WORLD WITHOUT ORPHANS

A GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR EVERY CHILD TO GROW UP IN A NURTURING PERMANENT FAMILY, AND TO KNOW THEIR HEAVENLY FATHER
SUMMARY

For as long as there have been humans, we have lived in families. God intended families to be the fundamental social structure around which life is organized. Yet millions of children throughout the world grow up without the benefit of permanent relationships with loving and caring adults. Their families have been broken apart due to poverty, illness, death, war, social isolation, violence, and relocation.

As a result, children are separated and placed in institutional care, lose contact with their kin, or suffer the detrimental effects of abuse, neglect, abandonment, and homelessness.

**THIS IS A GLOBAL CRISIS THAT HAS GRAVE MORAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND EVEN SECURITY CONSEQUENCES. IT IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH TODAY AND IT DEMANDS A GLOBAL RESPONSE.**

God knows all orphaned children by name, and He has a purpose for each of them. He is the Father of the fatherless, who sets the solitary in families (Psalm 68:5–6).

The World Without Orphans movement *WAS BORN FROM THE UNDERSTANDING OF GOD’S HEART FOR ORPHANS AND HIS CLEAR MANDATE* from Scripture for the Church to care for them. We believe that the global Christian community, the Body of Christ, is uniquely positioned and has the capacity to lead the effort to provide every child with permanent family connections and end the orphan crisis.
WHO ARE THE ORPHANS?

There is no easy answer to the seemingly simple question of "Who is an orphan?" However, **THE WAY WE DEFINE THESE CHILDREN HAS VERY IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS** for our capacity to help them.

Historically, orphans were children who had lost both of their parents, usually through death. UNICEF has expanded this definition to include children who have lost one of their parents. The Bible seems to use the words "orphan" and "fatherless" interchangeably, which supports a broader definition. Consider also *James 1:27* that ties together caring for orphans and widows, who could very likely be single mothers. Contemporary child welfare practice focuses also on children who have lost their families through abandonment, even though one or both of their parents may still be alive.

**THEREFORE, IN A BROADER SENSE AN ORPHAN IS A CHILD WHO HAS LOST ONE OR BOTH PARENTS OR HAS BEEN ABANDONED BY OR SEPARATED FROM THEM.**

Some children, born with disabilities, become orphans because their families and communities lack the skills and resources to meet their special developmental needs. Still other children may be removed from their families to ensure their safety, protecting them from child abuse, neglect, and other forms of child endangerment. Many orphans grow to adulthood without permanent family connections, and they often "graduate" to the streets, homeless and jobless, being drawn into lives of crime to support themselves. The most vulnerable may be trafficked into various forms of indentured servitude in other nations. Orphan children may be considered “at-risk” in the most fundamental sense.

**WITHOUT THE NURTURANCE, SUPPORT, AND CONSISTENCY OF A PERMANENT LOVING FAMILY IN A STABLE, SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY, ORPHANED CHILDREN ARE FACED WITH SEEMINGLY INSURMOUNTABLE CHALLENGES.**
**WHERE ARE THEY?**

**Top ten countries by absolute number of orphans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th># OF ORPHANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 INDIA</td>
<td>31000000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 CHINA</td>
<td>20600000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 NIGERIA</td>
<td>12000000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 BANGLADESH</td>
<td>4800000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ETHIOPIA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 INDONESIA</td>
<td>4700000</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 CONGO</td>
<td>4200000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 PAKISTAN</td>
<td>4200000</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 BRAZIL</td>
<td>3700000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 SOUTH AFRICA</td>
<td>3400000</td>
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</tbody>
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**Top ten countries by the percentage of orphans to the total population of children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th># OF ORPHANS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ZIMBABWE</td>
<td>1400000</td>
<td>22,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 LESOTHO</td>
<td>200000</td>
<td>20,99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ZAMBIA</td>
<td>1300000</td>
<td>20,73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 MOZAMBIQUE</td>
<td>2100000</td>
<td>19,25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 SWAZILAND</td>
<td>100000</td>
<td>18,73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 SOUTH AFRICA</td>
<td>3400000</td>
<td>18,49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 EQUATORIAL GUINEA</td>
<td>450000</td>
<td>18,22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 CENTRAL AFRICAN REP.</td>
<td>370000</td>
<td>17,31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 LIBERIA</td>
<td>340000</td>
<td>16,86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 ANGOLA</td>
<td>1500000</td>
<td>16,63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on the data from UNICEF*
THE MAP OF GLOBAL ORPHAN CHALLENGE
Based on the data from UNICEF
WHAT IS WORLD WITHOUT ORPHANS?

