

Child WORLD

FALL 2007

Christian Children's Fund



Entire communities are empowered as they learn to improve both business and animal husbandry skills. Families not only learn how to raise healthier livestock, but they are implementing critical new business skills that will have a tremendous economic impact on their community, while greatly improving their children's lives. (See related story page 13.)

CCF Children Honored by UN Poverty Day

By Sandra Shelley

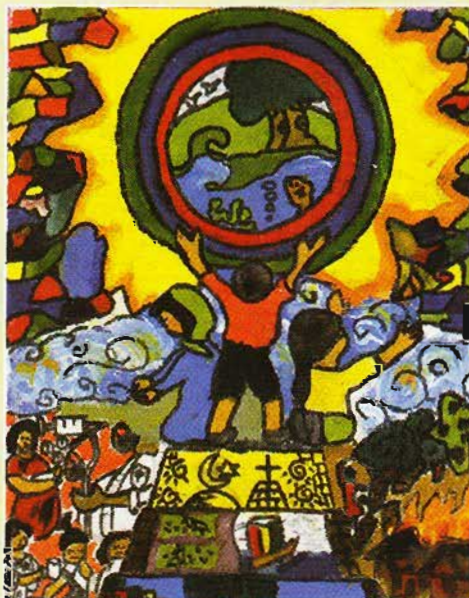
Each year the UN asks the world to come together on October 17, to reflect upon and commit to ending extreme poverty. This year, for International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, a number of youth, with financial support from Christian Children's Fund, took part in the commemorations. Two were on UN panels, and five others had been selected as finalists in the UN's international art competition. This was an opportunity for children to voice their experiences and contribute to the betterment of children's lives the world over.

The two CCF sponsored children who served as panelists were able to attend the event at the UN headquarters in New York. CCF co-sponsored the panel "We Can End Poverty: Children As Agents of Change," which allowed children and youth to share their experiences of poverty and ways to bring about positive change.

On the panel were Labradford and Maria, and both are very active in school and their communities. Labradford serves as president of his CCF youth group, and Maria volunteers as a tutor.

Additionally, two drawings by CCF children were among the 50 displayed in the "We Can End Poverty" international children's art competition at the UN headquarters. Over 12,000 entries from 124 countries were submitted. The CCF winners were from 12-year-old Oscar of Zambia and, from the Philippines, a collaborative effort from four children (Katrina, Sharifa, and Nurfaid, all 14, and 13-year-old Crisanto). The group from the Philippines depicted the different faces of poverty in the world. The top six designs from the competition will be issued as UN postage stamps in 2008.

On the competition's website, judge Mary Ellen Hostak commented, "I was very touched by the depth of



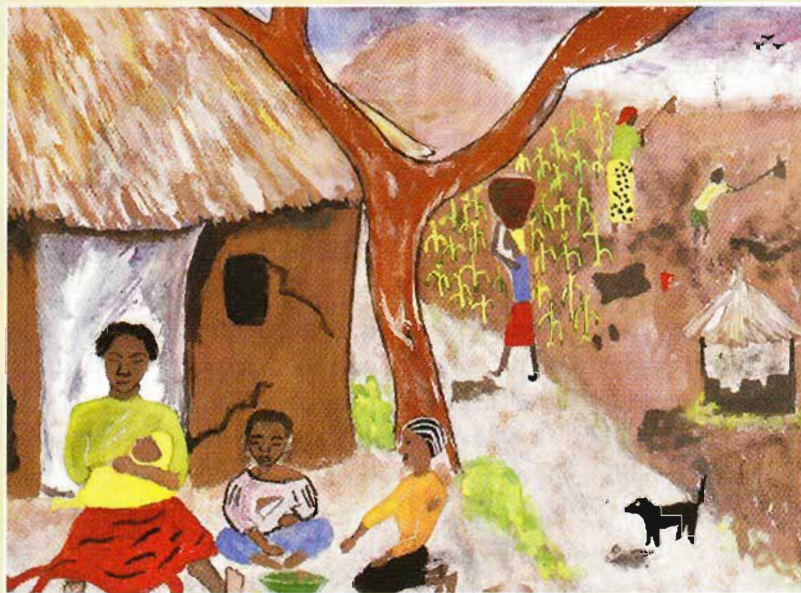
About the art: "The drawing shows the different faces of poverty. There are many people who are suffering...it's about time for us to act, as the sun in our drawing wants to emphasize, there is still hope. Indeed, this hope is our tool to end poverty."

thought and sensitivity that was depicted in the beautiful artwork done by the children. The pictures presented so many aspects of life in poverty, yet they also demonstrated the enormous hope offered by things like working together, education, caring for and supporting each other, and acceptance of differences.... We have so many things to learn from these children!”

