

# FOR EVERY CHILD

UNICEF Canada Magazine  
Spring 2012

## Inspiring Leaders, Inspiring Lives

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The extraordinary life of  
UNICEF's James Grant

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Saving lives with  
community radio

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A Q & A with  
"Mama UNICEF"

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A genocide survivor's  
story of hope

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unicef   
canada

## A message from President and CEO David Morley

I am often asked how I keep doing this work when I am faced time and time again with poverty, indifference and seemingly insurmountable challenges. The answer is easy. It is because of the heroes I get to work with. These heroes aren't celebrity heroes—these are real people: women, men and youth around the globe who make profound differences in the lives of the world's most vulnerable children.

They are people like Ramvati Adivasi ("Community Radio Saving Lives," page 14), from Madhya Pradesh, India, who didn't let illiteracy prevent her from becoming a well-known radio programmer. Today she uses the radio to provide critical public health information to her community.

Or people like John Nsabimana ("Hope After Tragedy," page 18), who at the age of eight led his younger siblings to safety after their parents were killed in the Rwandan genocide. Today he is a UNICEF ambassador and will soon begin his own career in humanitarianism.

Vivian Benedictos and Marilou Gambuta ("Schools Help Children Heal," page 20) are two Filipino teachers who, after flooding ravaged their community, brought comfort to their students by reopening their classroom as quickly as they could manage.

These are some of my heroes, and I feel privileged to work with them. Because

when I see how they will not give up in the face of overwhelming odds, then I know that I too have no choice, no choice at all but to work alongside them and try to build a better future for the most forgotten children in the world.



David Morley  
President and CEO  
UNICEF Canada

UNICEF is the world's leading child-focused humanitarian and development agency. Through innovative programs and advocacy work, we save children's lives and secure their rights in virtually every country. Our global reach, unparalleled influence on policymakers, and diverse partnerships make us an instrumental force in shaping a world in which no child dies of a preventable cause. UNICEF is supported entirely by voluntary donations and helps all children, regardless of race, religion or politics.

### FOR EVERY CHILD

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Radio programmer Ramvati Adivasi from Patara, India, uses radio to inform women of government health services.

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# VISIONARY LEADER

The extraordinary life of James Grant, whose tenacity and tireless resolve are credited for saving the lives of millions of children

**S**ometimes the newspapers miss important stories. On January 28, 1995, a man credited with saving millions of children's lives passed away. The obituary pages took note, but the front pages and news broadcasts were mostly silent about a man who revolutionized our thinking about the welfare of the world's children.

That man was James P. Grant. Jim Grant was UNICEF's third executive director, serving from 1980 until five days before his death. Grant died from cancer after spending his final days in a small suburban hospital room in New York, surrounded by wishes from presidents and prime ministers, including one from former President Bill Clinton, thanking him "from the bottom of my heart for your service to America, to UNICEF, and most of all to the children of the world."

A few days later, over 3,000 people, including Hillary Clinton and then UN Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros-Gali, packed into New York City's Cathedral of Saint John the Divine for a memorial service in his honour. The mourners in the church that day were paying homage to a man whose leadership saved or improved the quality of life for millions of children by dramatically increasing children's vaccination rates, reducing diarrhea mortality rates and pursuing other lifesaving strategies.

In a statement after Mr. Grant's death, Boutros Boutros-Ghali said: "Very few men or women ever have the opportunity to do as much good in the world as James Grant. And very few have ever grasped that opportunity with such complete and dedicated commitment." Former U.S. President Bill Clinton, who a year earlier awarded Grant the Presidential Medal of Freedom, said: "Throughout his long career, Jim Grant was a visionary leader—one of the most distinguished international public servants of our time." Of the many great things Grant accomplished through the generous contributions of UNICEF donors, two major milestones stand out among them.

To achieve goals many thought were impossible, Grant met with almost every president and prime minister in the developing world.

