

WorldVision

SPRING 2010

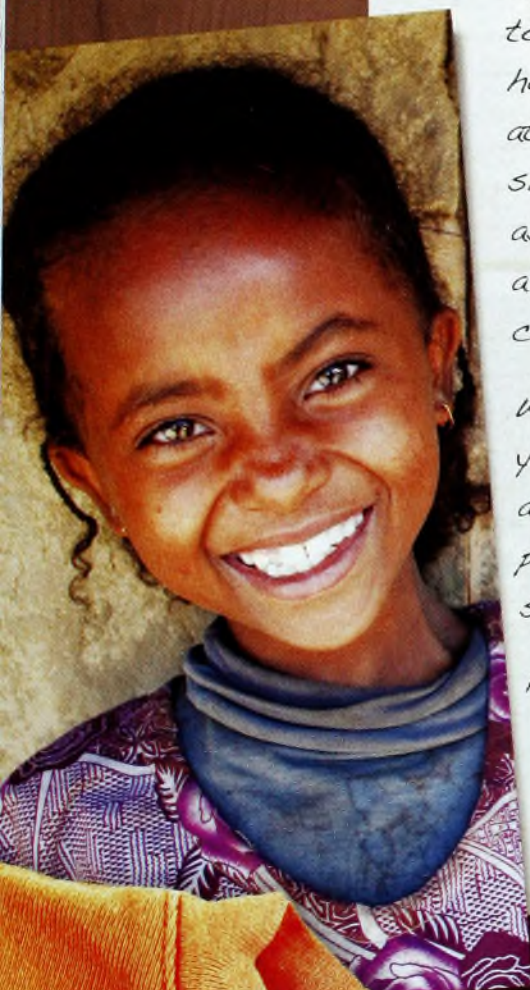
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

U.S. sponsors can help bring about a new day in battle-scarred Burundi

Rwanda's Recovery page 21
Sponsorship by the Numbers page 26



Host a Hope Sunday.
Motivate others to sponsor a child.



You know the difference that sponsorship makes to a child in need. By hosting a Hope Sunday at your church and sharing your experience as a sponsor, you can be a part of changing another child's life forever.

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VOLUME 13, NUMBER 3

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» ON THE COVER

A child's smile captures the mood of optimism at a sponsorship registration in Burundi.

Photograph by Jon Warren

World Vision, a free quarterly publication, affirms people responding to God's call to care for the poor by providing information, inspiration, and opportunities for action, linking them with children and families in nearly 100 countries where World Vision ministers. In an effort to be careful stewards of our resources, this publication costs about 46 cents a copy to produce.

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WORLD VISION STAFF

Support for the Race » *by Rich Stearns*

Whenever I speak somewhere on behalf of World Vision, people come up to me afterward to talk about their sponsored child. Maybe you're like these folks; with the pride and enthusiasm of a grandparent, you tell friends your sponsored child's name and country, what you've learned about him or her, and especially, how you came to sponsor that special child.

As a sponsor myself, I understand this—I've got my own stories. I'd like to share one that combines my pride in my sponsored child and in my own family.

I've written in this magazine as well as in my book, *The Hole in Our Gospel*, about how I came to sponsor two Zambian brothers, Morgan and Jackson. It was Reneé who prompted me, with a sharp elbow to my conscience, to fill in the sponsorship response card at a World Vision dinner in 2002. Technically, I sponsored Morgan, and my son Andy, then in college, signed up to sponsor Jackson.

Two years later, on a trip to Zambia, I met Morgan and Jackson and their grandmother, Mary. I'll never forget Mary's gratitude as she grabbed my hand and exclaimed, "When I learned that a family in America had decided to sponsor Morgan and Jackson, I knew God had replaced the parents these boys had lost!"

It turned out the boys had watched both parents suffer and die of AIDS. Afterward, it was Jackson who, at 13, stepped up to become man of the household. He dropped out of school and scavenged for food, somehow keeping his two brothers and sister alive until Mary came to help.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." —HEBREWS 12:1

Sponsorship enabled Jackson and Morgan to go back to school and provided a better house for the family. But then, in 2007, I heard some disturbing news: Jackson had dropped out of school again—for all the wrong reasons. He was neglecting his studies and getting into trouble.

I wrote Jackson a frank letter expressing my concern and stressing how important education is to his future, as it was to mine. The letter concluded: "Will you stay in school and finish the race you began so well? Will you set an example for Morgan? I pray you will."

The "race marked out" for Jackson was a tough one. There's plenty to hinder and entangle an orphan living in a poor



Andy Stearns met Jackson (third from left) and his family in Zambia in 2007.

community, and it's not surprising that he stumbled. But Hebrews reminds us that Jackson, and each of us, is not alone in the race. I was privileged to be part of that "cloud of witnesses" surrounding him.

There was also my son, Andy. After he graduated from college, Andy landed a good job and got married. He and Kirsten took over sponsoring Jackson (among 14 sponsored children). Andy took a special interest in Jackson, whom he met on a trip to Zambia in 2007. To give the boy every chance to succeed, Andy now supports him in private school and keeps in regular contact to make sure he's applying himself.

I admire Jackson's courage to step up after his parents' heartbreaking deaths, and I believe God has a great plan for him. I'm also proud of Andy's commitment to Jackson and other children in need around the world. He and Kirsten have joined the cloud of witnesses around these children.

As a sponsor, you, too, are helping your

child run the race marked out for him or her. Thanks to your prayers, letters, and encouragement, you can give that child a better chance to finish strong. ■



FRONT LINES

Compiled by James Addis

How to Make a Child Smile

EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Abduraman Yasin in Ethiopia enrolled in school for the first time this year after becoming a World Vision sponsored child. Abduraman loves school—even the homework. What else might delight a sponsored child? Maybe a letter from you. The letters you send may be the only mail your sponsored child ever receives, and they're often treasured for years. Some tips on writing grin-inducing letters:

- BE SENSITIVE:** Don't talk about your material possessions.
- BE CURIOUS:** Ask about your child's country and customs.
- BE SUPPORTIVE:** Express delight in your child's interests and achievements.
- BE PRAYERFUL:** If your child lives in a country where Christianity is welcomed, tell your child you are praying for him or her. Regardless, remember to pray for your child.
- BE PLAYFUL:** Decorate your letters with colored pens and stickers. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION

In communicating with your sponsored child, visit www.worldvision.org/sponsorsonly.





INDIA

WORLD WATCH » ASIA DISASTERS //

PHILIPPINES, VIETNAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA

» Typhoons Ketsana and Parma lashed the Philippines, bringing torrential rains and 60-mile-per-hour winds. The storms caused landslides and widespread flooding in dozens of northern provinces. Ketsana also struck Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, submerging hundreds of thousands of homes in floodwater.

