



Merry Christmas from Help a Child!

As I write this on the eve of Giving Tuesday, friends are sharing about remarkable & important work being done by organizations all over the world. In the darkest month of the year, it is a good reminder that there is hope and love still finding its way into dark places.

Since joining the US team of Help a Child this year, I've been encouraged at how I see the love of Christ showing up in so many places:

- through positive parenting classes in Rwanda
- in a youth self-help group being trained in beekeeping in Burundi
- in Bihar, India, where 32,000 women became literate and empowered, and are now able to educate their children through the Help a Child program
- in Ethiopia, where water points have been installed near schools and in the center of the participating villages to improve the children's and parents' health.

As my family and I celebrate Advent this year, we are marking each day's nearness to Christmas by adding one candle to our dinner table. Only two days in and already my children noted tonight that even two candles made everything so much brighter. I can't wait for them to have dinner on Christmas Eve!

Likewise, every Help a Child donor offers light where there is darkness. Thank you for your support & generosity to Help a Child and may your Christmas be filled with joy as we celebrate the Light of the World.

Warmly,
Mary Anderson, Communications Manager
Bethany Sherstad, Manager



Total number of children supported: 150,858



Total number of adults supported: 124,852



Self-help groups and farmer groups trained: 3,151

Your support of Help a Child makes a significant difference not only in the life of one child, but in entire communities.

Until the 2019 annual report is published, we invite you to visit helpachild.org and download the 2018 annual report where you can review the year's highlights, accomplishments, and financials. You can be sure that every dollar you give to Help a Child makes a meaningful impact. To make a year-end gift, please visit www.helpachild.us.



Dick and Mardi Keyes have been involved with Help a Child for over 40 years. Here, they share a peek into the early days of Help a Child.

We first learned about Help a Child from its founder, Mrs. Anky Rookmaker, a Dutch colleague of ours in L'Abri Fellowship International. She had inherited a substantial sum of money to be contributed to a missionary in India for the care of orphans. On traveling to India, she discovered that the missionary recipient was incapable of doing the job. To fulfill the wishes of the donor, she would have to start an organization herself. This was the beginning of Help a Child. On several subsequent trips to India, she tried to visit an orphanage which she had been helping, but was repeatedly told it was a bad time to come. Finally, she made a surprise visit and discovered that the children were severely malnourished, while the woman "caring" for them was living luxuriously. That day, she rented 2 school buses, took the children, and brought them to a legitimate orphanage where they got medical treatment, compassionate care and were able to thrive. From the beginning, Anky regularly visited the children's homes, which were run on the ground by nationals.

Unlike other nonprofits we were aware of, there was no age cut-off point, where children were "turned out" and needed to fend for themselves. They were trained and cared for until they could be self-supporting.

Help a Child flowed from Christian values we shared with Anky and all our L'Abri colleagues, which included holistic care for orphans and other children whose parents were unable to care for them. Help a Child provided for their spiritual, physical, educational, and emotional needs.

Thank you, Dick and Mardi, for your many years of support for & involvement with Help a Child!

Help a Child and Invi are joining forces to combine the strengths

of two interventions in addressing sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in South Kivu (DRC). As part of an inclusive community program that focuses on spreading knowledge and awareness on SGBV, the Invi self-defense bracelet will be introduced. The bracelet is a nonviolent self-defense device, using a disgusting smell to keep off perpetrators and enables people to walk around with confidence by knowing they can defend themselves.

By reaching out to girls, but also boys, teachers, parents and community leaders we include all in building a culture where SGBV is rejected and equality is embraced by the local community.

The program will be introduced in collaboration with the l'Université Évangélique Afrique and is funded by the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) for humanitarian innovations. The project will first start with 800 participants (400 women and 400 men) and will be scaled up after evaluation.



Community facilitators Chany and Joys lead group sessions and discuss preventative strategies with the community members in South Kivu.

Say Chany and Joys, "Women here are experiencing sexual violence for so long. That's why we are motivated to stop this violence and help women to use the self-defence bracelet."

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