Commemorated at UN headquarters and in ceremonies throughout the world, the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty also raises awareness of the UN Millennium Development Goal to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day. In 1990, more than 1.2 billion people lived in extreme poverty.

To learn more about CCF's work, visit www.ChristianChildrensFund.org.

Two CCF sponsored children — Labradford and Maria — were chosen to address the UN on what poverty means to them. The UN offered a formal forum recently to focus on the issues of world poverty.



Oscar, one of the CCF sponsored children whose art was recognized in the recent UN contest on poverty, wrote this about his art: “We can eradicate poverty by teaching the locals the importance of small scale farming as a way to end poverty.”

From Sponsor to 'Padrino' in Bolivia

Steve and Beth Burleson's sponsorship began with a bang. They became sponsors of Jose, 12, in August 2006, and, a few months later, began planning a trip to Bolivia through Christian Children's Fund to meet him. In the months before their June 2007 trip, the Alabama couple began corresponding with the child and taking Spanish lessons. They also decided to sponsor another child, 14-year-old Jaime, who, they were pleased to learn, lived just nine miles away from Jose.

In LaPaz, the sponsors' travels included a tour of the CCF-Bolivia national office where they met the national director and other employees. Steve was "very impressed with CCF-Bolivia. They are a wonderful group of people." He was pleased to see that the organization "is run by Bolivians, for Bolivians" and that "the country office was nice but by no means extravagant. It is obvious that the focus is on the children."

They traveled to Oruro, where they were met by two CCF staff members who drove them to Jose's town. Once there, they toured the CCF community center, where they met Jose. "It was hard to believe it was actually him... With him was his older brother, Jhon — both were beaming," said Steve. "This was truly one of the happiest moments of my life."

Steve presented Jose with a special gift: his son's trumpet, which he had gotten cleaned and repaired. "I don't think I have ever seen anyone happier," he said of the boy's reaction. Surprisingly, the grandfather picked up

the instrument and began playing it skillfully. The Burlesons learned that the older man not only plays the trumpet, but even earns extra money as a musician. He planned to teach the boys how to play on Jose's new trumpet. "It could not have turned out any better," said Steve.

After visiting two nearby CCF programs, the Burlesons went to San Antonio to meet their other sponsored

child, Jaime. "I had been studying satellite images of the village for a long time and it was exciting to get to finally walk through the streets," said Steve. When they met Jaime, "there were many people milling around and lots of cooking going on.... And there was Jaime with a big smile on his face," he said. "I was very touched because they treated us like family."

He was glad to see the improvements that had been made to the house. After reading about Chagas disease, the Burlesons had sent extra funds to make the adobe home safer for the family. A new metal roof replaced the former thatched one, the interior walls and ceilings were freshly plastered, a new door had been installed, and a concrete sub-floor was in place. "I was very impressed by the quality of the workmanship," Steve said. "Since our visit, a terra-cotta tile floor has been installed."

Jaime's grandfather runs a small llama farm. The group all "piled into the trusty CCF vehicle" and went to see it. Jaime and his family rounded up the herd. Then "I was told that I was

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The Burlesons (at right) visiting Jaime, a child they sponsor in Bolivia. While there, they were able to meet Jose, whom they also sponsor. Both children's families raise llamas, an industry common in Bolivia.

to choose one male and one female llama to take home with me," Steve said. "Jaime's grandfather said they would be no trouble at all on the airplane. I think they were having a little bit of fun with me." Instead, Steve let Jaime pick out the llamas, and asked him to raise them. "This gave Jaime a start on building his own herd," he said. Steve learned that Bolivians rarely include outsiders in this important rite of passage.

Afterward, they returned to the house for a celebration feast. Steve was asked to speak. "My advice to Jaime was to stay in San Antonio where he is much loved instead of migrating to a big city." The family's "hospitality was warm and genuine," and Steve felt a special bond with Jaime's father.

"After months of dreaming about meeting our sponsored children in Bolivia it was over all too fast," Steve said.