People impacted » 9 million

Death toll » More than 1,000

First response » World Vision distributed food, shelter materials, and hygiene kits to more than 160,000 people, using a helicopter to reach areas inaccessible by road. The organization also cared for thousands of children in Child-Friendly Spaces.

Long-term response » World Vision implemented cash-for-work programs whereby residents could earn much-needed income for clearing roads, removing debris, and de-clogging drains. World Vision also distributed agricultural tools and started projects to help subsistence farmers recover their crops.



DAVID LIBAN/WORLD VISION

PHILIPPINE



REUTERS/EDUARDO HUNDOZ. COURTESY: WWW.VALENTINET.ORG



INDIA » A massive downpour in the southern states caused widespread flooding, destroyed about 200,000 homes, and forced hundreds of thousands of residents to flee.
People impacted » 20 million
Death toll » About 300
First response » World Vision began distribution of food, clothes, bed mats, and shelter materials to 25,000 families.
Long-term response » World Vision is assisting people in finding safe shelter and has implemented cash-for-work programs to speed cleanup operations and stimulate the local economy.

NOTE TO SPONSORS Please know that if your sponsored child is directly affected by a natural disaster, it is our policy to notify you as quickly as possible.

INDONESIA » Two major earthquakes measuring 7.3 and 7.9 struck West Java and West Sumatra, burying thousands under collapsed buildings. Power supplies and roads were cut off. Survivors stacked corpses outside hospitals.
People impacted » 1.25 million
Death toll » More than 1,200
First response » World Vision distributed more than 10,000 family kits containing blankets, sleeping mats, tarpaulins, and hygiene items; set up portable toilets and provided clean water for those living in temporary shelters; and it established Child-Friendly Spaces for affected children.
Long-term response » World Vision is establishing 20 temporary schools so children can resume their education and teaching communities how to protect themselves against disasters.

HAITI: CATASTROPHIC EARTHQUAKE

Just as this magazine was going on press, a magnitude-7.0 earthquake and strong aftershocks pummeled Haiti. Initial reports estimated that up to 3 million people might be affected. World Vision staff immediately began surveying the damage and accessing pre-positioned supplies to deliver much-needed aid.

"We would be very concerned about a quake of this magnitude anywhere in the world, but it is especially devastating in Haiti, where people are acutely vulnerable because of poor infrastructure and extreme poverty," said Edward Brown, World Vision's relief director.

World Vision has worked in Haiti for 30 years and has more than 370 staff in the country. Workers are assessing the well-being of the 51,000 sponsored children (about 23,600 of them sponsored by Americans), most of whom live some distance from the impact zone. But World Vision is concerned that children's overall plight will deteriorate as a result of the earthquake. Haiti already has the worst indicators on child health and education in the Western Hemisphere.

Visit www.worldvision.org for updates on the crisis. Our Summer magazine will provide more information about World Vision's response. ■

TO DONATE to World Vision's emergency relief work in Asia, Haiti, or elsewhere, please visit www.worldvision.org/emergencies.



SAMOA

SAMOA » An 8.0-magnitude earthquake and tsunami slammed into the Samoan islands, burying parts of them under a sea of mud and debris. Affected areas included the independent nation of Samoa and the U.S. territory of American Samoa.

People impacted » 15,000
Death toll » More than 160
First response » World Vision distributed bedding and hygiene items to affected families as well as backpacks filled with school supplies for children.
Long-term response » World Vision will partner locally to rebuild homes in hard-hit areas. ■



Pastor Tim Hoekstra, still standing after running 50 miles.

He was also reminded of the biblical year of Jubilee that occurred every 50 years, requiring the rich to redistribute wealth to the poor.

So when Tim signed up for the Chicago Marathon, simply running the regulation 26.2 miles was not enough. He determined he would run 50 miles and raise \$50,000 for World Vision water projects in Africa. That meant beginning his run at about 1:45 a.m. from Glen Ellyn, 23.8 miles from the starting line.

An elated Tim managed to complete the Herculean effort in 10 hours and 42 minutes and was given a rousing reception by fellow Team World Vision runners and supporters after the event.

"Praise the Lord. It was his deal. He got it done," said Tim, amid a flurry of hugs, handshakes, and cheers.

Tim said his visits to places such as Ethiopia, Kenya, and Mozambique inspired him to complete the run. He was shocked by how far people had to travel to get water. But in other places, he was impressed by how World Vision had engaged communities to develop accessible clean water.

"I was struck by how people came together across village lines and across faith lines," he said, "to see what is possible when people are given the opportunity and the means."

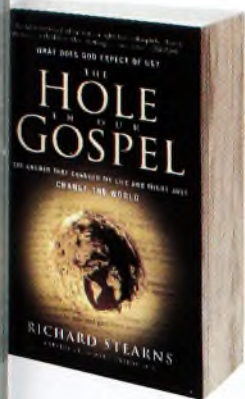
Tim was among 1,200 runners who joined Team World Vision to compete in the 2009 Bank of America Chicago Marathon. Together, they raised more than \$800,000 for African water projects. ■

» **TO LEARN MORE** about Team World Vision or to sign up to help the poor through the 2010 Chicago Marathon, go to www.teamworldvision.org.

Fabulous at 50

An Illinois pastor runs far for Africa.

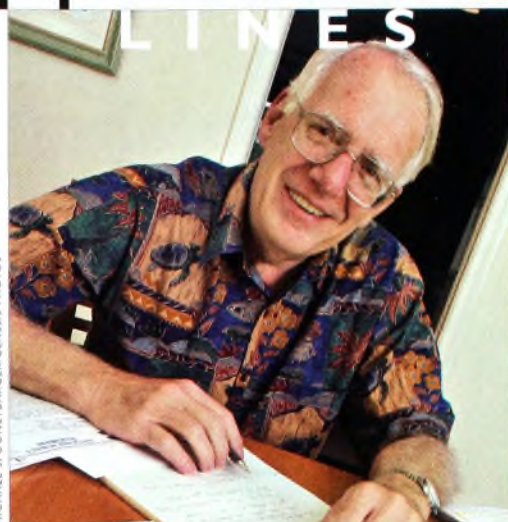
Like many men turning 50, Tim Hoekstra, pastor of Suburban Life Community Church in Darien, Ill., used the milestone to reflect on his life. He says he was struck by the many incredible gifts God has given him.



WHAT DOES GOD EXPECT OF US?

In *The Hole in Our Gospel*, World Vision U.S. President Richard Stearns poses the question that changed his life—and the answer just might help you change the world. After you read the book, go online at www.theholeinourgospel.com to find study guides, inspiring stories, and the author's blog. ■

» **COMING IN APRIL** *The Hole in Our Gospel* in paperback with 48 pages of additional material.



MICHAEL SPOONER/BAKER GENESIE PHOTOS

why I love BEING A CHILD SPONSOR

Beatty Collins, Sarasota, Fla.

