



thrive!

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Growing into 2015

Debra D. Kerby, President & CEO

The first six months of 2015 have brought with them an intense period of activity as CFTC continues its journey to change, and works to refine and sharpen our focus. Much of this activity centres around CFTC's growing profile and reputation among key influencers at the provincial and federal levels. Just recently, CFTC was honoured to testify before The House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development with respect to the protection of children and youth in developing countries.

There, we were able to present our point of view on the critical importance of women's livelihoods and income generating opportunities to child protection issues.

CFTC is aligned with UNICEF's vision of an international child protection sector that is characterized by *"a move away from addressing child protection issues in isolation to a more holistic approach ..."*



For CFTC, that holistic approach ensures that the social determinants of child protection are addressed through adequate nutrition in the early childhood and primary school years – and access to education, especially for girls. Access to nutritional food and to education is only possible where food security – especially for mothers – exists.

Working through women to increase the health and well-being of children is central to our work in all of our countries of operation.

For example, in our Climate Change Adaptation in Northern Ghana Enhanced (CHANGE) project, now in its third year, gender equity and a focus on women's participation are core elements in our objective to create more resilient and food-

secure communities, able to adapt to the impacts of climate change and feed children **all year long**.

CHANGE is one of the best examples of a project where the interconnections between women's health and participation in the local economy and the resulting positive impact on children's nutrition and health are most evident.

For example, women in one CHANGE focus group held in early 2013 spoke about growing food insecurity resulting in an increased incidence of stunting and wasting among children; and the reduction of meals from three times, to twice to sometimes only once a day as a result of a shortage of food or income to buy it.

They also reported reductions in household income as a result of crop failures leading to their inability to keep their children in school and pay for health insurance.

These are all examples of how the changing environment and reduced agricultural production in northern Ghana are directly impacting the safety and protection of children, and why supporting women to play a greater role in agricultural activity and community development is so key.

CHANGE continues to focus on:

- Including women in agricultural training opportunities;
- Giving women leadership positions in farmer-based organizations; and
- Land tenure for women to grow crops and materials required for agricultural and non-agricultural income generation.

Right now, in CHANGE communities in northern Ghana, more than 70% of farmer beneficiaries are women – far in excess of the original CHANGE target of 40%. And we are seeing dramatic improvements in women's crop yields: in 2014, from one to two bags to up to ten bags per acre (close to a ten-fold increase).

Women are participating at increasing levels in farming activities; they are gaining the knowledge they need to boost their own productivity and a stronger voice in community economic development; and they are being recognized for the value they can contribute to household and community food security.

Most importantly, they are now able to **feed their children nutritious food, send and keep them in school, and pay for basic necessities like clothing, repairs to their homes, and health care.**

Elsewhere in Africa, CFTC supports women's income-generating opportunities through micro-finance groups monitored and managed by our local partners. **In Ethiopia and Uganda, more than 10,000 members – 80% of whom are women – are earning income.**

The critical – and too-often missing link – between greater household income and better childhood nutrition is **nutrition education.** To that end, CFTC's local partners in all our countries of operation – including Canada – are delivering nutrition education designed to ensure that household income directly translates into improved quantity and quality of the food children eat.

We are seeing these efforts pay off: **there has been a 73% increase in income among self-help group members; and 93% of those who reported increased income have spent “some” or “all” of it on food.**



We are also seeing significant progress in our work in First Nations communities in Canada, where we started with breakfast and lunch programs and are now rolling out community-led, community-based nutrition programs: one in Eel Ground First Nation outside Miramichi, New Brunswick, and another north of Owen Sound, Ontario with the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. These are being fully embraced by the communities, with extremely high levels of leadership and participation across the entire community.

Development that is truly community-based and community-led is critical to ensure local ownership of long-term development goals and processes.

Community-led adaptation and action can also reduce the risks and effects of environmental-related disasters should they occur, therefore decreasing reliance on humanitarian assistance. It is the way CFTC contributes most effectively—as a development agency—to long-term social change that benefits children.