## WHAT DID JAMES GRANT ACCOMPLISH?

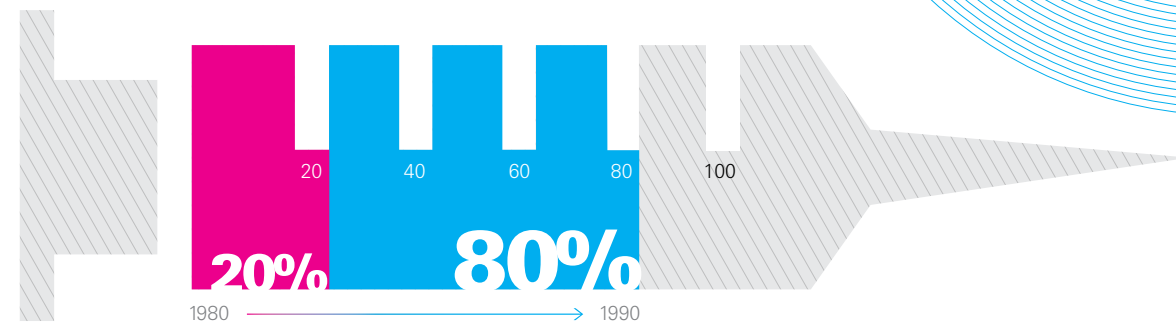
# 25,000,000

## LIVES SAVED

by the **Child Survival and Development Revolution** by the time of Grant's death.

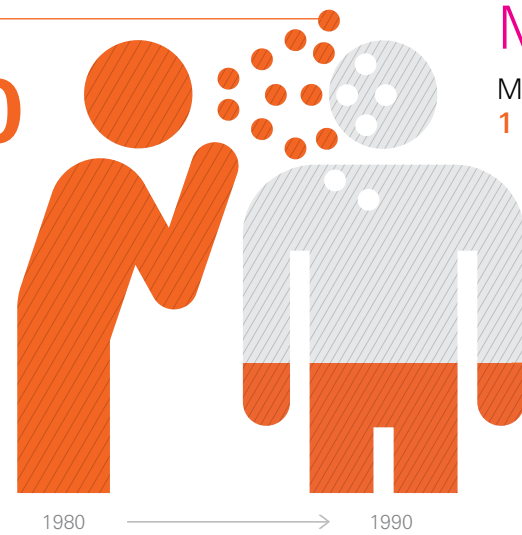
### Childhood Vaccination

Global childhood vaccination rates increased from **20 percent** to **80 percent**.



# 3,000,000

deaths per year



### Measles Deaths

Measles deaths fell from **3 million** to **1 million** per year.

# 1,000,000

deaths per year

# 500

thousand cases



# 100

thousand cases

### Polio

Polio cases declined from **500,000** to **100,000** annually.



A child at a community centre in the town of Grand Bassam near Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, shares a book with James Grant.

He simply refused to settle for less than dramatic gains in the survival rates of the world's young children.

First, he pursued with extraordinary focus the belief that investment in a number of low-cost interventions (such as vaccinations, breastfeeding and oral rehydration salts) could save millions of lives. In 1983, wanting to substitute incremental progress for a quantum leap, he launched the Child Survival and Development Revolution. He simply refused to settle for less than dramatic gains in the survival rates of the world's vulnerable children.

Though Grant was an expert in the complexities of his work, from demographics to biology to geopolitics, he channelled it all into the pursuit of simplicity, which was embodied in the Revolution. Undeterred by critics and naysayers, under his leadership global childhood vaccination rates increased from 20 percent to 80 percent, measles deaths fell from 3 million to 1 million per year, and polio cases declined from 500,000 to 100,000 annually. When he began promoting oral rehydration therapy to treat diarrhea, it was barely known outside the laboratory; it now saves millions of lives each year. Thanks to Grant, the world has made great strides in eliminating Vitamin A deficiency and the iodine-deficiency disorders that cause brain damage. By the time of his death, the Revolution was credited for saving some 25 million lives.

