

Christian Children's Fund 2005 Annual Report





MISSION STATEMENT

Christian Children's Fund creates an environment of hope and respect for children in need from all cultures and beliefs in which they have opportunities to achieve their full potential, while providing practical tools for positive change—to children, families and communities.



Davidson Jonah

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Cover photo by TamilNet. In February 2005, former US Presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush visited a CCF-Sri Lanka program where they met with staff and talked to child tsunami survivors—witnessing firsthand how CCF created a positive environment for children in tsunami-affected areas. They praised CCF for the way they are helping children recover.

◀ These Sudanese women are celebrating in the face of severe adversity. They fled their homes to escape the Sudanese militias who were attacking and killing innocent civilians. Now living in refugee camps in neighboring Chad, they receive assistance from CCF. Here, they are celebrating International Women's Day.

Message from the President and Board Chair

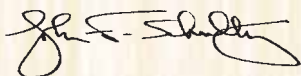
Dear CCF Family,

For decades, regardless of where we are working, Christian Children's Fund is focused on safeguarding children. This past year saw one of the worst natural disasters in the world's history in Southeast Asia, and now in the U.S. we have experienced Hurricane Katrina, yet another catastrophic event where children are extremely vulnerable. CCF responded immediately to the tsunami in countries where CCF has had a longtime presence; and we are addressing the needs of children in Katrina-affected areas of Mississippi where we work.

The tsunami took lives and homes, leaving in its wake shock, grief and devastation. The world responded with tremendous compassion, and we are now seeing signs of amazing progress and resilience among hard-working people determined to start over. We also realize there is much more to do to meet the challenges facing the "tsunami generation" of children who have experienced great loss and have seen their lives drastically changed.

The tsunami's destruction called upon us to act quickly, and our donors made great sacrifices to help meet the challenge. This generosity enabled CCF to immediately begin recovery efforts, first providing food and other emergency supplies, but—remaining true to our purpose—also initiating programs with long-term, lasting benefits. Among tsunami victims in India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, CCF has started the rebuilding process—providing income-generating activities, helping fishermen get back to work, rebuilding local infrastructure and helping children reclaim their childhoods through the establishment of more than 200 Child Centered Spaces.

While assisting children in both of these devastating emergencies, CCF continues to provide care and support to impoverished children the world over. CCF is well positioned to carry this progress forward for the sake of the children. Progress in one small community starts a powerful chain reaction that flows from one community to the next. We thank our donors for making this possible.



John F. Schultz
President



Ann C. Crouter
Chair of the Board

As part of CCF's good stewardship, CCF's President, Board members and staff periodically visit and review CCF programs throughout the world. CCF has earned the BBB's Wise Giving Alliance Seal of Approval and an "A" rating from the American Institute of Philanthropy, a prominent national watchdog agency. CCF has also received a third-party certification of compliance with the child sponsorship standards of InterAction, the largest alliance of US-based international development and



CCF Staff



Sarah Tolan

humanitarian NGOs. Having earned the various seals, ratings and certifications attests to CCF's ongoing commitment to meeting or exceeding the highest standards of accountability in delivering programs and services to children.

Poverty's Core Issues

What does poverty mean for children? How does CCF make an enduring impact on poverty within a particular community? What types of programs can empower parents to improve their lives? How best can CCF bring about meaningful and lasting changes in children's lives?

CCF launched a groundbreaking study on poverty in the belief that a broader, longer-lasting impact can be achieved only when we base programs on a deep understanding of child poverty. Rather than build on assumptions and normative ideas, CCF developed a framework founded on research and the actual experiences of children.

CCF listened to the real experts—children and parents living in poverty—to best understand how children experience poverty and what poverty means to them.

This unique study dispels some of the commonly accepted myths pertaining to children's acute awareness of their own poverty and how it affects their lives on a daily basis. It reveals that children make many direct and often very positive contributions to the struggle to overcome poverty, from fortifying the emotional and psychological resilience of other family members to taking the future into their own hands. Increasingly, children are now playing an active role in planning and decision-making about issues affecting their lives.

Study results demonstrated that a critical aim is to increase resilience in children by supporting their coping skills and building on their resourcefulness. Showing how humiliation and shame play a significant role in poverty, an 18-year-old girl from Belarus says, "Poor children are shy — they are not confident and it is difficult for them to communicate with others. It's not that they don't want to but they don't know how to do it."



