



Message from Executive Director
June 2008

Food crisis

I am pleased to announce that we have organized additional funding for some of the communities we support to address local effects of the global food crisis. These increases are a result of additional funds being made available through a budget realignment process.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely, especially the impact of food prices on our partners and the work they are carrying out. If it becomes clear that the crisis is worsening and our projects are forced to cut services to stay within existing budgets, we may request further funds be made available, possibly through a specific fundraising campaign. We will keep our supporters posted on the matter.

Better Together conference

To assess the global food situation, we depended heavily on our four country representatives who live and work for Canadian Feed The Children in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Haiti and Uganda. They have been much closer at hand these past few weeks – in Toronto for our Better Together conference. The conference has been an extremely busy and gratifying time for us and will have great benefit on our charity for years to come.

We had eight full days of skills building and curriculum that included detailed presentations on all our programs, attended by staff, volunteers, board members and some key supporters and service providers. I was particularly pleased to welcome those who help us communicate regularly with our donors – Public Outreach who fundraise on our behalf through direct dialogue; Blakely & Associates who help prepare mail packages for our supporters; and Response Marketing Group who make telephone calls to our supporters on our behalf.

As well, we had great representation from IDRF – a wonderful partner charity that does outstanding work for children affected by poverty and supports our breakfast program at Eel Ground School in New Brunswick.

We welcomed some exceptional special guests, including Gerry Barr, President-CEO of Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), who spoke about Canada's role in poverty reduction and introduced Bill C-203 – the Official Development Assistance Accountability Act - which CCIC helped make law.

We heard from Jocelyn Formsma, program co-ordinator from the Ottawa-based First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. With our increased focus on supporting Aboriginal communities, Jocelyn's informative presentation on the historical perspective and the situation facing some of Canada's First Nations peoples today was keenly appreciated.

Harry Cummings, professor at the School of Rural Planning and Development at the University of Guelph, led a day-long session on strategic planning, helping us to strengthen our mission and vision through astute planning and goal-setting.

And Philip Schatz, general manager of Mercy Corps Canada was on hand to present the complex processes that get our medicine shipments to the communities we support.

Extra special event!

In the middle of our conference was a wonderful evening at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto where friends of Canadian Feed The Children gathered to meet the country reps and celebrate our shared commitment to help thousands of children every year. Aply hosted by our board chair, Dr. Mark Wise, the evening was punctuated with an exciting appearance by Little Mosque on the Prairie co-stars Sheila McCarthy and Carlo Rota.

We saw the magnificent Quilt of Hope on display before it was shipped off to hang in Grace Children's Hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Its beauty is matched only by the generosity it inspired – \$11,000 was raised for the hospital by supporters whose names are forever etched into its fabric.

And we saw many of our loyal supporters – a small representation of the thousands of Canadians who make our work possible – but a strong reflection of the kinds of caring men and women who help children in all the ways that matter.

There are so many people to thank for generously donating goods and services for this event and for sharing the evening with us. I appreciate every one of you, whose heart and soul are at the core of what Canadian Feed The Children stands for. Our country representative from Ethiopia, Gebriel Gelatis, captured my appreciation perfectly when he spoke to the audience, saying: "On behalf of the children, I want to thank you for your own determination in reaching out to others through Canadian Feed The Children. In a thousand different ways I see the impact of your support and watch it come to life in the hands of children, families and communities who are determined to experience all that life has to offer."

With great thanks for your support,

Jim Dahl
Executive Director