To achieve goals for children that many thought were impossible, Grant met with almost every president and prime minister in the developing world—always bringing along a packet of oral rehydration salts in his pocket, a dropper to test whether the salt at the state dinner was iodized, or the latest child malnutrition and mortality statistics for the country he was visiting that day.

Grant's second major milestone was encouraging world leaders to make and keep commitments to improving child welfare. In 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted The Convention on the Rights of the Child. Because of

Grant's efforts, the Convention came into force faster than any other human rights convention then or since, and became the most widely embraced rights treaty in history.

Once the Convention was adopted, Grant set his sights on giving the document some real teeth: he organized the World Summit for Children, the largest ever gathering of heads of state and government. Nations established concrete goals for children's health, education, well-being and protection. To ensure these promises were fulfilled, Grant successfully urged countries to create national action plans. For the first time, the global community began work on international goals to reduce rates of mortality, disease, malnutrition and illiteracy, and to reach specific targets by the year 2000.

How did he manage to achieve so much in just fifteen years? Grant was both tireless and tenacious. Well known for his work ethic, he clocked 18 hour days, six and a half days a week, with staff scheduled in shifts to assist him. For the last two years of his life he travelled the world visiting over 40 heads of state, knowing that he was dying.

Perhaps nothing describes Grant's life's mission and tireless resolve better than what became his favourite quotation by George Bernard Shaw, which those close to him say put a special glint in his eye:

*This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one... I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and, as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.*



Françoise (right) visits a woman who gave birth during the 2011 World Breastfeeding Week, in the UNICEF-supported maternity ward at Isaie Jeanty Hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

© UNICEF/NYHQ2011-2125/Dormino



AN INTERVIEW WITH

## Françoise Gruloos-Ackermans

UNICEF's representative in Haiti

Currently leading the Haitian team is a woman of unprecedented vision, dedication and compassion. Françoise Gruloos-Ackermans, a former scholar and professor, has served UNICEF for over 21 years. A native of Belgium, she has worked in emergencies and headed up projects focused on HIV and AIDS, street children, child rights and education. From Burundi to the Comoros Islands, from Madagascar to Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, she has bravely and tirelessly embodied UNICEF's mission.



### You've worked for other humanitarian groups before working with UNICEF. How would you compare those experiences?

Passing from a non-governmental organization, where actions are more visible, to UNICEF, where a big part of our job is not visible, I realized the power of our organization. We negotiate and advocate with decision-makers to fulfil, often in a more sustainable way, the rights of children. It's very satisfying to work on that level, to make changes that can last.

### Where did the nickname Mama UNICEF come from?

From the Grand Mufti of the Comoros Islands, off the east coast of Africa. He came to my farewell party and made a speech. Then he ordered every follower to pray for me as the mother of the Comorina children!

Then again, when I was stationed in Burundi, in east-central Africa, working with street children. One day when I was buying bread, there was suddenly havoc, with street children running wild. I heard one child say to another, "Don't hurt her! That's Mama UNICEF!"

It's flattering—and a bit embarrassing. But it's not really about me. I may be the face that they recognize, but it is a compliment the entire team can take credit for. We transform people's lives and build strong relationships with the community. The nickname is really a testament to our success as an organization.

### Describe what it feels like to arrive in a country during an emergency?

When I arrived in Burundi after the war, thousands of displaced families were living in schools in horrible conditions. I didn't know where to start. Sanitation? Stem the measles epidemic? Prioritize feeding programs?

Investigating the situation on the ground with a Rwandan colleague, we came across a mother trying to feed her children—five of them, all crowded around a single plate. My colleague started crying—he'd had a sudden flashback of himself in the same situation some 25 years ago as a refugee. I realized how vulnerable we are. Today it is him; tomorrow it might be me.

### Many assume that field staff must "turn off" their emotions in order to get the job done. You seem to take a different approach than that.

Our work is dealing with human beings, and sometimes to weep is essential. Even though working in an emergency is rewarding, it affects us. I sometimes wake up at night with this picture of a baby boy dying in my arms from malnutrition. I felt responsible.