According to UNICEF, *“the single most important determinant of whether a child in the developing world will live to see her or his fifth birthday is a measure of that family's, the mother's in particular, access to education and to income.”*

We thank you for supporting our work that directly leads to women's empowerment, access to education and to income. **We simply couldn't do it without you.**

We're Moving!

As of June 29, 2015, our new address will be:

6 Lansing Square, Suite 123
Toronto, ON M2J 1T5

All phone numbers remain as is!

thrive!




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Collaboration in Canada

The inaugural *Nourishing Food, Nourishing Knowledge* learning forum, hosted by Canadian Feed The Children in New Brunswick in November 2014, brought together grassroots participants in food security including health professionals, teachers, community leaders, cooks, and project coordinators from Ontario and New Brunswick, as well as food security networks and other food-focused organizations. Through seminars and workshops, participants shared the practical ways they address food security in their schools and communities.

“I found it exciting and energizing to have such a diversity of people in the room working on school food initiatives, from Elders to students to health professionals. It was especially amazing to witness the knowledge-sharing and learning across community school cooks, students, local foodies, and leaders,” said Mueni Udeozor, CFTC’s Program Officer.

During the event, teachers and school principals learned how to start and maintain small gardens, and how to prepare healthy meal plans on a budget. Technical experts shared practical ways to strengthen programming, and many of the teachers and principals expressed a willingness to incorporate new ideas into their student nutrition programming.

Participants learned how to strengthen existing student nutrition programming and forged new partnerships and new ways of working. *“There is momentum on this issue across the country and bringing people together to share in this way creates space, not only for learning, but for greater coordination, collaboration and innovation. The event was truly a success in every way,”* said Mueni.

SCHOOL FEEDING SUCCESS IN EEL GROUND: A COMMUNITY’S PERSPECTIVE

For the past five years, Canadian Feed The Children has worked with the community of Eel Ground First Nation to improve the nutrition of their school breakfast and hot lunch program, which has had a tremendous impact on the students and broader community. CFTC recently had the opportunity to hear about the challenges the community continues to face, and what members of the community think of the school nutrition program.

CHALLENGES FACING THE COMMUNITY

Chief George Ginnish has lived in Eel Ground First Nation most of his life, and has been chief since 1996. *“I live with a great group of people. I love working here, and am glad to be part of a team that is working together to move our community forward,”* he said during a recent interview.

“First Nations, we have many challenges, and poverty is one of them. Seven of the ten poorest postal codes in Canada are in New Brunswick First Nation communities, so it’s really important for us to find partners [like Canadian Feed The Children] that will work with us,” said Chief Ginnish.

“It’s a reality that a number of our community members have to rely on the food bank,” said Chief Ginnish. *“These days it seems like everyone is in a rush; everyone needs to get somewhere, they need to pay bills, and they only have so much set aside for the food. So some kids will only eat once a day and for us that’s really heartbreaking,”* said Gail Hanifan who has lived in Eel Ground her entire life and is on the band council.

Gail is also part of a team currently conducting a survey with 100 homes in Eel Ground focused on learning more about food security and traditional foods. *“Doing these surveys, I’ve found that a lot of homes really struggle to put three meals on the table every day. When I asked if they would like to have more traditional foods, they said yes, they would, but the challenges for them were that they don’t know how to hunt, they don’t have transportation, and a lot of them are single parents taking care of babies along with school-aged children.”*

“For the single parents, when they do get money to go to the grocery store, they’ll buy mostly stuff that’s on sale, and it’s stuff that’s not really good for you,” Gail said. *“Their concern is that they have any food for the kids, so they don’t really go toward the fresh produce or chicken or stuff like that,”* Gail said. *“Quite a few mothers have told me that they will go without eating, so that their children can eat.”*

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

“Years ago we found out that a lot of kids were being bussed home at lunchtime, but they were coming back and a majority of them were not eating. So we set out to start a lunch program here at the school. It wasn’t a very good one. But we were able to get it going, and were eventually able to partner with Canadian Feed The Children,” said Ivan Augustine, former principal at Elsipogtog First Nation Elementary School and now Director of Education.

