

A group of children are posed in a dimly lit room with dark wooden walls. In the foreground, a young boy with dark hair sits on a weathered wooden crate, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a blue and white plaid shirt with a colorful graphic on the left chest and blue jeans. Behind him, four other children are visible, slightly out of focus. One girl to his right wears a bright pink jacket. The lighting is dramatic, coming from the side, highlighting the children's faces against the dark background.

CHILDFUND AUSTRALIA STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 – 2020

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ChildFund Australia is an independent and non-religious international development organisation that works to reduce poverty for children in the developing world. ChildFund Australia is a member of the ChildFund Alliance – a global network of 12 organisations which assists more than 15 million children in 58 countries.

ChildFund Australia implements programs with a range of local partners in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam, and manages projects delivered by partner organisations throughout Asia, Africa and the Americas.

Our vision: A global community, free from poverty, where children are protected and have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Our mission: We work 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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Front cover: Kuathor, age 10, lives in northern Laos.

Back cover: Siblings in Papua New Guinea's Rigo District.

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Thirteen year-old Ei Ei Htwe lives in Yangon, Myanmar. Building the resilience of children is vital in a rapidly changing world.

FROM THE CHAIR & CEO

ChildFund Australia is a member of one of the world's oldest child-focused development and humanitarian relief organisations. Established over 75 years ago to provide support to displaced children in China, the ChildFund Alliance is now a global network of 12 organisations, working in partnership with local communities in more than 50 countries.

ChildFund Australia has been responding to the needs of children in developing countries for more than thirty years – independent assessments have consistently confirmed that it is a highly effective, child-focused international development organisation.

Over the past ten years ChildFund Australia has significantly increased the reach and quality of its development programs, resulting in positive change in conditions for children in poor communities. ChildFund Australia directly, and through the ChildFund Alliance, has a longstanding, trusted presence in hundreds of local communities around the world.

ChildFund's development work is holistic, with integrated programs encompassing a vast range of activities that produce a tangible impact in children's lives including education, healthcare, water and sanitation, child protection, nutrition, livelihoods, capacity building, youth leadership, children's play and recreation, early childhood care and support, child participation, rights realisation, HIV and AIDS, disaster risk reduction and emergency relief.

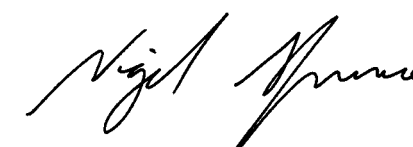
Our work is generously supported by more than 70,000 Australians, as well as businesses, Trusts, Foundations, the Australian Government, and members of the ChildFund Alliance. ChildFund Australia's

funding model has historically relied on child sponsorship, but has now evolved and diversified so that non-sponsorship funding streams now account for more than half of all revenue.

Drawing on these strengths, ChildFund Australia has undertaken an extensive strategic planning process to comprehensively reassess its response to children in today's fast-changing environment. Following consultation with stakeholders and extensive organisational review, the ChildFund Australia Board has adopted this Strategic Plan to guide the organisation's work to advance children's rights over the next five years.



Marcus Laithwaite,
Chair of ChildFund Australia



Nigel Spence,
CEO of ChildFund Australia

Thith, age 12, lives in Laos. The economic and social contribution that children bring to community life often goes unrecognised.

A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD FOR CHILDREN

Great progress has been made in reducing child poverty.

Child deaths have been halved - from 13m per year in 1990 to 6m in 2015. In 1990, almost half of the population in developing regions lived in extreme poverty, surviving on less than \$1.25 a day. This has fallen to around 20%.

An additional 2.6 billion people now have access to clean water and school enrolment in primary education has increased markedly to around 90 per cent in developing regions.

Extreme, life-threatening poverty is reducing in most developing countries. However, pockets of extreme poverty remain within emerging economies, deprivation is high in fragile states and some developing countries have made little or no progress on poverty reduction. Accelerating

urbanisation is leading to concentrations of poverty in many of the world's cities, although a greater number of the world's poor still live in rural and remote areas.

At the same time, less tangible manifestations of child poverty are becoming more significant:

- Inequality and exclusion have grown, often based on ethnicity, gender, class, location, disability, and caste. Marginalised groups are not benefiting from the growing prosperity in their country and region.
- Risks and threats to children have emerged or grown stronger, and include severe weather events, increased mobility and displacement,

urbanisation, global economic crises, family and community violence, and loss of traditional culture.

Civil unrest, armed conflicts and natural disasters are having severe impact on children in all regions of the world.

Children's rights, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, continue to be unrealised.