The trick is to have tragic events motivate you to go on, to do better and more, not stop you in your tracks.

### In Haiti, there are so many obstacles to overcome.

#### Do you feel like progress is being made?

We're making a difference here, every day. It's a wonderful team. Working with 230 people as committed as they are,



UNICEF representative Françoise speaks with a student after the inauguration of the Celie Lilavois school in Port-au-Prince.

© UNICEF/HIA2010-00554/Dormino

this gives me a lot of energy in the morning.

UNICEF's reputation here is very good because we show respect, we listen and we partner. We are always looking at ways to improve, but fundamentally we have a reputation here that we get things done and work well with stakeholders.

### Are we saving lives?

Absolutely we are saving lives, many lives—by treating cholera, especially.

### What are some of the long-term solutions for Haiti?

Here, 43 percent of the population is under 18. They do not vote, but the future of Haiti is in their hands. UNICEF primarily focuses on the needs of children and youth living in poverty, but we also need to connect with middle-class youth. They are the elites who will most likely be leading this country in the future.

### What are your hopes and dreams for the children of Haiti?

I want to see every child here going to school, with a nice back pack, a notebook, a pencil and a teacher who has what she needs to teach them well.

I want to see that children are no longer malnourished—I'm talking about chronic malnutrition, which is less visible but seriously impedes development.

I hope we can put an end to the suffering of child victims of trafficking, abuse, abandonment. This has to stop. These children need to stay here in Haiti; they need to be protected, and their families need support so they can cope and care for their own children.

### Did you know?

Comoros, an Indian Ocean nation near northern Mozambique, consists of four islands, one of which remains under French administration. Therefore, the UNICEF country program of cooperation includes three islands: Grande Comore, Mohéli and Anjouan. The country has transitioned to a stable democracy. However, Comoros faces serious socio-economic challenges and frequent natural disasters (cyclones and volcanic eruptions) that have severe adverse effects on children and women.

∞  
A  
LIFELONG  
LEGACY OF  
GIVING



UNICEF Canada Ambassador Elizabeth Dallaire discusses how her lifetime commitment to humanitarian work has brought deeper meaning to her life



Elizabeth took her passion to the classroom, travelling to different schools and speaking to children, teachers and parents about the struggles children face around the world, about the rights of children, and about what kids and schools can do to make a difference.

**A** brand-new school, built with UNICEF support, stands on a hill outside of Kigali, Rwanda. It bears almost no resemblance to the school Elizabeth Dallaire's husband told her about in an overseas phone call 14 years ago. "Romeo asked me if I could gather supplies for a school that he described to me as a mud and brick building with a leaky tin roof, no washrooms, no water supply, no chalkboard, no furniture, period. I made some phone calls and began to gather supplies for a shipment to help the children there, but the conflict escalated and we were unable to send it."

Ten years later, Elizabeth was touring Rwanda with UNICEF and visiting schools built by UNICEF and partners after the conflict. On this visit, she saw schools that had been newly transformed thanks to the generous support of our donors.

"There I was, over a decade later, standing outside a large cement schoolhouse, so bright and clean, complete with furniture, a chalkboard, windows, separate latrines for boys and girls, and a landscaped playing field outside," she recalls from her home in Quebec City. "The difference was like night and day. It was so comforting to see, firsthand, that things were really improving for children in Rwanda after so much suffering."

When most Canadians hear the name Dallaire, they think of Elizabeth's husband, Senator Romeo Dallaire, former Force Commander for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, where he bore witness to the horrific genocide that took place there in 1994.

What many Canadians don't know is that Elizabeth herself is a UNICEF ambassador, travelling the country from her home base in Quebec City, inspiring others to help the world's most vulnerable children. Those who do know about Elizabeth's work with UNICEF often assume that she became involved with the organization following her husband's experience in Rwanda. The truth is that she has dedicated an enormous amount of her time to humanitarian projects for several decades. Long before becoming an ambassador, Elizabeth spent hundreds of hours volunteering to ensure that all children around the world survive and thrive.