When I receive a letter from one of my sponsored kids, it's a special day. There's often a little drawing enclosed, and it immediately goes up on the refrigerator. I can hardly wait to write back.

What do they write? One child from Nicaragua is so thankful that she addresses me as "Don." It's an honorific usually reserved for esteemed people and a title that I definitely don't deserve. She signs her letter "Tu amiguita" (your little friend), and she is a friend, indeed.

Occasionally, we have donated a few extra dollars for "our" kids. One child was able to buy a bed. Another replaced the thatched roof on her house with a tin roof. Another family built an outhouse. What we give is so little compared to how much it means to those receiving it. Scripture says, "It is more blessed to give..." How true, how true! ■

» **TELL US YOUR STORY** Why do you love being a child sponsor? Write the editors at wvmagazine@worldvision.org.

MESSAGE OF HOPE

Liana Aghajanyan, 12, faithfully attends Sunday school every week, but it was only recently that she received a Bible of her own. That's because her sponsor, Lori Moore, a former nurse from Rancho Cucamonga, Calif., responded to a "Send a Bible to Your Sponsored Child" appeal from World Vision.

Child sponsors were invited to donate money to provide an age- and language-appropriate Bible for their sponsored child. About 75,000 people responded,

many providing extra money for Christian children's programs—all together giving about \$2 million.

Liana comes from Tavush, one of the poorest parts of Armenia. Farmers lack access to irrigation and fertilizers. Yields are low, and malnutrition is common. World Vision is working to improve health, education, and agriculture in the region.

One of Liana's favorite Bible stories is when Jesus multiplies the bread and fish to feed the 5,000. "I pray always to have bread for me and my family. And I know that my prayers will not be in vain," she says.

"I pray always to have bread for me and my family. And I know that my prayers will not be in vain." —LIANA

Liana has received toys and cards from her sponsor, but she says the Bible is the best present of all.

Lori Moore says it was a joy to be able to give Liana a Bible, because it conveys a message of hope for children. "The message is that the Lord loves them, that they are all precious to him—no matter what circumstance or country they are born in," she says. ■



ARMENUHI SAHAKYAN/WORLD VISION



Love Never Fails

Myrtle Charles is extending her lifelong commitment to children through her will.

At 101, Myrtle Charles loves to sponsor 10 children. | BY PAULA SCHUBERT

Myrtle Charles may be 101 years old, but you would hardly know it. Her mind is sharp, her voice is strong. She lives in her own home, and when visitors call, she often answers the door herself.

Neither has age dimmed her compassion for children. At 100, she knitted 50 caps for children at a kindergarten in a poor neighborhood of her hometown, Chico, Calif. They proved such a hit, she agreed to make 30 more. When she fell recently and broke her ankle, the children put together a scrapbook of photographs and messages urging her to get well soon.

Among other treasured correspondence are the letters she receives from the 10 children she sponsors through World Vision. Although arthritis in her hands prevents her from writing long letters, she manages to jot them an encouraging line on greeting cards.

"I understand what many of these children are going through, because I have gone through difficult times and have been there myself," she says.

Born in 1908, and growing up in the country, Myrtle had no chance to go to high school. During the Great Depression, her ailing husband was unable to work. Myrtle supported her young family as a typist, and saved everything—even balls of string.

But even when times were desperate, caring for children remained a top priority. "We saved and we worked, since our

goal was to help children," says Myrtle. She was just as determined that children would continue to benefit after her death, so she has made World Vision a beneficiary of her will.

Myrtle is unsure how she has managed to live so long, but she suspects a diet of fruit and vegetables has helped, plus a positive attitude. "I was never a pessimistic person, and I have a great outlook," she says.

Caregiver Cynthia Harvey agrees, saying that as Myrtle continues to live, she continues to bless.

"Our lives would not be as full if it were not for our relationship with Myrtle. There are a lot of people that also feel that way," she says. ■

» **TO LEARN HOW** you can support children by including World Vision in your will, call toll-free (866) 332-4453 or e-mail giftplanning@worldvision.org.

CHANGE AGENT

Name » Shann Comeaux
Home » Scott, La.
Occupation » Artist, teacher
Program » Child Sponsorship
Buzz » Among those who enjoy Shann's art are readers of *The Louisiana Cattleman* (she has a regular cartoon), those who love her book illustrations, and those who commissioned her to paint portraits of their pets. But some of her biggest fans are her sponsored children—Maisara Hajaj from Gaza, Amit Chandra from Bangladesh, and Aya Prasanth from India—who delight to receive her playful cartoons of cats, tigers, and elephants. Often caricatures of the children also feature in the drawings. ■

» **TO SPONSOR A CHILD** see the envelope between pages 16 and 17 or go to www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond.

CHUCK COOK/GENESIS PHOTOS



"It makes me feel good that I'm making an impact in these children's lives."

— SHANN COMEAUX

TELEFUNDRAISING

Ryan Stutzman was intrigued when he read that there are between 300 and 500 million cell phones currently lying abandoned in junk drawers around the world.

The University of Washington business student wondered if this piece of trivia could be the key to a money-making opportunity.

It was. He discovered several companies that refurbish old phones and resell them in countries such as India and China, where there is insatiable demand for low-cost phones. It turned out these companies are willing to pay up to \$200 per phone.

Ryan (pictured below, left) teamed up with fellow student Sean Yeung (below, right) to organize a phone collection on

the University of Washington campus, raising the money to help World Vision expand a school in Twachiyanda, an impoverished community in Zambia.

The pair handed out flyers and set up collection boxes. Within two weeks, they had amassed more than 100 phones—worth about \$1,000. Ryan is now planning similar forays on other university campuses.

He says he caught a glimpse of poverty in the developing world while serving in the Navy, and he decided he would one day do something about it. "God got ahold of my heart and made me want to do everything I can to give the opportunities that I have to others," he says. ■

» TELL US

Do you have an innovative way to help children in need? Write the editors at wvmagazine@worldvision.org.



VOICING THE VISION

In World Vision's 60th anniversary year, we remember the spirit of those who shaped this ministry. ■

God help us if we are only willing to do what is easy to do. Rather, let us do what God wants done.

—BOB PIERCE,
 WORLD VISION FOUNDER





BURUNDI

BETWEEN HARDSHIP AND HOPE

In a small country in the heart of Africa, families yearn to put decades of violence behind them and repair their fragmented lives for the good of their children. Now, child sponsors in the U.S. can help.

BY KARI COSTANZA / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON WARREN



From movies, books, and the news, most people know what happened in Rwanda—how on April 6, 1994, the plane carrying the Rwandan president was shot down over the capital, Kigali. How that night, the killings began—an incomprehensible slaughter of men, women, and children. How in 100 days, nearly a million people, primarily Tutsis and moderate Hutus, were hacked to death—machetes the weapon of choice. How in July 1994, the carnage was halted by then-Tutsi rebel force leader, now-President Paul Kagame, who had retaken Kigali from the Hutu wartime government.