□ The role that children and youth can play as active citizens in their communities – socially, economically and culturally – often goes unrecognised or is not valued.

THE WAY WE WORK

Sisters in Rigo District, Papua New Guinea.
All children have the right to care and protection.

ChildFund Australia will continue to work with children and young people, the communities we serve and other organisations until we collectively achieve our vision for the world's children: *A global community free from poverty, where children are protected and have the opportunity to reach their full potential.*

To do this, we will stay true to our mission 'to work in partnership with children and their communities to create lasting and meaningful change by supporting long-term community development and promoting children's rights'.

ChildFund's work is based on the understanding that poverty is not only a lack of material resources, but being deprived of the capabilities and freedoms people need in order to live the life they value (Amartya Sen, 1999).

People are poor because they lack vital assets such as education, healthcare, income, clean water and sanitation. They are excluded in their societies, and lack power in their families, communities and across nations.

Based on this understanding, ChildFund Australia works to secure children's rights by:

- building human, capital, natural and social assets around the child and their caregivers;

- amplifying the voice of children and their ability to bring about the changes they want in their lives;
- supporting the ability of people in poor communities to build and claim their power; and
- ensuring that children are protected from risks in their environment.

OUR OVERARCHING AIM FOR CHILDREN: 2015-2020

In this era of rapid change and disruption in the lives of children - with both positive and negative consequences for them, their families and communities - ChildFund Australia seeks to renew itself so that it can flexibly and effectively respond to children's lived experience.

We will focus our efforts and our resources in the next period on the achievement of one overarching aim:

ChildFund Australia will enable children and youth to be safe, confident and resilient, able to play active, constructive roles in an increasingly turbulent world.

We want all children with whom we work to be able to say:

I am safe

I am educated

I am heard

I can make a difference

I have a future

Success means that positive outcomes for children will be achieved, and ChildFund Australia will be recognised as an organisation that addresses the realities of children

living in poverty today, not the problems of the past. An organisation that not only reduces material deprivation but an organisation which promotes participation,

strengthens protection, advances children's rights and creates positive opportunities for children in poor communities and children from vulnerable groups.

OUR WORK IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

To address the overarching aim over the next five years, ChildFund will focus on five strategic goals – three child-focused goals and two enabling goals:

- 1

Refocus our programs to respond to children's changing needs.
- 2

Direct our efforts intensively to children in the Asia Pacific Region.
- 3

Help communities be prepared to address threats and risks; and protect children impacted by conflicts and disasters.
- 4

Diversify revenue to enable sustained, long-term organisational growth.
- 5

Strengthen the organisation's agility, and ability to respond to change and opportunity.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: REFOCUS OUR PROGRAMS TO RESPOND TO CHILDREN'S CHANGING NEEDS

ChildFund Australia's program approach remains highly relevant in the new era. But in the context of disruptive change and the increasing vulnerability of children and youth to risks in their environment, we will move beyond our historical focus on the 'survival agenda'.

In most countries where ChildFund operates, children's survival rights are increasingly being met, as basic services and physical infrastructure are put in place, but they are unevenly distributed and of variable quality. Inequality is widening, and marginalised groups of children are missing out on the opportunities that a rapidly changing world offers to the majority. Threats to children's well-being have emerged or grown stronger and many violations of children's rights persist.

In this changing context, we want children in poor communities to not only survive, but thrive. We want children to be safe, nurtured, educated, confident, capable and respected, with their ideas and opinions sought and valued. Children's rights to development, protection and participation should now be given even greater focus.

Another important trend is the growth of civil society in many countries. Our strategy seeks to build on and foster the growing strength of local community organisations in order to achieve better outcomes for children.

Helen and Dominic with their children in Papua New Guinea. Extreme poverty persists in some locations. Inequality within and between countries is widening.



In order to respond more effectively to children in these fast-changing circumstances, ChildFund Australia will refocus its programs in the following ways . . .

1. We will focus our programming more strongly on building vital human and social capital in communities – skills, knowledge, capacity, economic opportunities and effective services, particularly health and education. We will increase efforts to promote children's participation and contribution to community life, strengthen the protection of children from a wide range of threats and enhance the power of community members to advance the rights and interests of children.
2. We will scale up our response to children in three priority areas:
 - i. Education: formal and non-formal education; early childhood; primary and secondary education; youth vocational training; access to education for excluded groups; improved quality of education.
 - ii. Child protection: strengthen national child protection systems; strengthen community processes to protect children; prevent violence and exploitation; implement targeted projects for high risk groups of children.
 - iii. Build children's resilience: strengthen children's confidence, competencies, skills and interests so they are able to cope with challenges and crises.
3. We will partner more with community based organisations and actors to nurture local civil society, promote active citizenship and to build their capacity to deliver programs and projects that advance our overarching aim.
4. We will address specific child rights issues, specific inequities and concrete manifestations of child poverty by implementing national, issues-based campaigns and commencing in-depth, multi-country campaigns, driven by our programs.
5. We will evaluate and demonstrate results from our program work, and learn from our experience.

