

ChildFund
Australia

CHILDFUND NEWS

JULY 2024



**BECAUSE
EVERY CHILD
NEEDS A
CHILDHOOD**

SUPPORTING YOUNG REFUGEES TO FIND SAFETY

When a child is displaced from their home, they need somewhere they feel safe. Somewhere to play. Somewhere to develop skills for the future. And somewhere to just be children for a while.

ChildFund Australia is working with partners in Bangladesh and Uganda to establish child friendly spaces in refugee camps to ensure all forcibly displaced children can keep learning, stay safe and play with friends.



Bangladesh

Your generous donations will help 16,000 children living in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh to attend educational and livelihood classes at ChildFund-supported multi-purpose centres and youth clubs.

"As a mother of four children, visiting the camps was incredibly confronting. Domestic violence, child labour, early marriage and child exploitation are real threats children face every day.

"It seems like a simple thing, but these multi-purpose centres and youth clubs are saving lives. They are a safe place where children and young people – the doctors, nurses, teachers and pilots of tomorrow – can learn important and practical life skills, socialise and be safe."

Corinne Habel, ChildFund Australia's Chief Development Officer, who recently travelled to Kutupalong refugee camp in Bangladesh.

Playing with friends is such an important part of childhood. But for refugee children in Cox's Bazar there are few places they can safely play outside.

Thanks to those who gave to our Child Protection appeal, our local partner, EDUCO, can run three multi-purpose centres and 20 youth clubs in the camps. Your generosity means more children have somewhere safe to play with their friends.



Uganda

Your donations are helping to run three child friendly spaces in Paloringya refugee camp, the second largest refugee camp in Uganda and home to more than 122,000 South Sudanese refugees.

Each child friendly space includes a classroom, toilets and most importantly a playground.

Diana (pictured) laughs with her friends as she waits for the teacher to begin lessons in the classroom at the child friendly space.

Everyday more than 600 children attend the community spaces where they can learn, interact with other children, and access critical psychosocial support.



TAKING THE BIG JUMP - TOGETHER!

“Starting school might have been scary but it didn’t feel strange because I had already visited and met lots of kids,” – My, now in year one.

Excitement. Nerves. Even tears. The first day of primary school can be a mixed bag of emotions for both parents and children alike.

Thanks to our supporters, ChildFund Vietnam is helping preschool teachers in Tân Lạc to implement simple but effective programs so children like My are prepared for primary school. An example is the orientation program where preschool teachers organise primary school visits so preschoolers can see what they have to look forward to. Hopefully squashing some of those first day nerves in the process!

“I remember my preschool teacher taking me and my friends to meet the teachers and students at a primary school,” recalls My, “My favourite part was all the activities, especially getting to read and sing with the big kids.”

Even My’s mum, Thanh, has seen a big difference in her daughter’s confidence, *“My used to be shy, but now she is very comfortable at school, and her language skills have improved. She is much more independent.”*



Preschool children taking part in a primary school orientation program in Vietnam

With your support we’ve:

- Run 45 trainings for parents and caregivers upskilling 1,511 parents in how to prepare their children for the transition to primary school
- Trained 89 preschool and primary school teachers on how to create a rich learning environment for young children



Kajan and his mother, Pathmalaka, at their home in Sri Lanka

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Kajan (12) smiles brightly as he plays with his classmates at his local school in rural Sri Lanka. A few years earlier, this seemed impossible. Kajan was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, which left him unable to walk, and for the first years of his life, he was isolated at home.

His mother, Pathmalaka, remembers her sadness when her son was watching other children kicking a soccer ball around, unable to join in: *“I used to feel so sad, so hopeless.”*

But as day labourers, Kajan’s parents were unable to afford his medical care. When a ChildFund volunteer invited them to join ChildFund’s Community-based Inclusive Development Program, they enrolled immediately. Through the program, Kajan was provided with intensive physiotherapy and as his strength grew, he was given equipment to help improve his mobility. Pathmalaka worked with Kajan everyday on his exercises helping him walk for the first time in his life.