In fact, listening to Elizabeth talk about her life, you might say humanitarianism is in her DNA.

"I remember, growing up, that my parents, my grandparents, even my great-grandparents had set the bar very high for us kids," recounts Elizabeth. "They were always helping people in the community who had less or who were in dire circumstances, whether it was with a meal, a place to stay or by helping send local kids to school. It was how I was raised—if you had more than others and you were able to help, you did. In our family it seemed as natural as breathing."



"It was how I was raised—if you had more than others and you were able to help, you did. In our family it seemed as natural as breathing."



Elizabeth speaks with a young woman at the Busoro Health Centre in Nyanza, Rwanda.

© UNICEF Canada/Le Soleil/Steve Deschêne

She saw UNICEF as a touchstone for her family's commitment to charitable work from an early age. "I remember my mom buying UNICEF holiday cards in the late sixties," she recalls. "It stuck with me. As soon as I became a teacher, I helped out with the Trick-or-Treat program [today known as the National UNICEF Day program]. I was most interested in UNICEF's work in education, in the fact that UNICEF leaves no stone unturned to ensure that children in dire and extreme circumstances—be it poverty, armed conflict, natural disaster—still get an education."

So Elizabeth took that passion to the classroom, travelling to different schools and speaking to children, teachers and parents about the struggles children face around the world, about the rights of children, and about what kids and schools can do to make a difference.

"I was a teacher, a parent and a military wife. My volunteer work for UNICEF helped give deeper meaning to all those parts of my life," she added.

Eventually Elizabeth started speaking to community groups, finding ways of engaging people of all ages in the cause she believed in. Becoming an ambassador for UNICEF Canada in 2007 was a natural next step. "It's always been important to me to be able to say to myself each night that I devoted my time to activities that are worthy of my day."

Today she speaks with great pride that her own three children have taken up humanitarian work overseas.

Her oldest son, Willem, has worked in Sierra Leone, daughter Catherine in Peru and South Africa, and her youngest son, Guy, is heading off to Uganda this summer.

Recently, Elizabeth took an important next step in her commitment to humanitarianism, and she hopes her decision will inspire other donors to do the same. She has made UNICEF a beneficiary in her will.

"It's comforting to know that I can keep giving even when I'm gone. It's one way of continuing to contribute beyond my time on earth. For me, it's not about generosity. It's just sensible and normal. And I hope others who read this will consider joining me by making the same commitment—to invest in the future, the next generation. It just feels like the right thing to do."

For more information on charitable bequests, contact Jackie Jones, Legacy Giving Manager, at 1 800 567 4483.

### Did you know?

If we took a snapshot of the state of education across the globe, the image would shock many of us. Current estimates place the number of primary school-aged children out of school at 68 million—more than double the entire population of Canada.

Dharkan 107.8 program-maker Ramvati Adivasi at home in the village of Patara, India. Ramvati has recorded several programs and interviews informing women of government health services.



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# COMMUNITY RADIO SAVING LIVES

A community in rural India is powered up by passionate local radio host Ramvati Adivasi



Ramvati Adivasi hasn't let the fact that she can't read or write stand in the way of a career in radio. Today she's conducting interviews and editing programs for the newly inaugurated local radio station, Dharkan 107.8 FM, in Shivpuri, a village in Madhya Pradesh, India.

Though local residents say they find her broadcasts entertaining, Ramvati and her colleagues at the station have a more ambitious goal in mind: to use radio as a medium to save lives.

The area struggles with malnutrition, infant mortality and illiteracy. Local research identified radio as an excellent way to reach mothers, since women here are primarily in the home all day and not allowed to participate in family decisions.

Ramvati used to be one of these women herself. Now she interviews them, drawing on the advice of advocates who help local women increase their stature within the family and community.