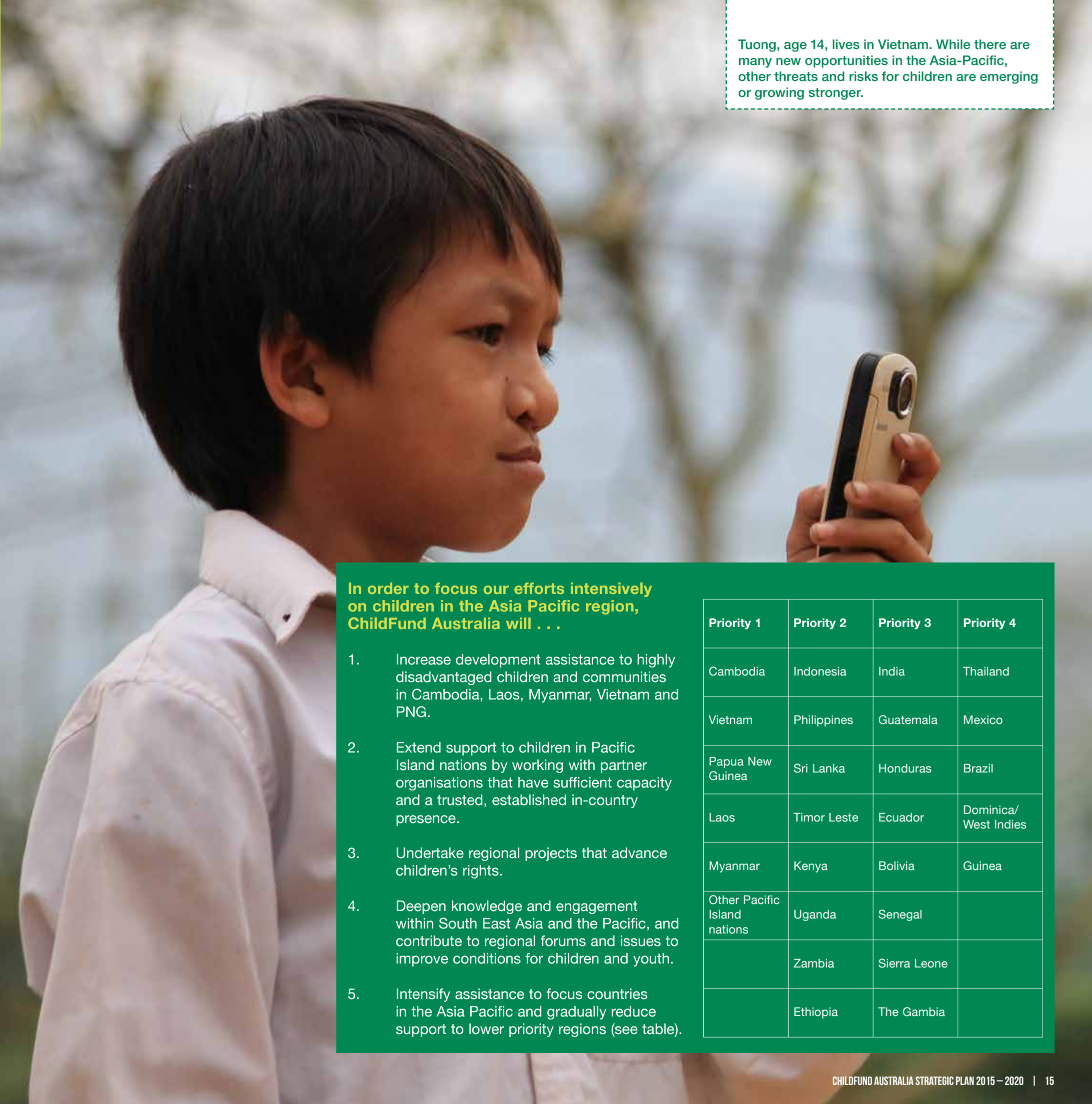
STRATEGIC GOAL 2: DIRECT OUR EFFORTS INTENSIVELY TO CHILDREN IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

The distribution of poverty and inequality is changing. Many children in the Asia and Pacific regions experience extreme poverty, lack of opportunity, discrimination and vulnerability. Home to two-thirds of the world’s poor, over 700 million people in the Asia-Pacific live on less than \$1.25US a day, with poverty levels making it especially difficult for those nations to deal with natural disasters, such as earthquakes and cyclones.