“Ever since we started working with Canadian Feed The Children we’ve seen a lot of benefits. We started off with meals that were not very nutritious years ago, like hot dogs for example, but now we’ve moved towards nutritious meals with moose meat, salad, vegetables and fruit. We have a program where kids grow seeds in the classroom and transplant them to the garden,” Ivan said.

Eel Ground school principal Helen Ward attributes improved attendance and academic achievement to the nutrition program. *“We see that in our classrooms, once they’ve eaten and had a well-balanced meal, they’re ready to take on the day. They have energy. They’re alert. We see it in the assessments that we perform on them,”* she said. Helen has been principal at the school for the past two years, but has worked for Eel Ground First Nation for 16 years.

During her years as a teacher in this community, Helen remembers many situations where it was apparent children

were not receiving proper nutrition at home. *“We had an incident where a child knew that they were going home and there was no food, so they would search in their classroom and the school to gather stuff to take home so that they could make sure they and their younger siblings would have something in the evening,”* she said.

Prep cook Kim Francis and kitchen staff member Freda Simon have worked at the school prior to Canadian Feed The Children’s involvement in the breakfast and hot lunch program, and have witnessed the transformation first hand. *“I think it’s important because the kids are getting a nutritious meal each day, which some of them may not be getting at home. It helps them focus and attend school more. You notice the kids’ attendance. The ones who never came before, you see them coming every day now, and they’re able to focus,”* Kim said.

“With the breakfast and hot lunch program, I find the kids happier and more outgoing. Before that you didn’t see much of that. They didn’t even want to come to school,” she said. *“We always see a smile on their faces, and they always say ‘Wela’liog!’, which means ‘thank you’, for their breakfast and hot lunch,”* Freda added.

The school nutrition program has had a direct impact on increasing student attendance, health and academic achievement. *“It’s not just providing nutritional food, it’s education and working with the community,”* said Chief Ginnish. *“I just want to thank Canadian Feed The Children, because without them the children would be going hungry. They’d be missing a lot of school,”* said Freda, *“Wela’liog!”*



Part of the team that makes the Elsipogtog First Nation school food program a success! (L to R) Dietitian Patricia Murphy; cook Jean Ann Clement; two students; and teacher Crystal O’Neill.

Sweet success in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is the world's largest honey consumer, and beekeeping has seen a rise in popularity among rural farmers as a way to earn additional income throughout the year. CFTC's beekeeping project with local partner Emmanuel Development Association is no exception: it has enjoyed buzz-worthy success since it began three years ago.

Working with EDA in the Amhara Region, the Yelen Queen Bee Multiplication Centre has grown to include 45 men from the surrounding area. They've produced 30 bee colonies, 20 of which were sold for 1,000 birr each, and they've retained 10 colonies as a stable base.

Group members use both modern yellow box hives and traditional hives, which are made of straw and hang in trees. The hives produce honey twice a year - usually in June and December - and are an important source of supplementary income for most farmers.



The Yelen Queen Bee Multiplication Centre group uses both modern and traditional beehives. The ones pictured here are the modern, yellow box beehives. The traditional hives are made of straw and hang in trees.

Tagafaw Kabede is a 38-year-old father of two boys who joined the group last September. *"I joined the group so that I could produce honey and benefit from the returns. I wanted to raise additional income through diversification,"* Tagafaw said.

Many members in the group manage multiple hives. For each kilogram of honey produced, they receive approximately 225 Ethiopian birr - equivalent to approximately \$13 Canadian. *"I have four modern beehives, and only one is in production, because three are newly established. At the last harvest I got 30kg from one beehive,"* said Beletew Kefelegn.



The amount of honey produced by each hive is dependent on the type of bee used and the skill of the farmer. Twenty-five-year-old Gizoaw Beshah joined the group last September. *"I wanted to improve my quality of life. I learned about honey production from the training organized through the EDA-CFTC group, as well as from other farmers, and from the government,"* said Gizoaw.

