsor you by creating a fundraising webpage. Visit [www.everydayhero.com.au/event/Challenge](http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/Challenge) to get started. It takes only minutes to create your online page. Then all you need to do is send the link to everyone you know and watch the donations come rolling in.

Visit [www.childfund.org.au/act/event](http://www.childfund.org.au/act/event) for more information and find an event near you! It's an easy way to get fit and make a huge difference to vulnerable children.

## The gift of a lifetime

By including ChildFund Australia in your will, you can provide children, families and future generations with clean water, nutritious food, health care, education and support as they move towards self-sufficiency.

We depend on bequests from our passionate supporters in order to continue assisting some of the world's poorest children. A gift left in your will can continue the sponsorship of your child for future years, or be earmarked for general purposes, which means that the project or situation that is most in need will receive your funding.

Leaving a bequest could be the gift of a lifetime for the children we support. For more information, call 1800 023 600 to request your wills guide or visit us online at [www.childfund.org.au/act/bequest](http://www.childfund.org.au/act/bequest).

## 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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