South East Asia and the Pacific is Australia’s geographical neighbourhood. It is a region where Australia has a leading geo-political role, including being an important actor in overseas development assistance. ChildFund Australia has a strong, trusted presence in South East Asia and Papua New Guinea. We will build on this strength and extend our reach to countries in the Pacific that are underserved by effective child-focused NGOs.

Many of the issues impacting children today are global or regional in nature. Multi-country or regional responses are part of the required solution. Development organisations, such as ChildFund Australia, should undertake regional programs of substantial size and scale, in order to address trans-national child rights issues.

Tuong, age 14, lives in Vietnam. While there are many new opportunities in the Asia-Pacific, other threats and risks for children are emerging or growing stronger.



In order to focus our efforts intensively on children in the Asia Pacific region, ChildFund Australia will . . .

- 1. Increase development assistance to highly disadvantaged children and communities in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam and PNG.
- 2. Extend support to children in Pacific Island nations by working with partner organisations that have sufficient capacity and a trusted, established in-country presence.
- 3. Undertake regional projects that advance children’s rights.
- 4. Deepen knowledge and engagement within South East Asia and the Pacific, and contribute to regional forums and issues to improve conditions for children and youth.
- 5. Intensify assistance to focus countries in the Asia Pacific and gradually reduce support to lower priority regions (see table).

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3	Priority 4
Cambodia	Indonesia	India	Thailand
Vietnam	Philippines	Guatemala	Mexico
Papua New Guinea	Sri Lanka	Honduras	Brazil
Laos	Timor Leste	Ecuador	Dominica/ West Indies
Myanmar	Kenya	Bolivia	Guinea
Other Pacific Island nations	Uganda	Senegal	
	Zambia	Sierra Leone	
	Ethiopia	The Gambia	

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: HELP COMMUNITIES BE PREPARED TO ADDRESS THREATS AND RISKS; AND PROTECT CHILDREN IMPACTED BY CONFLICTS AND DISASTERS

The number and severity of humanitarian emergencies are increasing due to climate change, urbanisation, civil wars, poor governance, unrest, inequality, global economic shocks and weak preparedness.

Throughout its long history, ChildFund has been a first responder, recognising that children are particularly vulnerable when crises occur and often suffer the worst consequences. There is a humanitarian imperative for organisations such as ChildFund to act to protect children when their safety and survival are put at risk due to sudden events.

Natural and human-caused disasters can wipe out years of development progress. Well planned risk reduction measures can minimise the risks that children face and can limit or prevent the damage caused by disasters. With the significant increase in both natural and man-made disasters, ChildFund will increase its emergency response capacity. It will also support communities in developing disaster risk reduction strategies, to reduce the threats that children face and prevent years of development progress being lost.

Many countries have made progress in reducing their vulnerability to disasters and other localised hazards. However, community-based actions to reduce vulnerability are severely under-developed in countries served by ChildFund Australia. It is also the case that young people are largely under-utilised in community based preparedness.

Sanju, age 11, from Nepal. Providing psychosocial care and support to children is essential during humanitarian emergencies.



In order to strengthen community resilience and protect children impacted by humanitarian crises, ChildFund will . . .

1. Help communities be better prepared to identify and deal with potential crises. We will support youth to participate, and take leadership roles, as appropriate in disaster preparedness processes.
2. Respond immediately to severe localised emergencies in communities– either by direct response or through partners.
3. Contribute to the response in all major (Level 3) emergencies around the world where we are able to make a valuable and effective contribution. This will be done by responding directly, supporting ChildFund International’s response or by working in partnership with other organisations.
4. Respond rapidly, providing assistance as called for by the circumstances. Our specialist contribution will be child protection expertise with a focus on children’s psychosocial care and support.
5. Continue to build organisational capacity to reduce risks for children in communities where we work, and build organisational capacity to protect children in emergencies.
6. Contribute to improved coordination and strengthened capacity in the ChildFund Alliance.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: DIVERSIFY REVENUE TO ENABLE SUSTAINED, LONG-TERM ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH

ChildFund Australia has enjoyed strong support from the Australian public, resulting in substantial revenue growth. Historically, public support has been mainly through child sponsorships contributed by Australian families.

