



In collaboration with
*Local NGOs including Bwafwano and HAPSCO and the
 World Food Programme*



**Better Education and Life Opportunities for
 Vulnerable Children through Networking and
 Organizational Growth**

Final Program Report
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ACRONYMS & GLOSSARY

ACSO	Alem Children Support Organization
ADV	Addis Development Vision
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
AFSR	Action for Self Reliance
BELONG	B etter E ducation and L ife O pportunities for Vulnerable Children through N etworking and O rganizational G rowth
BWAFWANO	Local NGO partner in Zambia whose name means, “ <i>Helping One Another</i> ”
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CBT	Capacity Building Taskforce
CBTO	Community HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis Organization
CCF	Christian Children’s Fund
CHANGES	Communities Supporting Health, HIV/AIDS, Nutrition, Gender and Equity Education in Schools
CHILD	Children in Local Development, WFP’s community-based prioritization and planning process
CLA	Cluster Level Association
CRDA	Christian Relief and Development Agency
DEBS	District Education Board Secretariat
DFT	Developing Family Together
DHMT	District Health Management Team
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
FY	Fiscal Year
GMP	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
HAPCSO	HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Support Organization
HBC	Home-Based Care
<i>Idirs</i>	Traditional Ethiopian Burial Societies
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IR	Intermediate Result
ISAPSO	Integrated Services for AIDS Prevention and Support Organization
LCO	Love for Children
LOP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MACO	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPHHC	Nutrition Plus Holistic Home Care
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PCI	Project Concern International
PCSC	Parents Community School Committee

PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PSS	Psychosocial Support
PTA	Parent/Teacher Association
QIVC	Quality Assurance Verification Checklists
RAPIDS	Reaching HIV/AIDS Affected People with Integrated Development and Support
SHG	Self-Help Group
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region
SPRINT	School Program for In Service for a Term
SWDA	Social Welfare Development Organization
TB	Tuberculosis
ToT	Trainer of trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
WFP	World Food Programme
Woreda	Administrative unit in Ethiopia equivalent to a district
WORTH	Pact's model for economic empowerment
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From March 18, 2005 through September 30, 2010, Project Concern International (PCI) implemented the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)-funded BELONG Project (**B**etter **E**ducation and **L**ife **O**pportunities for Vulnerable Children through **N**etworking and Organizational **G**rowth) in Zambia and Ethiopia in response to the growing numbers of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) who lack access to health and other support services essential to minimizing their vulnerability and addressing their developmental needs. BELONG was designed to *increase the numbers of OVC in both countries accessing quality services through sustainable, community-based programs that effectively reduce their vulnerability*. This Strategic Objective (SO) was supported through four Intermediate Results (IRs):

- IR1:* Increased availability of critical OVC support services, including formal or informal education, literacy/numeracy training, life skills education, medical care, nutritional support and psychosocial support;
- IR2:* Strengthened capacity of older OVC, and of households providing care for OVC, to support themselves and their children through initiatives;
- IR3:* Increased capacity of local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)/Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) to provide quality services to OVC; and
- IR4:* Increased capacity of selected local NGOs/CBOs/FBOs to serve as "Centers of Learning" in order to facilitate rapid scale-up of services.

To increase access of OVC to essential services, BELONG built upon and adapted successful experiences to integrate support for OVC into existing community and home-based care (HBC) services and strengthen existing programs to expand and improve service availability for vulnerable children and their families. Coordinating closely with technical and implementing partners to maximize impact, PCI strategically utilized a variety of channels or platforms including formal and informal primary schools, women's groups, CBOs, CBO networks and cultural/religious bodies to facilitate delivery of a comprehensive package of needed services and support. In Zambia, BELONG was implemented through partnerships with 200 community schools and 15 CBOs in the Lusaka, Southern, Central and Western provinces. BELONG also worked closely with Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) entities including the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Health (MoH). In Ethiopia, BELONG supported the additional needs of OVC in 200 schools in which the World Food Programme (WFP) implemented school feeding programs. BELONG also partnered with ten local CBOs and collaborated with the MoE and MoH to implement, manage and support program activities.

Over the Life of the Project (LOP), BELONG served a total of 298,570 OVC in Zambia and Ethiopia, or 206% of its target of 144,749 OVC¹, with a range of essential services including access to health care, food and nutrition support, education and vocational training, psychosocial support (PSS), protection and shelter and care. The strategy of building the capacity of government entities and local organizations to strengthen their existing programs to expand and integrate services for OVC and their families increased the sustainability of the project's interventions. The strategy also mobilized communities to identify OVC and increased their

¹ BELONG exceeded its LOP target due to the school-based platform in Ethiopia, which reached far more OVC than targeted in the Year 1 Work Plan.

ownership of OVC care and support activities both in the school and home environments. The Final Evaluation concluded that *“Using the school platform in food insecure areas in Ethiopia, as well as in the community school setting in Zambia to reach out to a high number of OVC proved to be very effective. Analyses of the socioeconomic backgrounds of children involved in the program showed that most of them were either orphaned or from a very poor household where their essential needs (e.g., nutrition, education, medical care and PSS support) were not ensured and support was desperately needed”* (BELONG Final Evaluation Report p. 108).