But, when his mum tried to enrol him in the local primary school, he was denied a spot because of his disability. *“When ChildFund visited I told them about Kajan’s desire to study and how he was denied admission to school. They went and met with the school administration and were able to get him in.”*

Kajan is now a confident child who flourishes at school and loves to join his friends on the soccer field during break time!

Thanks to your support, ChildFund and local partners are challenging the discriminatory attitudes that keep children with disabilities from accessing quality education and helping to provide families with access to the healthcare services their children need.

KEEPING CHILDREN HEALTHY IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES

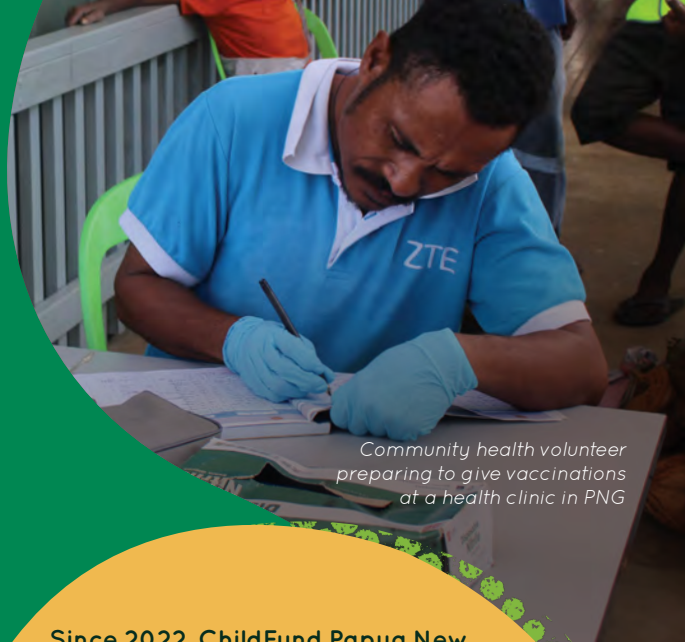
Not too far off Australia's shores, communities in Papua New Guinea (PNG) are grappling with the consequences of having one of the lowest vaccination rates in the Asia-Pacific region. With your support, ChildFund has helped children and their families living in remote communities to access much needed healthcare facilities. ChildFund's Mobile Health Clinics provide a one stop shop for a variety of health services, including vaccinations, maternal healthcare, and tuberculosis treatment.

For mums like Mrs Abadi, who lives in a remote village in Central Province with her nine children, the mobile health clinics are a lifeline. Previously, she had to travel long distances to access healthcare for her family.

"It was incredibly difficult to bring my children to the nearest health facility due to the poor road conditions and the unaffordable transport fares,"

Mrs Abadi added that the ChildFund team also shared information on different health topics, some of which were new to her and would keep her family safe and healthy.

"I am grateful for the outreach health services that provide immunisations, as I know this is keeping my youngest Kila safe from the sicknesses I hear about in awareness messages from ChildFund."



Community health volunteer preparing to give vaccinations at a health clinic in PNG

Since 2022, ChildFund Papua New Guinea in partnership with the Provincial Health Authorities in Central and Northern Provinces has:

- Delivered 16,545 vaccines to children in remote and rural communities
- Trained 257 volunteers to deliver vaccinations and treat diseases like tuberculosis, polio and COVID-19



Americo, a community health volunteer in Timor-Leste

GIVING CHILDREN IN TIMOR-LESTE THE BEST START IN LIFE

There is no time to spare in the first 1,000 days of a child's life. This is something Americo, a health volunteer working with ChildFund in Lautem municipality in Timor-Leste, knows all too well.

Poor access to health care and hygiene facilities in conjunction with limited knowledge on health, nutrition and food preparation has resulted in malnutrition in children under five becoming a major issue across Timor-Leste.

Health volunteers trained by ChildFund are helping to identify and diagnose cases of child malnutrition, and work with parents and caregivers to provide appropriate nutrition intervention.