Yet most know little of what happened across the border in Burundi.

Burundi's conflict between the same two ethnic groups—Hutus and Tutsis—never received as much press as Rwanda's. But in 1972, 20 years before the genocide in Rwanda, tension between the two groups in Burundi erupted as a Hutu uprising against the Tutsi-led government incited the massacre of 150,000 Hutus.

In 1993, the country's first democratically elected president was assassinated. Burundi's next president was aboard the same plane as the Rwandan president shot down over Kigali in April 1994. During the following decade of civil war, conflict claimed 300,000 lives; 800,000 Burundians fled the country; and 150,000 more ran from their homes, searching for safety within Burundi's borders.

In the end, as in Rwanda, the most vulnerable suffered most.

CONFLICT AND CHILDREN

The conflict was hardest on the children," says Patricie Niyibitanga, 31, a government administrator working to develop Gasorwe, the war-torn community of 71,000 where World Vision is starting child sponsorship.

In Gasorwe, says Patricie, children shoulder the consequences of conflict. "Many are orphans," she says. "Others are street children. Others are handicapped because of the war. They are very sick and don't get health care. They don't go to school. Their life is not very good."

"When [families] ran from their houses [in 1993], they left everything behind," says World Vision operations director, Leonidas Ndikuriyo, 46.

Leonidas joined the World Vision team that had begun to rebuild his country in 1995. "We started a food-security program," he says. "We

(continued on page 17)



FACING PAGE: Signs of democracy in Burundi as supporters rally for the upcoming election.

ABOVE AND LEFT: Sponsorship will bring new hope to Collette and her family. She and her brother, Pascal, and sister, Chisahayo, live in this small, dirt-floored hut. They wait hungrily for their one meal a day.



CLOCKWISE FROM PHOTO ABOVE: Sponsorship begins in Gasorwe— families gather to register; children write letters to sponsors; staff photograph and weigh and measure children. After explaining how the system works, Ferdinand (CENTER PHOTO) asks for a show of hands for understanding.

(continued from page 14)

helped with house building; we supplied iron sheets. We distributed animals and goats. We distributed things, but most importantly, we visi-



World Vision



COLLINS KAURBA/WORLD VISION

THE JOY OF SPONSORING

No wonder sponsored child Mary Mweene, 12, is smiling. After World Vision drilled a borehole in her village, she no longer has to walk long distances to fetch water.

**Sponsor a child for the first time—
or sponsor another child!**

CHARGE

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COLLINS KAUPRA/WORLD VISION (2)

SPONSORED CHILD MARY MWEENE, from Zambia, used to get up at 5 a.m. to fetch water from a polluted stream. The heavy lifting and dirty water damaged her health and kept her out of school. Today, she enjoys easy access to clean water every day.

Sponsorship helps a child with things like clean water, education, nutritious food, health care, and the chance to live a full and happy life. What is more, a sponsored child knows that somewhere in the world, somebody cares for him or her.

Right now, about 120,000 children desperately need sponsors. Is there room in your heart for one of them?

Sponsor for the first time, or sponsor another child today. Complete the form and return it in this envelope, or go online at www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond.

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CLOCKWISE FROM PHOTO ABOVE: Sponsorship begins in Gasorwe— families gather to register; children write letters to sponsors; staff photograph and weigh and measure children. After explaining how the system works, Ferdinand (CENTER PHOTO) asks for a show of hands for understanding.

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(continued from page 14)

helped with house building; we supplied iron sheets. We distributed animals and goats. We distributed things, but most importantly, we visited [families]. People began to recover their lives."

But relief spawned dependency. The team knew that progress could only happen if communities took ownership of the work.

Clearly, the time was ripe for child sponsorship. But as conditions improved in Burundi, economic turmoil created havoc and financial fear around the world. Would sponsors reach out to 1,500 children in this little-known African country? The needs were obvious, but was this the right time? In July 2009, World Vision's U.S. office gave the green light for sponsorship in Gasorwe, and, like a rocket, the work took off.



THE MAN IN CHARGE

If the rocket has a captain in Gasorwe, he is Ferdinand Nzokirantevye. Ferdinand, 45, a health expert, started laying the foundation for sponsorship in Gasorwe two years ago. "We chose leaders of the community, organized people, and held group discussions in playgrounds," he says. He listened to their needs—food, water, education, health.

Ferdinand went to every hill, as communities are called in Burundi, to meet with each chief—29 hills in all. "We heard resistance," says Ferdinand. The chiefs told him: "Oh, you guys, you want to send our children to the USA." Ferdinand explained the process of child sponsorship to everyone he met. "At the beginning, they had some fears," he says, "but now it's OK. They understand what sponsorship is."

But on this morning, at a registration in Masasu Hill, Ferdinand explains sponsorship again. He tells a crowd of parents who have come to register their children: "The objective is that our children will have well-being—that they are born in good conditions and grow up in good conditions."

Many here do not know much about the United States or have any idea what a sponsor does, so Ferdinand explains: "They will be people from America with the hearts to help others, who are concerned for our country," he says. "If they have two Fantas, they drink one and give the other away. It's not that they are rich, but they want to help others." The murmur that rolls through the crowd ends in a collective smile—these Americans share their soda pop and their love. Opportunity is coming to Masasu Hill.





(continued from page 18)

by this. We thought he was killed because of his ethnic belonging.”

As in Rwanda, the radio was used to incite people to violence against their neighbors. But, Gaspard says, there is a key difference between Burundi and Rwanda. In Burundi, everyone feels at fault. “Hutu killed Tutsi and Tutsi killed Hutu,” he says. “We have to get past it and start at zero.” And, while Rwanda’s reconciliation process has been burned into the national psyche, Gaspard feels Burundians just need to move on. “If we start saying who did what, we’ll never finish, and we don’t have enough prisons to put people in,” he says.

Gaspard (pictured above) lost everything during the war. He and his wife divorced. “During that period, trust ended,” he says with sadness. Now remarried to a woman orphaned during the war, Gaspard has two rambunctious little boys who are registered for sponsorship.

Gaspard says this is the right time for sponsorship. “We are lucky that the international community is helping. Peace is a reality in Gasorwe,” he says. “Come and see for yourself.”

LIFE AND DEATH IN GASORWE

Pace has arrived with no time to spare. The people of Masasu Hill face daily hunger, lack of water, and poor shelter. Malnutrition is high, affecting 54 percent of the children. So are the rates of preventable diseases like malaria and pneumonia.