Honey production is taking off in many parts of Ethiopia, and the government is supporting this initiative through government extension agents, as well as offering visits by bee specialists from the Ministry of Agriculture. The extension agents and bee specialists are helping provide support and teaching skills to the farmers.

Awolae Chew is the chairperson of the group and says, *"My vision is to educate all my children up to the level they want to reach using the returns from my hives."* The goal for the Yelen Queen Bee Multiplication Centre is for each farmer to have 30 beehives to manage: an ambitious but attainable one, with ongoing support of CFTC and its donors, and EDA.

Feeding the world, caring for the earth:

Progress Update on the 2014 International Year of Family Farming

The International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) wrapped up in November 2014 after a year in which the importance of family farming to reduce poverty and improve global food security became a centrepiece of worldwide attention and action. The IYFF provided an opportunity to open a dialogue about more inclusive and sustainable approaches to agricultural and rural development that:

- Recognize the importance of smallholder and family farmers for sustainable development;
- Place small-scale farming at the centre of national, regional and global agricultural, environmental and social policies;
- Elevate the role of smallholder farmers as agents for alleviating rural poverty and ensuring food security for all; as stewards who manage and protect natural resources; and as drivers of sustainable development (IFAD, www.ifad.org/events/iyff/)

Around the world, the critical importance of family farming to local, national and world economies and food security is vast. Globally, 500 million family farm employ and support 2.5 billion people – more than one-third of the world's population. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost 239 million people face serious consequences related to food security and nutrition. Family farming - i.e., maximizing yield on small plots of land, usually under two acres - is an effective model that can provide solutions to overcome these challenges.

Although often restricted in their ability to farm commercially, women provide the vast majority of labour for family farms in Africa. This activity plus their own agricultural activities (for domestic food production and consumption only) are essential for household food security and adequate nutrition.

CFTC is addressing these limitations in a variety of ways. Every food security initiative we support is delivered with a dual lens on the cross-cutting themes of gender equality and environmental sustainability. Here's a quick pictorial update on some of our food availability, access and nutrition initiatives taking place in our countries of operation:



Food sharing, communal meal preparation and community rituals around food are important ways that First Nations people are addressing the problems of food insecurity, the high cost of living, and loss of culture.



Urban gardens supported by CFTC's local partner IPTK are important strategies to support family food security in Bolivia.



Climate Seeds Knowledge (CSK) groups preserve, share and trade indigenous, climate-adapted seeds, leveraging women's traditional knowledge and breaking down barriers to women's participation in commercial agricultural activities.



CFTC's Program Operations Manager, Amboka Wameyo (left) interviews Edema William (in green shirt), a participant in local partner CEDO-run Farmer Field Schools (FFS). FFS improve participating farmers' production and income by supporting better crop management decisions, and building resilience and adaptability to environmental changes.

According to IFAD Secretary Rasit Pertev, the IYFF has caused "a paradigm shift" in support of the interests of family farmers. At CFTC, we have seen – and also made – this shift in our own work, as we have honed our focus on food security over the past several and, with your help, continue to work to create a hunger-free, food-secure world for women, men and children.



Extra support for the youngest students in Uganda

Rural communities in the Masindi District of Uganda often lack basic social services and have poor infrastructure. In a country with more than 1.2 million orphans – 37% orphaned by HIV/AIDS – it is not surprising that an increasing number of children are growing up without adequate care, requiring support in terms of education, shelter, health and access to food. Local partner Child Rights Empowerment and Development Organization (CEDO) and CFTC are working together to enhance the lives of Ugandan children through early childhood education.



New block for Kababiito Early Childhood Development Centre, built in 2014 thanks to the generosity of CFTC donors like you!