Dressed in a beautiful blue sari, with sparkling red bangles and traditional tattoos decorating her arms, Ramvati beams when she talks about the change community radio has made to her own life: "My name is known in the community. I have this knowledge, and so people are respecting me now. In the tribal community I belong to, women are not considered as an equal counterpart to men—and so no one wanted to listen to my opinion when there was a discussion in the family or the community. But today I have my say in whatever matter is being discussed."





Women’s empowerment is a common theme of the station’s broadcasts. The hope is that the station will be critical to breaking the cycle of illiteracy and malnutrition that so many women face here. Thanks to the station’s promotion of UNICEF’s Education for All campaign that focuses on improving quality in primary education, many local girls are now seeing the inside of a school for the first time. These young girls know firsthand the difference Ramvati and her colleagues have made in transforming their community.

The station broadcasts to 75 villages in a 15-kilometre radius, reaching as many as 170,000 people. Residents turned out in force when the station launched a few months ago. Traditional musicians beat drums, while girls with bells tied around their ankles danced in celebration. The crowd bursts into peals of laughter at a program featuring Ramvati as a difficult mother-in-law arguing against exclusive breastfeeding.

Rather than preaching educational messages, Ramvati and her colleagues use humour and local entertainers to inform their audience.

Dharkan 107.8 FM is a collaboration between the community, two non-governmental organizations—Ideosync Media Combine and Sambhav—and UNICEF. Besides education, the station’s goals include improving

community participation and giving villagers a voice in media.

Radio technology has advanced so far that it doesn’t take much more than mobile phones and laptop computers to get a radio station off the ground. The project in Shivpuri costs only a few hundred US dollars per month to maintain. And it is made possible thanks to donors like you.

Already the station has had a profound effect on this community: the local government reports a significant increase in the use of key government services such as hospital deliveries and vaccinations, which many residents didn’t even know were available, or didn’t trust. “Here, poor, uneducated people cannot sit with the educated and learn, but they have this opportunity now, this new perspective,” says Ramvati. “They are very hopeful now.”

#### Did you know?

Madhya Pradesh’s maternal mortality rate of 335 per 100,000 live births is higher than the national average and ranks fourth in India. New mothers are vulnerable because many are malnourished and anaemic when they get pregnant, often as teenaged brides. Low literacy levels, particularly among young tribal women, also contribute to the high mortality rates.

The staff of Dharkan 107.8, including Ramvati Adivasi (in pink sari, right), outside the station offices in Shivpuri, India.





# HOPE

## AFTER TRAGEDY

Rwandan genocide survivor John Nsabimana tells of his journey from a refugee camp to the University of Victoria and UNICEF Canada

It is 1994, during the Rwandan genocide. A seven-year-old boy named John Nsabimana, along with his two younger brothers, is swept up by the sea of humanity fleeing the country. The boys' parents have just been killed. John keeps his siblings close as they follow the river of people to where it ends, at the massive Oruchinga refugee camp in Uganda.

The camp becomes his home. John spends the remainder of his childhood there, an orphan. Despite the hardships of life in the camp, he focuses on watching out for his brothers and on his schooling, provided by UNICEF.

Fast forward 18 years: today, John is a Master's student at the University of Victoria. Having recently completed an internship with UNICEF Malawi, this remarkable young man is also one of UNICEF Canada's ambassadors, helping to deliver UNICEF's message—that no child is too far to help—to all Canadians.

It's hard to imagine how someone with a childhood like his could be filled with gratitude, but that's one of the things that makes John so amazing. He credits his success not to his own hard work and perseverance, but to the many people and agencies that touched his life—including UNICEF.

**"I am alive today because of the existence of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and because UNICEF enforces the Convention. All the people who have helped me over the years did so because they were standing up for my rights."**

John's sense of gratitude first bubbled up shortly after arriving at the camp, when he decided to master English so he could thank the staff and volunteers who helped him and his brothers survive and thrive.

But there is one thing in particular that John is most grateful for: the day a United Nations truck unexpectedly arrived at the camp looking for him.

"I immediately thought, 'I'm in trouble.' I couldn't think of a reason that anyone would be looking for me," recalls John from his apartment in Victoria.