At St. Teresa’s Health Clinic in Gasorwe, nuns mourn the death of a child lost to a respiratory disease. “It was too late—even if we’d had amoxicillin,” says Sister Hilda. The baby lies wrapped in cloth on a bed while his parents search for a coffin for his burial.

At the Kizi Health Center, administrator Felicite Nikuze, 26, says her clinic is always short of medicine. “In some cases, children die between

here and the hospital because of diarrhea,” she says. The clinic also lacks electricity. “When we have to use a flashlight to deliver babies, it’s a serious issue,” she says. The clinic doesn’t have clean plastic sheeting, so women have to deliver babies on their wraparound skirts. “We used to give them amoxicillin to prevent infection,” says Felicite. But the clinic hasn’t had the medicine in four months.

A CLEAN START

Venantie vigorously scrubs the family’s few pieces of clothing with a precious bar of soap, preparing for church the next day. Their well-worn clothes turn the water a coffee-colored brown. Her youngest child, Cishahayo, plays happily in the soap suds.

“I was so happy at the registration,” she says, dumping a tub of brown water and judiciously adding clean water from her jerry can. She and her neighbors have high hopes for what sponsorship might accomplish, through God’s provision. “If we could have houses and clean water, we would worship the Almighty God for that.”

Suds fill Cishahayo’s eyes, so Venantie wipes them away with her clean skirt. She then lays the freshly washed clothes on the grass to dry.

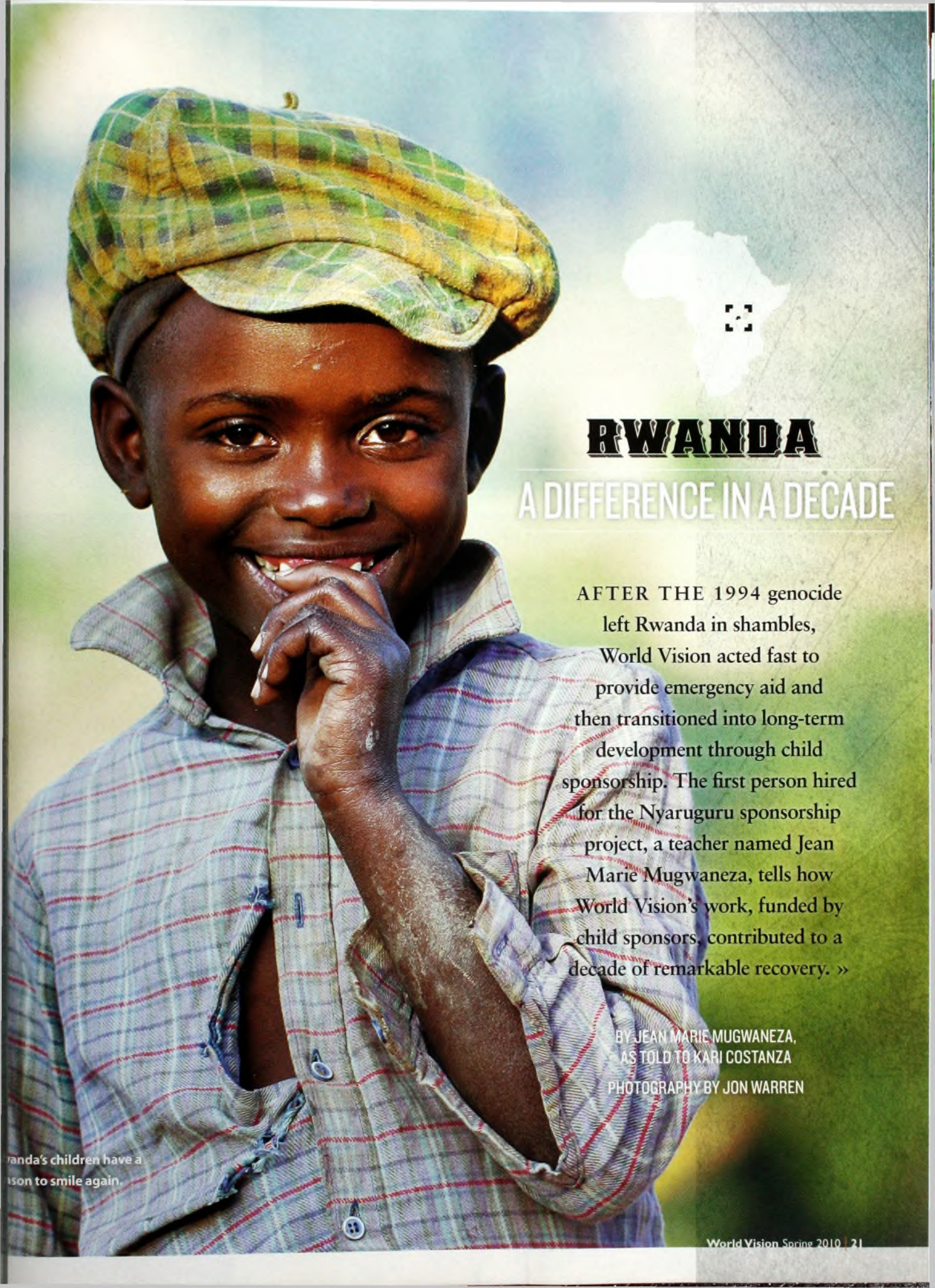
But when she goes back to her washing, she can’t find the soap. Cishahayo is rubbing it on her belly. Venantie laughs, her eyes crinkling with glee.

Collette says that she feels different now that she’s been registered for sponsorship. “They told us that in five years, things will be changed,” she says. “For me, change means a house covered with iron sheets, with water that comes from a tap—available to everyone on Masasu Hill.”

The wind whispers through the leaves of the banana trees. The family’s treasured chicken struts by. On this warm afternoon on the equator, anything seems possible. ■

TO SPONSOR a child in Burundi, see the envelope between pages 16 and 17. Or go to www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond.

ON THE WEB: See a video and extra photos from this story at www.worldvision.org/magazine. Also, read Kari Costanza’s blog posts while traveling in Burundi and Rwanda at blog.worldvisionmagazine.org.



RWANDA

A DIFFERENCE IN A DECADE

AFTER THE 1994 genocide left Rwanda in shambles, World Vision acted fast to provide emergency aid and then transitioned into long-term development through child sponsorship. The first person hired for the Nyaruguru sponsorship project, a teacher named Jean Marie Mugwaneza, tells how World Vision's work, funded by child sponsors, contributed to a decade of remarkable recovery. »

BY JEAN MARIE MUGWANEZA,
AS TOLD TO KARI COSTANZA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON WARREN

Rwanda's children have a reason to smile again.



In 2000, World Vision came to Nyaruguru to conduct interviews. I was among the four people who were selected. I was very glad. I liked being with children, advising them and interacting with them.