"Whenever we weigh a child, and the child's weight is below average, we immediately make plans with the mothers to start cooking lessons," explains Americo. *"We teach them how to cook nutritious porridge for the child to consume for 12 days and then weigh the child again to see their progress. Most of the children gain 2.5 to 3kg."*

The cooking lessons have become an invaluable and popular experience for families. Lessons focus on teaching parents to use the food they grow in their backyards to create a nutritious and balanced diet for their children. It's only a 12-day program but its impact is long lasting. Americo says that the parents that took part in the program are now more proactive in making sure that their children are growing up healthy.

Together, we've supported:

- 2438 parents to attend childhood nutrition sessions, including cooking sessions
- 209 community health workers to receive training on childhood nutrition and health

PROTECTING CHILDREN TRAPPED IN CRISIS

Every child has the right to live a safe, happy, and healthy life. But, for one in six children living in or fleeing from a conflict zone, this is a right they are constantly denied. Protracted crises in Ukraine, Afghanistan and Gaza have forced many children to flee their homes, give up on their education, and face unimaginable mental and physical trauma.



Children dancing at a ChildFund-supported refugee accommodation centre in Moldova



Ukraine

With your support, ChildFund Alliance member, WeWorld, has provided 95,000 people including 43,000 children forced to flee to Moldova with humanitarian assistance. This includes providing access to lifesaving supplies, including food, clean water, safe shelter and psychosocial support.



Aziz's daughter at their home in Herat Province, Afghanistan

Afghanistan

Decades of conflict, economic and political turmoil, alongside recurrent disasters have left millions of people in Afghanistan living in extreme poverty and experiencing widespread hunger and malnutrition. For women, especially those at the head of their families, rising hunger as well as ongoing restrictions on their rights and participation in public life has left them struggling to meet their own and their families' basic needs.

Aziz was widowed four years ago and has struggled to feed her four children since then. During the day, she would go house to house baking bread, and at night she would tailor clothes as her children slept.

"I have been through a lot of challenges after my husband died. After he passed, there was not any income to feed the children and respond to our needs. My small daughter became malnourished".

ChildFund, and our partners, WeWorld and the Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan (RRAA), Cash for Food program in Herat province is helping families like Aziz's access lifesaving food supplies through cash transfers.

"Through the cash I was receiving every month I could respond to the entire needs of the household and feed my children three times a day, provide clothes and education materials. The assistance has made life better."

Thanks to support from donors like you, ChildFund's Cash for Food Program has helped more than 500 families with cash assistance. Families like Aziz's can now purchase food and other essential items.

DANCING FOR A CAUSE

In April, we saw an incredible outpouring of support for the communities we work with in Papua New Guinea. Dancers Unite, an annual charity event that brings together dance schools from across Melbourne, rallied together to raise funds for our maternal and child health programs in Papua New Guinea. The fundraiser was spearheaded by Madelyn Hassan who established Dancers Unite when she was just 15 years old to shed light on communities in need and educate younger generations about the importance of giving back.

It was a celebratory evening filled with many outstanding performances by dance schools from across Melbourne. The event raised \$7,560 to support children in Papua New Guinea to gain access to lifesaving health services. Thank you to our community of supporters who are raising their voice for child rights and helping children to stay safe, healthy and educated.

If you are interested in throwing a community fundraiser for ChildFund, get in touch with our Supporter Relations team on 1800 023 600.



Dancers Unite performing at a charity fundraiser for ChildFund



ChildFund Australia recognises the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



ChildFund Australia

Address: 162 Goulburn St, Surry Hills NSW 2010

Phone: 1800 023 600

Email: info@childfund.org.au

Website: www.childfund.org.au

ABN: 79 002 885 761

Editor: ChildFund Australia communications staff

Designer: Minnie Milan

Photography: ChildFund staff and supporters

Printers: JA Wales

Front cover: Jovia, Nancy and Antias playing at a ChildFund-supported child friendly space in Uganda

© ChildFund Australia