Under IR2, BELONG implemented savings-led, self-help methods to strengthen the capacity of vulnerable households to meet their basic needs. In Zambia, BELONG worked with Pact to implement its WORTH model. A total of 5,232 women formed 210 WORTH groups that organized a total of 2,420 functional businesses, including 2,212 individual enterprises and 104 group businesses and increased their savings from ZMK 12,000,000 (USD 3,158) at baseline in FY06 to ZMK 203,127,500 (USD 51,864) through the first half of FY08 when the WORTH groups began operating independently. Ethiopia used the Self-Help Group model and over the LOP established a total of 373 SHGs with 7,795 members. Over the LOP, the 373 SHGs mobilized a total of 1,447,305 Ethiopian Birr (ETB) (USD 108,002) of which 833,281 ETB (USD 62,182) was loaned out to members. The Final Evaluation noted significant positive results of these activities both to the economic status of participants as well as increases in social capital and self-efficacy. Of those surveyed in the Final Evaluation, 55% of respondents in Zambia indicated that their households ate three meals a day before participating in the WORTH groups versus 70% after participation. In Ethiopia, none of the SHG members reported eating three meals a day before joining SHGs; after participation, 76% of women indicated eating three meals per day. In Zambia, 35% of women reported they would have stood up if something happened in their community they found intolerable before joining the WORTH group versus 85% after participation. Forty-five percent of respondents in Ethiopia indicated they would have stood up before joining the SHG versus 94% after participation (BELONG Final Evaluation Report p.11).

IR3 and IR4 focused on building the institutional capacities of schools and local partners to achieve sustainable delivery of quality OVC services. Through activities under these IRs, which included intensive trainings, on-site and remote technical support and mentoring and peer-to-peer learning approaches, BELONG strengthened both the technical and institutional capacities of partners. In Zambia, capacity building efforts resulted in eleven CBOs becoming legally registered, providing them with the legal recognition required to apply for loans, funding and operate independently as official CBOs. Eleven community schools met GRZ standards to become Basic Schools supported by the GRZ and an additional twenty schools built their capacity to qualify to receive GRZ-paid teachers. In Ethiopia, nine local CBOs developed the capacity to implement both OVC and economic strengthening initiatives and 200 schools utilized WFP’s CHILD methodology to develop and implement CHILD action plans that mobilized community, government and private resources to improve the school environments.

Both Ethiopia and Zambia Partners in both Zambia and Ethiopia faced high staff turnover which created continuity gaps. In addition, capacity gaps existed among implementing partners in core competency areas. Both of these challenges required significant investments in training, capacity building and ongoing technical support were required to ensure quality service provision.

I. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

PCI implemented the PEPFAR-funded BELONG Project in Zambia and Ethiopia from March 18, 2005 through September 30, 2010 in response to the growing numbers of OVC who lacked access to health and other support services essential to minimizing their vulnerability and addressing their developmental needs. The overarching SO for the BELONG Project was *increased number of orphans and vulnerable children accessing quality services through sustainable, community-based programs that effectively reduce their vulnerability*. The SO was supported through the achievement of four complementary IRs:

1. Increased availability of critical OVC support services, including formal or informal education, literacy/numeracy training, life skills education, medical care, nutritional support, and psychosocial support;
2. Strengthened capacity of older OVC, and of households providing care for OVC, through economic empowerment initiatives;
3. Increased organizational capacity of local NGOs/CBOs/FBOs to provide quality OVC services; and
4. Increased organizational capacity of selected local NGOs/CBOs/FBOs to serve as “Centers of Learning”.

The Emergency Plan Indicators Tables are attached as Appendix A. The Essential Services Tables are attached as Appendices B (Zambia) and C (Ethiopia).

Zambia

In Zambia, BELONG was implemented through partnerships with 200 community schools and 15 CBOs in the Lusaka, Southern, Central and Western provinces as per Table 1. BELONG also worked closely with the MoE’s District Education Board Secretariats (DEBS) and the MoH’s District Health Management Teams (DHMTs).

Table 1. BELONG/Zambia partner organizations by geographic areas of operation and intervention type

Partner	Province	District	Intervention Type
200 Community Schools	Lusaka Southern Western	Kafue, Lusaka and Chongwe Kalomo Mongu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based support to OVC
Bwafwano	Lusaka Central	Lusaka, Mkushi and Chibombo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-based support for OVC • Mentors CBOs/FBOs/NGOs in HBC
Community-Based Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Organization (CBTO)	Lusaka	Lusaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-based support for OVC using the Bwafwano model
13 HBC/Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) CBOs	Lusaka Western	Lusaka Mongu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-based support for children of clients on ART

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, BELONG worked with 11 partner organizations² and 200 schools to implement, manage and support program activities. WFP implemented school feeding programs in 200

² BELONG initially partnered with two additional CBOs, namely Ethiopian Muslim Relief and Development Association (EMRDA) and Hope for Rural Children Organization (HORCO) but terminated their agreements in FY08 due to management and transparency issues.

target schools in which BELONG supported the additional needs of OVC. BELONG also partnered with ten local NGOs, nine of which were direct implementers as per Table 2. The Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) served as an umbrella organization which disbursed funds to nine local implementing partners. CRDA was also responsible for overseeing the implementation of IR1 activities from project inception through January 2009³.