World Without Orphans is a global movement with a shared vision for orphans becoming sons and daughters. Our dream is that every child will grow up in a safe, stable, and nurturing permanent family and know their Heavenly Father.

FOUNDATION

Because God has adopted us, and is Father to the fatherless; He is at the center of this movement.

CORNERSTONES

CHILD: every child has inherent value and an unconditional right to holistic development.

FAMILY: a healthy family is the best environment for a child to develop and thrive.

CHURCH: the Body of Christ is commissioned to care for the orphan and has the capacity to lead the local and global effort to end orphanhood.

MOVEMENT: broad scale collaboration is required to transfer these core values across societies and see transformation occur.
GLOBAL STRATEGIES

ACTIVATE: Engaging and educating leaders who will create systemic change in different spheres on behalf of children and families.

CONNECT: Building collaborative networks, in which participants learn from one another, gain access to ideas and assistance, and work together to devise unique solutions.

EQUIP: Ensuring that all activists have access to training and practical tools needed to build the capacity of their movements.
OPERATING FRAMEWORK

WWO IS A PART OF A GROWING WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT to address the orphan crisis. It is a call to end orphanhood by transforming lives, communities and societies.

WWO IS A COLLECTIVE EFFORT of individuals, churches, groups, and organizations united under a common vision and values. It is not owned by any one entity but is manifested through grassroots movements, which implement family-based solutions for orphans and vulnerable children in their nations, communities or networks.

THE GLOBAL FACILITATION TEAM SERVES AS A CATALYST AND SUPPORT FOR THE GROWTH OF WWO AND FOCUSES ON GLOBAL STRATEGIES. It also works to help launch national and local teams, which undertake responsibility to serve their respective movements. Mission of GFT is to activate, connect, and equip change agents for a world without orphans.
HOW DID WWO START?

The initial vision for the movement came from the example of Ukrainian Christians. Ukraine, a nation with a reported 100,000 orphans, has experienced tremendous societal transformation in recent years, seeing thousands of children find homes. It began with Christians believing that every child should have a caring family in their own country. In 2010 a group of Christian leaders established the Alliance for Ukraine Without Orphans that now includes hundreds of participating Christian NGOs and works with more than ten thousand churches of various Christian denominations. The combined efforts resulted in a significant increase in national adoptions, growth of foster care, and unprecedented mobilization of Ukrainian churches, including Orthodox, Catholic and a wide array of Evangelical denominations, for family-based care for orphans and vulnerable children.

After Ukrainian leaders shared what God was doing in Ukraine at the 2011 4–14 Window Global Summit in Singapore, requests for assistance in developing similar initiatives began pouring in from other countries. It soon became obvious that the Holy Spirit had been laying a similar vision on the hearts of believers in many countries. Global Christian leaders recognized the need to initiate a movement that could respond to the global orphan challenge and asked Ruslan Maliuta, former President of the Alliance for Ukraine Without Orphans, to lead its facilitation.

In November 2012, 45 delegates representing 15 countries from around the world met in Indonesia as a part of the Transform World Global Challenges Summit to work on developing the WWO initiative further. Four days of intense work resulted in a refined vision, action plan, and expected outcomes over seven years. Another significant result was the formation of the WWO Global Facilitation Team, a group of servant leaders, who have significant experience in different areas and are committed to advancing the cause.

Since 2012 the Global Facilitation Team members have worked with leaders around the world to share the vision and equip them with a family-based approach to caring for orphans and vulnerable children. The initial result has been the launch and growth of national movements in more than 20 countries, primarily in Africa, Europe and South Asia. These movements are engaging thousands of churches, organizations and individuals and bringing sustainable transformation to the way children are being cared for in their societies.
WHAT ARE EXPECTED LONG TERM OUTCOMES?

NATIONAL MOVEMENTS – *national orphan care movements* are initiated around the world through the collaboration of churches and NGO’s, who stand in agreement with common biblical values.