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL FACILITIES

CEDO's Tugende-Tutandike Programme was designed to enhance community awareness, engagement and participation in early childhood education in 18 communities in the Masindi District. Before this program, any schools that existed in these communities were often in extremely poor repair. Few had desks, benches, chalkboards, or teaching aids. Latrines were dilapidated, filthy or non-existent and clean, safe water was rarely to be found on site. Yet, despite these obstacles these schools were often overcrowded with no measures to control student absenteeism.

The Tugende-Tutandike Programme offers communities an alternative path to basic education through community-owned Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDs). Since 2010, the project has helped close to 3,000 highly vulnerable children. CFTC has provided volunteer teachers, nutritious porridge, and scholastic materials, along with furniture and teaching materials to these centres.

In the past five years there has been a marked change in how the community views education and sending their



children to school. *“The biggest change I have seen is that ignorance about education has now declined. In the past, parents were not committed to taking their children to school. You could find children of six years at home, but now children of four are in school,”* said Endrecia Lillian, a teacher at the Kababiito ECD.

“Community members are now most interested in education and want the school to keep growing from nursery to primary. They don’t want the school to collapse. Most nearby communities have an interest because they are seeing the good work being done here. They come here, to Kababiito, to save and bring their children,” said Elias Samuel, who has been head teacher at Kababiito ECD since 2013.



“CEDO has encouraged focus on education and has also supported provision of materials to teach the children. If you compare the children in this school to those in Nyatonzi Primary School, our children are doing better. Children are now leaving Nyatonzi and coming to our school. Last year, we had six children join us from other schools,”

said Obizuyo Mildred, a teacher at Kababiito ECD.

Endrecia, Elias and Obizuyo are just some of the volunteer teachers who live in the project villages. These teachers are tasked not only with supporting students at each centre, but also making home visits to follow up with children who drop out or are at risk of dropping out. To facilitate these visits, funds were used to purchase bicycles: three for each centre in the Masindi District. These bicycles will remain the property of the ECD centre and make the job of supporting these young students much easier for those who give of their time so generously.

Thanks to its generous donors, CFTC was also able to provide funds to build a kitchen at the Kababiito ECD Centre: students from the five villages that comprise Kababiito now benefit from a new kitchen plus storage shed, which means healthy meals can be prepared on site. Previously, the children’s daily porridge was prepared under a makeshift shelter, often interrupted by rain. The construction of a permanent kitchen reduces risks related to poor sanitation and hygiene at this learning facility.

The popularity and success of the ECDs can be attributed to their affordable school fees, proximity to family homes, less demanding entry requirements, nutritious meals provided to the children, and the fact that the community self-manages them. Community leadership and ownership of these core development initiatives are key to sustainability.

EMPOWERING FAMILIES FINANCIALLY

The introduction of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in these same communities has made it possible for families to be able to afford to send their children to school, and to cover the associated costs. *“CEDO has helped promote savings which enable parents to get money to pay fees. The VSLA meetings also act as a market place for women to sell wares. The groups meet together in one venue every Monday,”* said Endrecia Lillian.

Ten-year-old Kabahumza’s father Byarugaba is a member of the local VSLA in Kisabagwa village. *“Life before CEDO was difficult, because we could not get enough of what we needed. I was not eating as well as well I eat now. I was not living in a good house,”* said Kabahumza. Her half sister, Atugonza, is two years older, and she adds, *“My parents built this house with money from the VSLA. Before this new house was built, we used to sleep nine of us in a grass thatched house.”* Being a member of the VSLA has meant that Byarugaba is able to supply all of his children with the books, clothes and food they need. *“CEDO helped my father. He pays school fees in time, and buys me books in time. We also eat what we want. For example we eat rice, bananas, posho, and chicken,”* Kabahumza said.



CFTC’s Amboka Wamayo speaks to ten-year-old Kabahumza and her half-sister Atugonza. Their father, Byarugaba, is a member of the local Village Savings & Loans Association in Kisabagwa village.



Creating safe spaces for children in Bolivia

CFTC's local partners in Bolivia work hard to create safe spaces for children to play, learn and grow. Without adequate child care facilities, children in Bolivia are often left alone, in the inadequate care of older siblings, or must accompany their parents to dirty, unsafe factories or fields without any opportunity for stimulation, education or support.