"The UN staff said I should come with them to Kampala. I was very nervous. When I got to the city, I was told the good news. I was one of only 23 children in all of Uganda to be interviewed for a scholarship. I had applied some



**"We drew numbers, and I drew the last interview slot. I thought to myself, 'There's no way!' But I was one of three selected. They told me immediately that I could go to Canada."**

In 2009, John was sent to Geneva as one of the 25 people selected worldwide to study the work of the United Nations firsthand for 12 days at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva.

months before, but I didn't think that I stood a chance. Was I surprised!

"We drew numbers, and I drew the last interview slot. I thought to myself, 'There's no way!' But I was one of three selected. They told me immediately that I could go to Canada. It all happened so fast, I still thought it wouldn't come true. Growing up in the camp, it's hard to imagine that great things can happen to you. But four months later I was on a plane to Victoria, British Columbia. It changed my life."

Though John's life in Canada was dramatically different from his life in the refugee camp, one thing stayed the same—his unwavering drive to get the most out of his education. His United World Colleges (UWC) scholarship landed him at the Lester B. Pearson School in a unique pre-university program attended by students from around the world. From there he decided to pursue a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Victoria's School of Child and Youth Care, where he focused on Child Protection.

Keen to give back, John recently completed an internship with UNICEF Malawi, a country where an estimated 1.16 million children survive on an income of less than US \$0.20 per day. While helping establish

childcare centres for these vulnerable children, he had something of an epiphany. "I realized that there is something else for which I am extremely grateful—that I am alive today because of the existence of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and because UNICEF enforces the Convention. All the people who have helped me over the years did so because they were standing up for my rights," says John.

John's optimism is infectious, as is his enthusiasm for humanitarian work. He hopes his studies and his volunteer work will lead to a long career in development, so he can help the next generation of vulnerable children get the support they need to survive and thrive.

And it is thanks to your generosity that children like John are given a chance at a new life. We at UNICEF Canada have no doubt that whatever success John sets his sights on, he will achieve.

# SCHOOLS HELP CHILDREN HEAL

Two dedicated Filipino teachers support their students in the aftermath of devastating floods

Teacher Vivian Benedictos speaks with student Gia Bitua in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. Both fled their homes during the recent floods.

Students at Consolacion Elementary School in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines, use UNICEF-provided school packs to resume their studies.

In Cagayan de Oro, Philippines, two teachers from the City Central School recently held their first day of classes since devastating floods swept through their community—even as their own futures looked uncertain.

Vivian Benedictos and Marilou Gambuta, co-teachers and best friends, share a Grade One classroom at the school. It is a space they not only teach in, but now also live in.

When Tropical Storm Washi tore through the city on December 16, 2011, it unleashed a deluge that wiped out whole communities, including Vivian's and Marilou's. By working together, they managed to save both their families from the rushing floods.

"I could hear that the water was already behind us," recalls Marilou. "I didn't want to look back because I knew I wouldn't find my house there anymore. I covered my ears because I could hear my neighbours screaming for help."

As soon as her family was out of harm's way, she called Vivian, warning her to flee before the floodwaters descended on her town.

"When I heard from Marilou, I told people, 'Let's go!' but my neighbours didn't believe me," says Vivian. "The water started to rise, and I got out of the house. My sister and my children stayed on the second floor thinking they would be safe, so I had to go get them. By the time we left, the water was chest-deep."

After escaping the floods, the teachers were reunited in their classroom. It has been their home—and their families' home—ever since.

Others were not so lucky. Among the estimated 1.1 million people affected by the disaster, 6,071 were injured and 1,257 killed. At the City Central School alone, six education personnel and more than 100 students were killed, and almost 200 students remain missing.

Many schools were destroyed, or are being used as evacuation centres.

Returning to school is essential for flood-affected children. School helps them to resume a sense of normalcy, which is critical to their emotional recovery. Schools are also a protective environment for children, who are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse in the aftermath of disasters. And in the long term, education contributes to the social and economic stability of the flood-affected areas.