Mary Arnold



CCF Staff

The study identified the following three key factors of poverty that impact children's lives:

- **Deprivation**—the severity, intensity and contextualized nature of children's experiences of impoverishment with regard to their material conditions and access to basic services
- **Exclusion**—the processes through which individuals or groups of children are wholly or partially marginalized from full participation in the society in which they live
- **Vulnerability** —the dynamic nature of children's experience of poverty in terms of how they are affected by, or resilient to, the array of changing threats in their environment

The findings from this study have begun to shape the thinking of CCF about program design and methods. They are proving to be a key tool for staff, providing research that will more effectively improve the lives of children around the world.

▲ These Thai boys enjoy an afternoon of fun so important to their development and self-esteem. CCF's educational and child development programs focus on building self-esteem, a key to fighting poverty.

Interviewing children for CCF's poverty study revealed children's thoughts on how poverty affects them. These interviews have helped CCF gain valuable insights. Here is one child's view of poverty:

“You feel bad. You feel like the odd one out...you lack self-esteem. You feel like you shouldn't talk wherever you are, like you shouldn't be expressing ideas. You feel lonely. You feel ashamed.”

—16-year-old girl, Rusinga, Kenya

Early Childhood Development

The Right Start Affects a Child's Whole Life

In most of the world, children never see a doctor before they begin school. Some miss key developmental milestones, and others are left with lasting physical and mental difficulties. A complicating factor: parents don't understand that early stimulation is vital for their children's overall development process and for their children's success later in life.

CCF's Early Childhood Development programs address these issues and are getting children off to a strong, healthy start.

CCF's Early Childhood Development programs take a community-based approach. Targeted are all aspects of the children's development, including health and nutrition, while also empowering parents and community leaders to make lasting changes.

In the United States, the Brickfire program in Mississippi provides Early Childhood Development services in a center-based child care program. Serving children beginning at six months of age and ending when they enter school at age six, the full-time child care program uses its own curriculum. Teachers plan daily activities to enhance each child's growth in language, cognitive, motor and social/emotional skills, thus offering a rich and stimulating environment.

ECD programs like this take place throughout many other countries where CCF works. In The Gambia, the child's overall needs are addressed, including health and nutrition—going far beyond only educational needs. Parents learn the importance of a healthy start to life and its long-term impact on a child's future. Some parents are trained as ECD caregivers, implementing many elements to create a successful program.

The effectiveness of CCF's Early Childhood Development program in Honduras —the Guide Mothers program— was recognized when 1,700 CCF Guide Mothers won the Honduran Presidential Award for their volunteer work.

CCF trains parents who are role models in their communities to serve as guide mothers. These guide mothers travel throughout rural areas making home visits. Working with parents to address any signs of developmental delays or other problems, they track children's immunizations, health, height and weight, information critical to monitoring and maintaining proper growth and development.

Now a three-year study by the Bernard van Leer Foundation provides additional confirmation about the success of CCF's approach. This study compared children from two very similar villages. Children participating in CCF's Early Childhood Development program in Honduras had parents who were more involved, and the children received more opportunities. Primary teachers

also saw very clearly the differences in the two groups. Children from the CCF group were better able to adapt to school and had good habits and behavior. They were more responsible, sociable and communicative than their counterparts.

In countries throughout the world, thousands of children from birth to six are benefiting from CCF's Early Childhood Development program. In CCF preschool classrooms, specific themes build on the children's natural interest and curiosity about their environment, while linking other areas of the curriculum such as math, language, literacy, health science, music, arts and crafts as well as physical development. In this atmosphere, children excel.

A profound outcome of this program is that the children gain a sense of self. Therefore, researchers have discovered, children in the CCF program have hopes and dreams for the future.

CCF's Early Childhood Development programs worldwide address each child's health and nutritional needs first. Before children have the capacity to learn, their basic needs must be met. In addition, parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's development to ensure proper support and follow-up at home. Some of these programs are conducted in day care centers, while in rural areas, trained staff travel from home to home to monitor children's needs and conduct health assessments.

▼ These girls and boys are participating in CCF-Mexico's Early Childhood Development program, where critical needs are addressed so they can reach proper growth and developmental milestones.



Mary Arnold

Education



Thea Shermer

Hundreds of thousands of children are educated every year with CCF help. Most of them would have had little hope of ever going to school.