ECE and after-school centres fill crucial gaps in Bolivia's education and social services systems, enabling the youngest children to survive and thrive during their first six years and keeping older ones safe and healthy in structured, supportive after-school centres. CFTC has been working with local partner NJDP in Tiquipaya town, Cochabamba, supporting Nino Jesus du Praga Children's Centre.

Olivia Cruz has been working as an educator at this centre for the past ten years. *"It is known that NJDP Centre supports families who value their help with food, education and health, which allow the parents to work while their children are well cared for,"* she said.



Olivia has seen firsthand the impact attending the centre has had on the children she cares for: *"I like working with children aged 3-4, because at this age children are like sponges, they understand you and learn a lot. It is possible to see the difference in them when they start the school year and when they leave for vacation."* She says the most satisfying part of her job is *"the joy of the children, and the smile on their faces when they learn something new."*

These centres also provide relief for many parents. Victoria, a 42-year-old mother of six, lives in the Encanto Pampa zone of Tiquipaya town, Cochabamba, with her second husband. *"I arrived in Tiquipaya when I was 21. I had my*

little daughter and I needed to work, but there was no work in the mine for a woman with a child," she said. Her brother was able to help her get a job as a chicken peeler.



"I sometimes used to work night shifts because I did not have enough money. I would work day and night. My mom helped me to look after my children. I lived alone because my first husband abandoned me, and I had to find a way to feed my kids and mom," she said. *"I guess*

NJDP staff saw that I am a needy person, and they decided to help me by sponsoring my child." Her second husband works as a bricklayer's assistant, and sometimes works as a driver during the day. The house they live in has no floor, no running water, and no sewage system. They have to walk to their neighbour's house to carry water back to their home.

While they may struggle to make ends meet, Victoria is very thankful that her children have the opportunity to attend the centre. *"The centre has been of great help to me, especially giving me peace of mind in regards to my children's care. I do not have to worry if they are eating or if they are alone. The house has no proper lock, so anything can happen. However, when they go to the centre I am calm, I know they are eating and doing their homework,"* she said.

Andrea is 12 years old and lives in the community of Ecanto Pampa with her parents and older sister. She has been sponsored by CFTC since 2008. *"Since I started attending the children's centre I received assistance with food, medical care and school support, the centre also*





Peace of mind in Bolivia

Alberta is a mother of three living in the impoverished, rural community of La Barranca, near the capital city of Sucre. She works in the local brick factory with her husband, which means their children were often left unattended for long periods of time. Their three children were often left to play in the streets with other children whose parents also worked in the brick factories nearby.

When Alberta's youngest daughter, Yasmine, was just two years old she was identified by CFTC's local partner IPTK, and began attending the local early childhood education centre shortly after that. At that time she



couldn't speak, but now - as she approaches her fourth birthday - she can be seen talking, laughing and playing with the other children at the centre on a daily basis.

Yasmine loves to paint and draw in her work book, and she has flourished in this nurturing environment. Alberta's hope for Yasmine, and her other children, is that they finish high school.



Children in Bolivia benefit from early childhood education and after-school centres, which fill crucial gaps in Bolivia's education and social services systems, enabling the youngest children to survive and thrive during their first six years and keeping older ones safe and healthy in structured, supportive after-school centres.

helped me to have friends. This assistance has made it possible for my parents to work, in order to have a house of our own," she said.

Despite the fact that both her parents are able to work, she says that they sometimes don't have enough to eat dinner each evening, *"I eat at the centre every day and sometimes I have dinner at my home, but if there isn't dinner I just drink tea. My favorite food in the center is peanut soup, and noodles at home."*



Andrea now attends Maria Magdalena Postel School, and was top student last year. *"Last year I had the honour of carrying the flag for being the best student of the school. This made me feel very happy and cheerful. My parents and I were also very proud,"* she said.



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