On January 3, 2012, the two teachers began their first day of class since the deluge.

"Some of my students are still in shock," says Marilou. "I wanted to cry while they were telling me their stories about the flood, but I had to be strong. Adults like me can recover, but with children, it's extra hard for them. Going back to school would be good for them."

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, UNICEF is currently reconstructing 23 severely damaged schools and 68 daycare centres. We are also providing school kits, early childhood development kits and working with partners to train volunteers to offer psychosocial support to affected children. And because UNICEF was in the Philippines before the disaster and will be here long after, the staff here are also focused on building the community's resilience against future disasters.

"In emergencies, the school is a lifeline for children. Getting children back in school is essential to regaining normalcy in their lives," states Maria Lourdes de Vera-Mateo, Education Chief of UNICEF Philippines.

The children have also been eager to return. It's been an inspiration for Vivian and Marilou, who remain as committed as ever to helping their students.

"Children need to heal properly, and we as teachers need to help them through it," says Marilou.

## Did you know?

A critical need in post-crisis transitions is building countries' capacities to develop new and better education systems. Time after time, this investment yields significant dividends by helping today's traumatized survivors become tomorrow's strong and capable leaders.



Iste Mui holds his daughter, Sterling, and speaks with Marie de la Soudiere. Father and daughter have just reunited after more than a month of separation.

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# FAMILIES REUNITED

Marie de la Soudiere dedicates her life to the tracing and reunification of separated children

Child Protection expert Marie de la Soudiere’s passion for her work is fed by those special moments when she witnesses a child’s life turned around by the help of her team.

“I remember visiting a camp in Sierra Leone where all but one child, a 17-year-old boy, had been successfully rehabilitated,” Marie recalls. “He was violent and aggressive. Finally, they asked him what he wanted to do, and he said that he wanted to become a sign maker. He became an apprentice to a man who took him in to his family’s house. When I went to meet him, he had a huge smile on his face, and he took me to a crossroad nearby and showed me this big sign on which he had done the painting and the stencilling.

He was so pleased and so proud and was back to normal.”

For 30 years, Marie has played a leading role in aiding children affected by armed conflict, children separated from their families, and former child soldiers. She began her overseas career in 1980 during the Cambodian refugee crisis, where she was in charge of a comprehensive program for separated children in refugee camps in Thailand. Since then she has developed psychosocial policies and programs for children in more than a dozen troubled countries.

Today, Marie leads family tracing and reunification efforts in Haiti. Ensuring separated children receive the best support possible is her foremost concern. While many children end up in residential care centres, Marie prefers when children can



Sterling (left) speaks to Marie outside the makeshift living quarters of her host family, whose house was damaged in the earthquake. Before Sterling was reunited with her father, Marie encouraged her to draw what she remembered of her home life to “bring back memories” that would help them find her family.



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For 30 years, Marie has played a leading role in aiding children affected by armed conflict, children separated from their families, and former child soldiers.

be fostered with a family in their home—a solution that she believes is better in several ways.

“A child needs to be in a family environment, where he can play with other children and where adults can take care of him,” says Marie. “Especially during emergencies, an orphanage can turn children into true orphans, even if their parents are still out there.”

Before heading to Haiti, Marie focused her energies on the Paris Principles and Paris Commitments, UNICEF’s guidelines to protect children from being forced into conflict. Thanks in no small part to her leadership, over the course of this past year over 100 nations have pledged to uphold the Principles.

The wisdom she gleaned in the field was also instrumental in shaping UNICEF’s groundbreaking report “The Lost Ones: Emergency Care and Family Tracing for Separated Children from Birth to Five Years.” The report’s recommendations are derived from UNICEF’s learnings and best practices in 18 different countries around the world.



# YOUR WILL IS THEIR FUTURE

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## A purposeful life deserves a lasting legacy.

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To learn more, contact [bequests@unicef.ca](mailto:bequests@unicef.ca) or call Jackie Jones, Legacy Giving Manager at 1 800 567 4483.