We in Customer Relations Services were in charge of visiting children and following up with them. World Vision rented a house [for an office], but we outgrew it. The number of sponsored children was growing and growing—we needed more space for file cabinets.

The biggest problem then was that people didn't have houses to live in. Most of the houses were destroyed by the war. There were no toilets. Many people were scattered and weren't stable enough to cultivate food. They were hungry. People were fetching stagnant water. The taps were no longer functioning because of the war. It was survival of the fittest.

In 2000, 450 children were registered for sponsorship. The children didn't understand sponsorship. They didn't know where the U.S. was. Their faces and their hearts were dim and dark. Maybe they didn't eat the night before. Others had life problems that affected their inner feelings. World Vision kept going into the community, sharing hope. The peace-building team would come and talk about healing.

The first sponsored child in Nyaruguru was Louise, an orphan, who lived with her grandfather. When sponsorship started, [the focus] was children who had lost one or both parents. There were many kids in that category. We stayed close to them and cared for them.

RIGHT: Jean Marie Mugwaneza tells the remarkable story of transformation in southern Rwanda.

ABOVE: When Jean Marie found this family living in a cowshed, he made sure a proper house was built for them.

FACING PAGE, LEFT AND RIGHT: Supplemental feeding for children and a wetlands project are among the accomplishments funded by World Vision sponsors.

I remember one family in particular. It was a child-headed household, four girls and two boys. They were emotionally disturbed. The house was very bad, so World Vision built a house for them and trained the older sister in sewing. Now she has a sewing machine and does some sewing in town, and she can provide for the rest. One of the children goes to a school that World Vision built.

Children used to walk very long distances to collect water. We decided to build water tanks and rehabilitate the water canals that were blocked. There are water tanks connected to the houses of sponsored children and to schools.

At first, many children couldn't go to school because their families had been killed. When they started school, they started under trees. But when it would rain, the children would run

(continued on page 25)





Evidence of change:
(RIGHT) Clean water
at a sponsored child's
fingertips; (BELOW)
new schools; (BOTTOM
LEFT) cows providing
nutrition for families;
(BOTTOM RIGHT)
healthy children
growing up in a safe
community.



continued from page 22)

home. It was a terrible time when there were no schools. Now World Vision has built three secondary schools and built or renovated eight primary schools.

When World Vision first constructed a school, the community and government authorities said, 'Wow. I think World Vision is really good.' Before that] people thought World Vision was just an organization, that it would just do the usual. When it started doing tangible things, people thought, World Vision is kind of different and special. The parents rejoiced because their children were no longer loitering around.

After the genocide, children didn't know themselves. They had no confidence. Their minds and hearts were so frightened. When they went to school, they wouldn't play together. But the government and World Vision came in with programs and built confidence and brought hope.

In agriculture, we trained families to have vegetable gardens to provide food for the children. World Vision provided cows. We would give 50 families one cow. The families would take care of it, sharing the manure to put in their gardens. We identified a good valley, a wetland, and



ABOVE: Ignace Mucunguzi, 9, writes to his U.S. sponsors, congratulating them on their new baby. Ignace says he wants to become chief of staff to Rwandan President Paul Kagame someday.

looked for farmers to farm the wetland. It is so productive. Now it's producing so much corn.

World Vision's approach is to sensitize the community that this is about them—it's their development. They take over, and it becomes theirs. It's a process.

There was a time when I had nothing. But World Vision has been good to me. After getting this job, I was able to marry and have a family. I used to rent, but now I am constructing a house. When this project phases out [in a few years], I am not worried. Let's talk about everything I have learned: I can now take a picture. I could even work on a Web site.

I am strengthened when we do devotions in the morning. Your behavior changes because of those teachings. Before, I would pass a poor family, and it made no difference in my heart. It was like pouring water on a stone. Now I am moved when I see a poor family. I am filled with compassion. I know them. I know their needs. I work with them and I pray with them." ■

WORLD VISION ^{IN} RWANDA




- » Operates in 21 of 30 districts
- » Assists 1.5 million + people
- » Sponsors support 60,000 + children
- » Constructed 400 + classrooms
- » Improved the learning environment for 18,000 + children
- » Removed 7,000 + children from child labor
- » Constructed 168 water tanks
- » Provided 1,900 + mothers with nutritional training



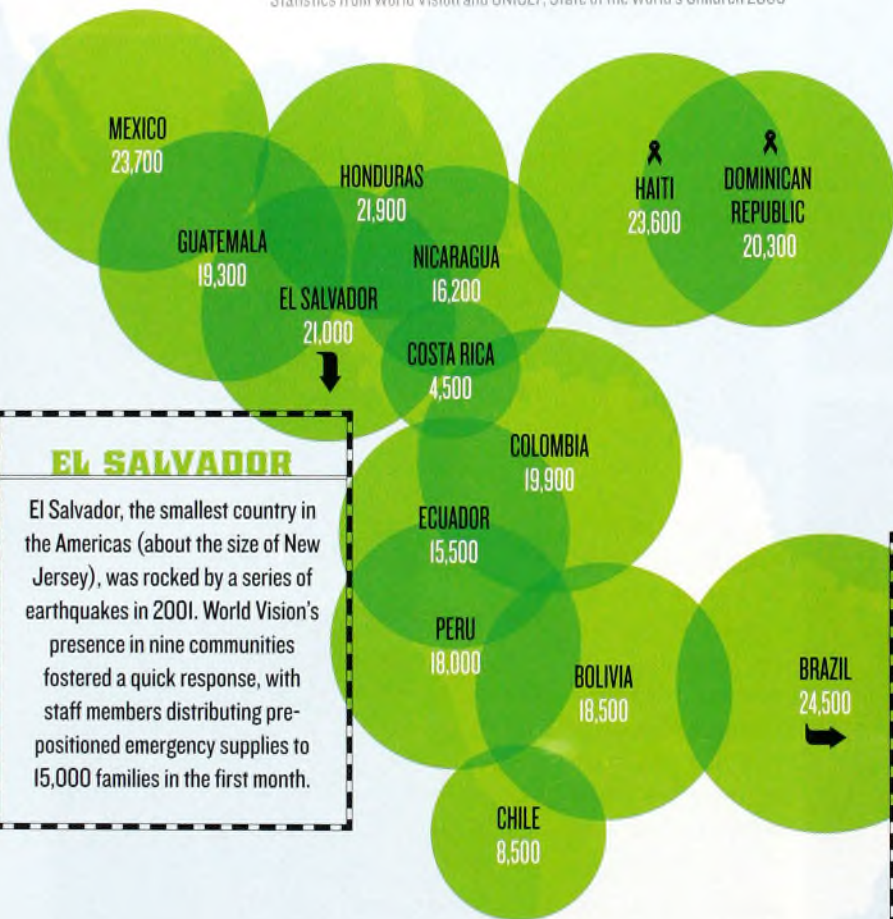
CHILD SPONSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS

Sponsors in all 50 states support children in 50 countries. Here's where faithful U.S. sponsors are doing a world of good. By Ryan Smith

COUNTRY
NUMBER of U.S.-
sponsored children

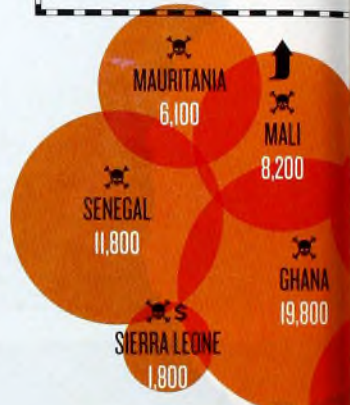
-  High prevalence of HIV and AIDS
-  Child mortality (deaths before age 5) is higher than 10%
-  Gross per-capita income is lower than US\$1.25/day

Statistics from World Vision and UNICEF, State of the World's Children 2009



EL SALVADOR

El Salvador, the smallest country in the Americas (about the size of New Jersey), was rocked by a series of earthquakes in 2001. World Vision's presence in nine communities fostered a quick response, with staff members distributing pre-positioned emergency supplies to 15,000 families in the first month.



BRAZIL

World Vision's work in the remote Amazon region started with sending volunteer doctors, nurses, and dentists on boats to serve riverside communities. Later, when child sponsorship began in the region, the boats were put to use to reach children and help their communities develop better hygiene, education, and farming.

SPONSORSHIP ON THE RISE

Since its start in 1953, child sponsorship has helped a growing population of children. In the last 20 years, children sponsored by Americans has more than doubled.



ROMANIA

Sponsorship is a key way World Vision focuses on children in Romania. Emphasis also carries through programs such as providing Youth Bible curriculum for Christian students, reuniting abandoned children with their families, caring for HIV-positive young people, and fighting child labor.

ARMENIA

A devastating earthquake brought World Vision to Armenia in 1988, to provide emergency aid for some 500,000 people left homeless. Later, World Vision helped families winterize their scanty shelters against the grueling cold. Now U.S. sponsors help provide warm clothing and education for children and microloans for their parents.

CHINA

China, the country that deeply touched World Vision founder Bob Pierce in his travels in the 1940s, has experienced dramatic economic progress in recent years. But many rural areas, especially those populated by minorities, remain disadvantaged. Sponsors help ensure that children in those communities receive improved nutrition, healthcare, and education.

ETHIOPIA

Major famines plagued this second-most populous African country in the 1980s, killing about 2 million people. World Vision responded with massive relief operations, saving thousands of lives. Today, through 22 sponsorship projects, World Vision helps families grow drought-resistant crops to prevent dry spells from spiraling into disaster.

INDONESIA

U.S. sponsors assist as many children—17,000—as there are islands in this archipelago between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Also, following 2004's catastrophic Asia tsunami, World Vision provided emergency aid in Indonesia, including supplying building materials to help families rebuild homes and initiating microenterprise to improve family incomes.

THE NEED IS STILL GREAT

Top 10 countries where children are waiting for U.S. sponsors.

1. ETHIOPIA » 11,900 children
2. UGANDA » 9,780 children
3. ZAMBIA » 6,800 children
4. MOZAMBIQUE » 6,100 children
5. INDIA » 5,600 children
6. RWANDA » 4,900 children
7. MALAWI » 4,500 children
8. MEXICO » 4,500 children
9. ZIMBABWE » 4,400 children
10. GUATEMALA » 4,000 children

ON THE WEB Go deeper with an interactive graphic displaying more information, facts, and photos for every country. Go to www.worldvision.org/magazine.



LEFT: Leonel has a heart for his indigenous people. **FACING PAGE:** Leonel with his wife, Maria, and daughter, Gaby.

several universities and won a scholarship to study business in the United States. He is married to Maria, an attorney who has a master's degree in human rights and, like Leonel, is active in advocating on behalf of impoverished and exploited children.

In his view, his sponsor's support during his youth helped make all these accomplishments possible.

Things did not look promising 44 years ago when Leonel was born in the former Maya capital of Tecpán. Leonel's mother married at 15 but separated at 19 after discovering her husband was having an affair. Leonel went to live with his grandparents. His aunt and her husband lived in one room, while Leonel and his mother, brother, another aunt, and grandparents shared a smaller room.

In the cramped conditions, squabbles were frequent and violent. Adding to the stress was a shortage of food. Sometimes Leonel would steal tortillas from the married aunt and always feared a brutal confrontation if discovered. "My aunt had a hard heart," he says.

Other times, Leonel and his brother, Mardoqueo, would scrape food from tin cans and packages their cousins threw in the garbage. The boys also had to learn to dodge older neighborhood children whose parents had no qualms in telling them to give Kaqchikel kids a beating.

Leonel's mother provided for the boys as best she could by selling hot drinks in the market and taking in laundry. The hard times made Leonel delight in every small act of kindness. He still remembers the joy he felt as a 4-year-old when his mother gave him a new hat. "In my town, only respected men wore hats," he says.

Another great moment was being able to continue to attend school. His mother had planned to take him out of school because she could not afford to educate both Leonel and Mardoqueo. Fortunately,

CECILIO MARTINEZ/WORLD VISION (3)

Life Lessons »

By James Addis

Former sponsored child Leonel Xuya Pastor works to improve life for Maya children.

There are so many significant strands to Leonel Xuya Pastor's life. He is an outspoken champion of his people, the Kaqchikel—a sub-group of the indigenous Maya peoples of Guatemala. He is a prolific writer on Maya and agricultural affairs. He has degrees and diplomas from

I dream that girls and boys have access to education and opportunities to succeed, no matter their ethnic group. — LEONEL XUYA PASTOR

The principal learned of the family's predicament and enrolled both boys in World Vision's child sponsorship program. Sponsorship covered school fees and the cost of books, uniforms, and a daily snack. Leonel remembers receiving a letter from his U.S. sponsor that he treasured for many years, but it was lost when his family eventually moved.

Sponsorship also meant celebrating Christmas—something the brothers had never done at home. Children had a party, shared gifts, and wrote letters of thanks to their sponsors. Leonel also learned about Jesus through Bible lessons at school. In 1972, he became a follower of Christ, a decision that has guided his life ever since.

Leonel proved a stellar student. He was one of only 168 students out of 3,000 applicants to win a scholarship to study at the Agricultural School of Secondary Studies. Later, he graduated from the prestigious Rafael Landivar University in Guatemala City as an agronomist and attended various other colleges and universities, including Rochester

Community College in Minnesota, where he studied business administration.

After Leonel completed his education, he returned to Guatemala and worked as a farm manager for one of the country's wealthiest families. Children as young as 8 would start at 5 a.m. and work 12-hour days, their faces covered in sweat and dust. "It broke my heart to see them," he says.