Child Friendly Schools in the Philippines, started after CCF conducted educational research, looking at education from several viewpoints. While education is aimed at the child's benefit, a well-rounded and successful education hinges on community and parental involvement. These schools enlist community participation as part of the educational process, taking a wide view of education. Community members help by finding children who are not attending school and getting them enrolled; serving as advocates to promote education; and looking beyond classroom education to address health, nutrition and overall well-being. Most important, the community has learned the value of caring about what happens to children in their

families and communities before they enter school and after they leave it. This program has experienced tremendous acceptance and is growing as a method of education.

In many developing countries, girls are especially at risk of not receiving a basic education. Although the United Nations reports that girls' education has been expanding all over the world, it is still just the beginning. CCF is working hard to improve educational opportunities for girls. One program in Kenya addresses a longtime tradition, that of forced early marriage of girls, some of whom marry as early as age eight. CCF offers a dramatic alternative—encouraging villagers to replace the harmful practice of “booking” girls for early marriage with a new practice of “booking” them for school. To do this, an innovative school was established—the Nangingoi Girls Boarding School. The success of this revolutionary program earned CCF's East Africa Regional Representative, Margery Kabuya, the Agathe

Education Offers a Window of Hope

To young girls at risk of early marriage, to children who work as forced laborers, to girls and boys living in families where day-to-day survival is the norm, education offers hope of a brighter future. CCF offers this hope throughout its programs.

award from the Forum for African Women Educationalists.

In Mexico an innovative new program is strengthening the cultural pride of youth. The program involves youth in 13 communities where older children work with elementary school children to promote good values, positive ideas, self-improvement and a new way to see the world. This also means that CCF is building community leaders from the ground up.

A similar program is helping youth in Belarus, where extreme poverty has seriously scarred children emotionally and psychologically. Widespread unemployment, poor living conditions, and lack of food and clothing magnify the stigma of being poor. Often the children become involved with crime, as well as drug and alcohol abuse. The CCF Peer Education Program specifically helps children and adolescents build self-esteem and develop their personal growth. This successful initiative pairs children, trained by CCF specialists, with other girls and boys their age to discuss such life-changing issues as health, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse prevention, effective communication, conflict resolution, leadership, and other life skills. They also train the next group of peer educators.

Thanks to vocational training, parents in Afghanistan have developed new skills like welding or sewing so they can support their families. Over 2,500 parents have received training and loans to start small businesses such as agricultural product processing, bakeries, sewing and animal husbandry.

No matter what form education takes, CCF is offering hope. Education is an investment in the future, one that CCF is making in 34 countries throughout the world.

The Maasai

The Maasai are a pastoral tribe in Kenya who subscribe to the practice of “booking” their daughters for marriage—usually before they are even born. CCF substitutes this traditional practice with a new practice of “booking” them to attend school instead. The brilliance of the program is that it uses the familiar process of offering a dowry to a girl's father (in the form of donated livestock and gifts). The Nangingoi project has recruited well respected Maasai elders to become “suitors” on the school's behalf. The elders act just as any other “suitor” would, offering gifts to fathers—in order to “book” young girls into the school.



Thea Shermer

These girls face the prospect of a much brighter future because their parents have “booked” them for school instead of early marriage.

Emergencies

Taking Key Steps After Disasters

After the peaceful blue skies and turquoise waters turned into a raging tsunami, nature became a force that altered lives forever. CCF stepped in with emergency relief just hours after the tsunami.

After families were driven from their homes by Sudanese militias, they fled across the border to Chad, where CCF is helping them rebuild their lives.

After the fighting stopped in Liberia, CCF began helping child soldiers adjust and return home again.

CCF responds to emergencies with immediate food, supplies and psychosocial interventions, gradually addressing the long-term needs of recovery and reconstruction.

Even though the tsunami caught the world's attention this past December, it is only one of many emergencies and natural disasters encountered by families in developing countries and here in the U.S.

Children are at risk due to war and civil conflict. In Sudan, thousands of people have fled to refugee camps in the neighboring country of Chad to escape brutal ethnic cleansing. More than 70,000 Sudanese people have been massacred and over 1.5 million displaced.

For those who have escaped to Chad, CCF has set up Child Centered Spaces, where children receive help to begin a long recovery process. In addition, CCF has established health, psychosocial and income-generating programs for parents. Soon after, Chadian women recognized the benefits of CCF's Sudanese work, and at their request, programs were begun for them as well.