CHURCH MOBILIZATION – *Christian churches around the world are aware of the orphan crisis* in their community, nation, region, and around the world. The majority of churches in countries with national movements are motivated to action and equipped with the most effective strategies and resources to respond to the need.

PERMANENCY FOR CHILDREN – *Permanency of children in families is perceived and promoted globally* as a primary goal in caring for orphans and vulnerable children. A paradigm shift from institutional to family-based strategies has occurred in churches, NGO’s and governments in countries with national movements.

PREVENTION – *Parents know and understand the steps* to creating a healthy, safe and strong family unit where children are living with and being nurtured by loving parents.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT – *There is a comprehensive, best-practice, evidenced based collection of resources* available for distribution and training for those persons working with or for orphans. Capacity is demonstrated by a competent, confident and committed group of leaders, parents, and workers who are serving together for a World Without Orphans.
WHERE TO BEGIN?

THE FIRST STEP IN RESOLVING ANY PROBLEM IS TO UNDERSTAND IT.

There is an urgent need to complete comprehensive assessments of the presence and location of orphans and vulnerable children in every country in the world so we fully understand the scope of the problem and the needs of the children, and **DEVELOP THE BEST POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**.

These assessments should include accurate and up-to-date information about the number of children that need permanent placement with a new family, children living in orphanages and other institutions, children living on the streets, and children in other non-permanent forms of care. We also need data about children who suffer from abuse, neglect, or exploitation and who have been removed from their parents, either temporarily or permanently, to ensure their safety.

**An example of the findings of one such assessment, done in Ukraine, is presented below.**

**Map of Orphanhood in Ukraine: a key to understanding the numbers**

- **Total number of children in Ukraine**: 8,000,000 (17.6% of the country population)
  - **1,500,000 children are being raised by a single parent**
  - **250,000 children experience abuse, brutal treatment and exploitation**
  - **In addition to orphans, there are over 40,000 children living in institutions who do not have official orphan status**
  - **Out of those children: 96,000 children who have the legal status of orphans**
    - **63,000 live with guardians**
    - **22,000 live in institutions/orphanages for children**
    - Every year, 11,000 new children join the orphanage population
    - Every year, 27,000 children turn 18 years old; 56% of them are either over 5 years old, from directories of disable or are part of a disability group
    - Every year, 12,000 orphans turn 18, the age of legal independence

Armed with accurate information, national movements can begin recruiting and mobilizing advocates to design nation-specific strategies to begin to address this problem.
WHAT ARE SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

THE FOLLOWING GUIDING PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN OUR WORK:

Not all orphans need a new family. Many of them already live in families who can be strengthened to ensure permanence and safety for these children. We must support these families and the communities that care for them.

THERE IS A SPECTRUM OF MODELS OF CARE FOR ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN:

- strengthening their own immediate and extended families;
- reuniting children in care with their own families;
- adoption;
- guardianship;
- foster care.

We need to build all of these options concurrently, TO PRODUCE A RANGE OF FAMILY CARE OPTIONS for a nation’s children. We also need to explore the options of placing children in healthy extended families from which they may have been separated.

- Orphanages and child care institutions are the least effective and often the most detrimental forms of care for orphans. We understand the use of these facilities as emergency placement options for some children, but we should not consider them an adequate permanent placement for any child.
- If children have lost their own families and there is no hope of reuniting them, then adoption or guardianship should be the aim of our efforts.
- Careful and thoughtful planning should go into any nation’s program model on behalf of orphans. Prevention programs at all levels is critical.
HOW TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT?

The vision for a world without orphans is a huge task and no single organization, church, or even network would be able to do accomplish this vision on its own. It will require the input and service of many dedicated believers who are passionate to see children without families placed in healthy homes. Together with our current national partner networks and alliances and leaders from many other countries, WE WARMLY WELCOME OTHERS TO JOIN THIS MOVEMENT and would like to offer a variety of next steps for those who want to get involved.

- Receive updates
- Get involved with the Global Facilitation Team or regional or national teams
- Help to initiative a movement in your nation

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF THIS MOVEMENT, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:

info@worldwithoutorphans.org  www.worldwithoutorphans.org

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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