

CHILDFUND'S 2015-2016 IMPACT REPORT: A FOCUS ON CHILD PROTECTION

When ChildFund was founded nearly 80 years ago, we reached out to children where war and revolution had destroyed the systems and structures around them. In China, and later in Korea, this meant meeting the immediate needs of infants and children apart from their war-damaged homes and communities.

Today, ChildFund works globally to protect, support and care for millions of children and youth living in extreme poverty. We engage long-term to enable children to achieve better health, access education and thrive within the care and protection of their families, communities and societies.

ChildFund's experience and programmatic evidence have led us to deepen our child protection efforts across all of our work. To address the root causes of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children, we take a comprehensive approach to child protection rather than limiting our response to specific violations. We invest in the vital relationships among children, families, communities and national and global institutions to build stronger systems that better serve children and advance their overall well-being. What's more, ChildFund's Life Stage approach promotes children's optimal development at every age by tailoring interventions to their unique needs as they grow from infants to young adults.

CHILD PROTECTION AT THE CENTER

All children have the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, and yet the extent of harms committed against children worldwide is massive. Violations to a child's right to protection not only impede individual development, but they also erode global gains in children's collective well-being.

ChildFund has placed child protection at the heart of our efforts to support and care for millions of children and youth living in extreme poverty. ChildFund's most recent biannual Impact Report (2015-2016) examines our work in child protection to further child well-being globally. The report highlights our understanding that without protection from harm, other efforts to advance child development will be undermined. It describes where, how and with what results we are implementing child protection around the world, and suggests ways we can achieve better outcomes for vulnerable children.

CHILDFUND 2015-2016 IMPACT REPORT: KEY FINDINGS

- **Healthy physical, cognitive and emotional growth cannot occur when a child is exposed to abuse, neglect, exploitation or violence.** To be effective in child protection, we must strive for a comprehensive protective environment and not limit ourselves to responding to specific violations. We also must integrate our measurement of protection outcomes with measurement of other child development outcomes, while becoming more focused, deliberate, and sophisticated in our measurement.
- **Some child protection violations are overt and widely recognized, but many are subtle or part of harmful traditions and customs. In order to take effective action, communities must have a shared understanding about the types of harm against children.** In five provinces in the Philippines, ChildFund reduced child labor by 96 percent by providing realistic alternatives to sending young children to work in dangerous conditions.

Worldwide, 570 million children live in extreme poverty, vulnerable to many factors that threaten their well-being.

- In 2015, up to 1 billion children endured violence. This is more than half of the world's children.¹
- Each year, 150 million girls and 73 million boys experience sexual violence.²
- 168 million children worldwide are engaged in child labor.³
- Each year, 15 million girls are married before the age of 18.⁴
- The global cost of harm to children equals 3% – 8% of the world's gross domestic product.⁵



- **We must place children at the center of a system where family, community, social services and institutions, national and global laws and policies align for their protection and positive development. ChildFund bridges these structures to make gains that result in child protection and, thus, well-being.** In Belarus, ChildFund worked with communities and governments to establish a modern child protection and alternative care system that has enabled 17,000 children to thrive with their families, rather than placing them in state-run institutions.
- **Sustained protection can be achieved only when we address the root causes of harm to children, including chronic poverty, inadequate or absent policy, and deeply ingrained social norms and practices.** In Ethiopia, ChildFund engaged community advocates, religious leaders, governments, media and other influencers to change the way people perceive female genital mutilation and reduce incidence rates.
- **Measuring child protection is not straightforward, given the complex mix of informal and formal systems that influence gains in child protection. ChildFund measures outcomes related to child protection and development, and examines the mechanisms that prevent and respond to risk and harm. While we have improved our measurement capabilities, we are still learning what must be measured, and how.** In Kenya, a child cannot access education, health care and legal protection without a birth registration. ChildFund worked with local governments and communities to create mobile birth registration centers that enabled remote families to register 77,000 vulnerable children in one year.



OUR APPROACH TO CHILD PROTECTION

ChildFund's experience and focus on the root causes of child poverty position us to take on the challenges of effective child protection, both deeply and broadly. Our strong relationships with children, families and communities enable us to infuse child protection in all our interventions, and to collaborate with key constituents to strengthen protection systems around children by addressing critical areas of need:

- **Support** protective factors in children's environments.
- **Address** social and cultural norms that harm children.
- **Help** formal and informal structures fulfill their roles and responsibilities for the best interest of children.
- **Engage** children and youth in accordance with their ability, need and right to act for their own protection.
- **Address** underlying causes of harm.
- **Invest** in a systems approach that bridges informal and formal systems to promote real and sustainable change toward child wellbeing and protection and to reflect all rights of the child.

GET INVOLVED

ChildFund exists to help deprived, excluded and vulnerable children have the capacity to improve their lives and become young adults, parents and leaders who bring lasting and positive change in their communities. Through local partnerships, grants and outreach in 28 countries, ChildFund is making a difference for nearly 20 million people worldwide. To learn more, visit childfund.org/ImpactReport or contact Erin Kennedy, Director of Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships at ChildFund International, at ekennedy@childfund.org.

1. "Global Prevalence of Past-year Violence Against Children: A Systematic Review and Minimum Estimates." *American Academy of Pediatrics*. January, 2016.
2. Finkelhor, David. "The International Epidemiology of Child Sexual Abuse." *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 18. 1994. 409-417.
3. "Global Child Labour Trends 2008-2012." *International Labour Organization International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour*. 2013.
4. "Ending Child Marriage: Progress and Prospects." New York: *United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)*. 2014.
5. "The Cost and Economic Impact of Violence Against Children." *Overseas Development Institute, Child Fund Alliance*. 2014.