Leonel switched to working for various humanitarian organizations, including World Vision, to help improve the lives of Guatemala's impoverished children. Today, he is gathering support to fulfill his ambition to found the first university directed by Maya-speaking people.

"I dream that girls and boys have access to education and opportunities to succeed, no matter their ethnic group," he says. "I firmly believe that education is one of the best ways for children to develop their gifts and talents." ■

» **TO SPONSOR A CHILD** see the envelope between pages 16 and 17 or go to www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond.



About World Vision

WHO WE ARE | World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to helping children, families, and their communities worldwide reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

WHOM WE SERVE | Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed—regardless of a person's religion, race, ethnicity, or gender—as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people.

WHY WE SERVE | Our passion is for the world's poorest children whose suffering breaks the heart of God. To help secure a better future for each child, we focus on lasting, community-based transformation. We partner with individuals and communities, empowering them to develop sustainable access to clean water, food supplies, health care, education, and economic opportunities.

HOW WE SERVE | Since 1950, World Vision has helped millions of children and families by providing emergency assistance to those affected by natural disasters and civil conflict, developing long-term solutions within communities to alleviate poverty and advocating for justice on behalf of the poor.

YOU CAN HELP | Partnering with World Vision provides tangible ways to honor God and put faith into action. By working together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families who are struggling to overcome poverty. To find out how you can help, visit www.worldvision.org. ■



Blessed are the Locksmiths » *by Bwalya Melu*

When you lose a key, the first person you usually think about is a locksmith. With four kids at home, all with a propensity to lose their keys, I have paid a number of visits to a locksmith.

Hope, I am learning, is like a key—a key to access our dreams. Sometimes life's experiences cause us to lose the "hope" key, and we need to find a locksmith to replace it.

That's exactly what happened to me recently when I spent seven months as interim director for World Vision's office in Zimbabwe. Anybody familiar with Zimbabwe will know about the political upheavals, the soaring inflation, the stagnating economy, and the crippling effect all this is having on poor families.

At the office, I was faced with a projected decline in funding for our programs and a looming staff reduction process. I wondered how we could continue to support impoverished children at a time when they needed our help more than ever. I also worried about my family back in the States. I was feeling sorry for myself. Everything looked bleak.

And then I found my locksmith.

His name was Learnmore Ndlovu, a 12-year-old sponsored child. On the face of it, Learnmore might not have seemed a strong candidate to bring hope. He was orphaned at the age of 3, when his mother died from cancer and his father deserted him. He was left in the care of his unemployed grandparents, who also care for seven of Learnmore's orphaned cousins. Furthermore,

*"You turned my wailing into dancing;
you removed my sackcloth and
clothed me with joy ..."* —PSALM 30:11

Learnmore was diagnosed with hydrocephalus—an abnormal accumulation of fluid in the cavities of the brain. Untreated, this can lead to convulsions, mental disability, and death.

On the bright side, World Vision had built a small house for Learnmore's family, and it had a toilet—a luxury in their village. World Vision also provides regular medical checkups for Learnmore and arranged for the insertion of a shunt to drain the water and reduce the swelling in his head.

When I met Learnmore, I was totally unprepared. He had traveled almost 500 miles to Harare for a medical examination.

But the boy had one of the brightest smiles and most



Learnmore with a World Vision staff member

exuberant personalities I have ever encountered. He talked incessantly about what he will do when he gets better. "These legs are not made of wood, but flesh," he told me. "One day I will go to school and beat my cousins at a race."

Unable to contain his high spirits, Learnmore broke into song: "Raise your hands and praise the Lord, and he will bless you."

Later, alone in my office, tears of joy fell down my cheeks. I had allowed myself to become disheartened by my problems. But Learnmore, who had faced many more obstacles in his short life than I can imagine, showed me that it is possible to live life with optimism and confidence in God. Learnmore was the key to reviving my passion for the ministry.

And what a ministry it is. All of us involved in this work—child sponsors, donors, World Vision staff—are also providing keys for thousands of children like Learnmore, unlocking their hopes and dreams.

Let's not get discouraged. We can all be locksmiths. ■

Bwalya Melu has served at World Vision for 28 years in various roles, including national director of the office in Zambia. Currently he is a program director in the United States.

RETROSPECT



WORLD VISION STAFF (3)

C H I N A

"The most wasted of all days is one without laughter," poet e. e. cummings once observed. It's a philosophy that 4-year-old sponsored child Chen Shengfa seems to have wholeheartedly embraced. He laughs ... and laughs ... and laughs, despite living in tough circumstances. Chen comes from Luchun County, populated by ethnic minorities and identified as one of the poorest in the country. Nevertheless, child sponsorship assists more than 3,000 children in the county, bringing a host of benefits such as improved schools and community health clinics. Sponsors also are helping families acquire better skills in rice production, animal husbandry, and tree planting. Such initiatives bode well for Luchun—and provide plenty of reasons to keep Chen laughing. ■



Marie Rose/girl
 Birthdate: 7/20/01
 ID# 190685-0286

Beni/boy
 Birthdate: 6/23/01
 ID# 190685-0048

Zubeli/boy
 Birthdate: 12/17/02
 ID# 190685-0484

Tinyuburundi/girl
 Birthdate: 7/20/04
 ID# 190685-0560

Eric/boy
 Birthdate: 6/1/01
 ID# 190685-0001

To sponsor one of the children pictured, call 1.866.332.4453.

Children in Burundi can't wait to meet you!



Be one of the first to sponsor a child in Burundi!
 For the first time ever, you can sponsor a child in Burundi, a country in eastern Africa where the average family survives on just 30 cents a day†. These children are all too familiar with hunger and poverty—but you can help give them hope.

Zawadi/girl
 Birthdate: 8/15/01
 ID# 190685-0521

†UNICEF Web site, Info By Country

These are six of the 1,500 children in Burundi who are waiting right now for a sponsor like you. You can help provide one of them with prayer support and access to things like:

- **Clean water**—keeps children healthy
- **Nutritious food**—helps kids thrive
- **Healthcare**—saves lives
- **Education**—offers a better future
- **Economic opportunities**—helps parents support their children

The benefits you'll help provide will extend to each child's family, their community, and other children in need.



Sponsor now! Call 1.866.332.4453

Yes, I want to sponsor a child in Burundi today!
 Please send me information and the photo of a child affected by poverty.
 I want to sponsor a boy girl either

I've enclosed a check or money order for my first \$35 gift (payable to World Vision).
 I authorize World Vision to charge my \$35 monthly sponsorship gift to my credit/debit card each month: VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Card number _____ Expiration date _____
 Signature (required) _____ World Vision account number _____
 Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other _____ First name _____ Last name _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
 Phone _____ E-mail _____

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