CCF-Liberia has implemented a three-year community revitalization and vocational skills training program for war-affected women and youth. The program addresses children's rights and helps former child soldiers

return to society. It also helps those who were sexually assaulted to recover and return home. As part of the demobilization process, CCF works through six interim care centers. Along with a place to help children adjust to civilian life, the centers provide basic health screening and services, prevocational training and nonformal education. CCF traces families so they can be reunited with their children and works with communities to accept children and youth once they have returned home.

Northern Ugandan children and families have also suffered greatly due to civil unrest. CCF continues to work with the World Food Programme, addressing food security, child protection and public health, but also providing



Caroline Jenkins

emergency food. Working with UNICEF, CCF has initiated a Child Protection Program in three districts of Uganda. It targets 25,000 children, offering programs such as Child Centered Spaces and nonformal and peer education.

Tsunami Recovery Efforts

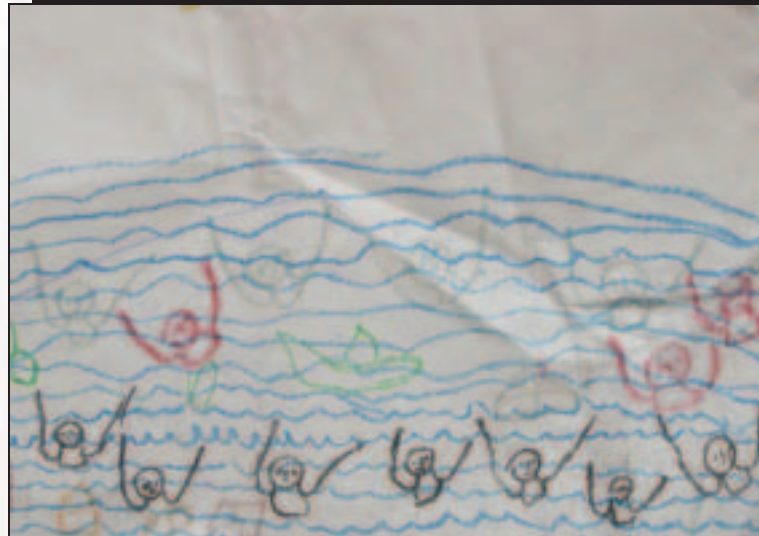
When the waves receded from the deadliest tsunami in modern times on December 26, 2004, CCF provided immediate emergency assistance. CCF distributed food, milk, water and other supplies. Within days, CCF was working with parents and community members on reconstruction and began setting up Child Centered Spaces, to give children a safe place to heal from the devastation they had experienced. In tsunami-affected India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, CCF is addressing long-term recovery, and helping families regain their livelihoods.

In India, CCF established more than 90 Child Centered Spaces in tsunami-ravaged villages, and helped parents and community members initiate livelihood programs that included construction and repair of fishing boats, cleaning up debris and putting wells back into working order.

In five tsunami-devastated districts of Sri Lanka, CCF has established more than 50 Child Centered Spaces, and rebuilt water and sanitation facilities and cleared sand from rice fields. CCF has implemented a USAID-funded "cash for work" program, enabling 38,000 people to earn wages while rebuilding their communities. Now, CCF is establishing livelihood ventures targeting women.

In Indonesia, CCF initiated more than 100 Child Centered Spaces, has cleared debris, and has been a leader in child protection efforts among those who moved from camps to temporary housing.

CCF is recognized for its strategies to safeguard children following emergencies or natural disasters. CCF initiates programs that enable children to return to their normal activities, while also helping their parents and communities nurture them as they look toward the future.



This drawing is one child's view of what happened during the tsunami. It was drawn as part of an activity in one of CCF's Child Centered Spaces in Sri Lanka. Art is a tool used by CCF that allows children to express their thoughts and feelings in Child Centered Spaces, one of which was visited by former presidents Bush and Clinton in February 2005. See cover photo.

In Katrina's Wake

Christian Children's Fund is responding to the needs of children and families in central and northern Mississippi where the impact of Hurricane Katrina is being felt. While the devastation on the coast is being widely reported, areas in central and northern Mississippi have also experienced significant property and structural damage. CCF is restocking food pantries, repairing a flooded technical center for youth, distributing school supply and recreation kits for 10,000 children, and setting up small laundromat facilities for evacuees, among other emergency responses.

For more information regarding CCF's emergency response, visit www.ChristianChildrensFund.org/emergency