Child sponsorship will remain a popular form of engagement for many Australian families but with increasing advances in technology, we will offer new forms of support, participation and engagement for Australians who are concerned about global child poverty and children’s rights. We will rely less heavily on sponsorship and scale up new forms of engagement and offer them through a wider range of channels, utilising new and established media.

It is critical that ChildFund Australia retain public confidence and grow public support. We have the opportunity to do this by boldly presenting our cause for children, valuing and continuing with child sponsorship, scaling up new forms of supporter engagement, diversifying fundraising channels, and achieving the highest standards of supporter care.

In addition to support from the Australian public, there is more opportunity to grow the support from institutional donors, the private sector, philanthropic sources and ChildFund Alliance members.

In our fast-changing environment, new forms of support and engagement will rapidly emerge, many of these will utilise new technologies. ChildFund Australia must be ready to adjust quickly, investigate rapidly and be a smart adopter of the most promising new opportunities.

Former sponsored child Raphael and his family in Uganda. Child sponsorship is one of many ways in which Australians can engage in the work of ChildFund Australia.



- In order to evolve our business model and achieve sustainable long-term financial growth, ChildFund Australia will . . .**
- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Articulate clear, concise, powerful messaging that communicates our ‘overarching aim’ in a distinctive, authentic and compelling way to the Australian public, donors and our country stakeholders. | 5. Increase the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and long-term value of traditional fundraising methods while scaling up online and offline marketing channels. |
| 2. Continue to improve the child sponsorship experience for supporters and children, using new and improved technologies. | 6. Retain grant-seeking as an organisational priority and increase grant-seeking capacity in collaboration with ChildFund Alliance. |
| 3. Engage our supporters on issues affecting children in ChildFund-supported communities through development education, encouraging meaningful connections and advocating for children’s rights. | 7. Maintain and strengthen bilateral partnerships with ChildFund Alliance members. |
| 4. Increase our investment in fundraising products, notably Global Community, one-off giving, bequests, community fundraising, corporate and philanthropic support. | 8. Maximise the marketing power and functionality of the new ChildFund Australia donor management system. |
| | 9. Investigate new development financing options that are emerging in the industry, in partnership with other organisations. |

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: STRENGTHEN THE ORGANISATION’S AGILITY, AND ABILITY TO RESPOND TO CHANGE AND OPPORTUNITY

ChildFund Australia’s structures and ways of working must evolve to achieve our strategic goals and ensure we remain a contemporary, dynamic and efficient organisation. Changes in our operating environment call for review and adjustment - particularly to respond to the challenging fundraising environment, competitive grant-seeking context, our growing presence in the Asia-Pacific, opportunities presented by new technologies and changing partnership arrangements.

Our highly skilled and capable people remain the backbone of ChildFund Australia’s operation and we will continue to give attention to their development, capacity and the best way to structure and align people for the work ahead.

ChildFund has invested in a new donor management system, in order to position the organisation for the future. Additional IT investment will remain a challenge. Nevertheless, adoption of appropriate technologies in all functional areas of the organisation remains a priority to facilitate collaboration across locations, knowledge and learning dissemination, and our capacity to be flexible and responsive.

Working with others is essential if we are to achieve our goals. Partnerships enable us to accelerate our work and to extend our reach. They enable us to secure global resources and to undertake joint projects such as global advocacy campaigns. Being part of ChildFund Alliance remains critical to us and we will pursue collaborations with individual Alliance members, as well as develop new partnerships with organisations outside the Alliance.

Sorphoan and her mother in Kratie Province, Cambodia. Exclusion, often based on ethnicity, gender, class, location, disability and caste, is increasing in many countries.



- In order to maintain cohesion while reaching for new ways of working, adjusting our structures, stimulating a stronger learning environment, achieving high quality leadership and contemporary, relevant IT, ChildFund Australia will . . .**
- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Complete the professionalisation of our new human resource systems. | 4. Drive the donor management system and expand functionality so that it is widely used across the organisation. |
| 2. Build staff capabilities to respond flexibly and effectively, giving particular attention to developing competence in the areas prioritised under this Strategic Plan. | 5. Develop and implement an agreed IT strategy that enables us to incrementally upgrade, replace and introduce technologies in line with our strategic goals. |
| 3. Investigate alternative staff structures and ways of working that increase efficiency and accelerate progress toward our strategic goals. | 6. Expand our range of partnerships with external parties in the pursuit of our key objectives, with specific attention to: Pacific programs, regional projects, emergency response, private sector relationships, development finance, research and campaigning. |



Pam, age 12, from Vanuatu surveys cyclone damage to her school. More children are now enrolled in primary school, but it is vital that the quality of education they receive is improved.



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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