Table 2. BELONG/Ethiopia partner organizations by geographic areas of operation and intervention type

Name of Partner	Region of Operation	Intervention Type
CRDA	N/A (umbrella NGO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fund Disbursement
WFP	Tigray and Amhara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School-based Support to 200 community schools
HAPSCO	Addis Ababa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Alem Children Support Organization (ACSO)	Amhara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Addis Development Vision (ADV)	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Nutrition Plus Holistic Home Care (NPHHC)	Tigray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Action for Self-Reliance (AFSR)	Addis Ababa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Developing the Family Together (DFT)	Amhara	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Integrated Service for AIDS Prevention and Support Organization (ISAPSO)	Addis Ababa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Love for Children Organization (LCO)	Addis Ababa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support
Social Welfare Development Association (SWDA)	Addis Ababa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Home and Community-based OVC Support ▪ Older OVC and Caregiver Support

Intermediate Result 1: Increased Availability of Critical OVC Support Services, Including Formal or Informal Education, Literacy/Numeracy Training, Life Skills Education, Medical Care, Nutritional Support, and Psychosocial Support

BELONG used community schools and local CBOs as platforms to deliver a comprehensive package of OVC care and support services, including food and nutrition support, education, health, protection, psychosocial support, shelter, and household level economic strengthening in Zambia and Ethiopia. The strategy of building the capacity of government entities and local organizations to strengthen their existing programs to expand and integrate services for OVC and their families increased the sustainability of the project's interventions. The strategy also mobilized communities to identify OVC and increased their ownership of OVC care and support activities both in the school and home environments. Over the LOP, BELONG served a total of 298,570 OVC in Zambia and Ethiopia, or 206% of its target of 144,749 OVC. BELONG

³ Based on the Midterm Review (MTR) findings, PCI revised its partnership agreement with CRDA in January 2009 and took responsibility for overseeing the implementation of IR1 activities due to CRDA performance issues.

exceeded its LOP target due to the school-based platform in Ethiopia, which reached far more OVC than targeted at project inception as described in more detail below.

Zambia

In Zambia, BELONG reached a total of 111,275 OVC over the LOP with a range of essential services as per Table 3 and the narrative below, representing 86% of its LOP target of 129,150 OVC. BELONG was not able to reach 100% of its LOP target in part because the project did not expand to all districts originally planned. BELONG's expansion was dependent on WFP's expansion of its school feeding project. Due to WFP resource limitations, BELONG implemented only in the five districts listed in Table 1. In addition, the projected WFP school feeding targets and MOE enrollment data used for planning did not accurately reflect the actual number of children enrolled in target community schools.

Table 3. Number of OVC reached by PEPFAR core service area in Zambia

Core Service Area	Number of OVC Reached over the LOP
Food and Nutrition Support	53,459
Shelter and Care	1,328
Protection	26,198
Health Care	104,522
Psychosocial Support (PSS)	87,913
Education and Vocational Training	53,369

HBC Platform

Over the LOP, BELONG reached a total of 29,430 OVC (14,206 females and 15,224 males) with critical services under the HBC platform. BELONG worked closely with Bwafwano and CBTO and 13 HBC/ART CBOs in Lusaka and Mongu to provide OVC with the support services described below through home visits from trained HBC volunteers and facility-based support at Bwafwano and CBTO. Bwafwano reached a total of 7,140 OVC (3,547 females and 3,593 males) and CBTO reached 2,968 OVC (1,284 females and 1,684 males). The 13 HBC/ART CBOs collectively reached a total of 19,322 OVC (9,375 females and 9,947 males).

- Nutritional Support: BELONG conducted nutrition demonstrations and breastfeeding counseling sessions to educate breastfeeding mothers on how to add nutritional value to complementary foods prepared for their children. ART/HBC CBOs linked OVC caregivers to partners including WFP, World Vision International, and the Catholic Diocese which provided maize, High Energy Protein Supplement (HEPS) rations and infant formula to families in need. Bwafwano provided HEPS porridge donated by WFP to OVC households and lunch to OVC enrolled in the community school with leveraged funding from Cecily's Fund, a United Kingdom-based charity. Through a partnership with Valid International, BELONG provided micronutrient supplementation to children under five. BELONG implemented Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) urban gardens at 14 HBC CBOs. The harvests contributed to meeting the nutritional needs of HBC caregivers' households. The harvest excess was sold and the proceeds were used to support caregivers in their work and assist OVC with educational needs.
- Psychosocial Support (PSS): BELONG trained HBC caregivers to provide PSS to OVC through one-to-one counseling, emotional, spiritual and social support and play therapy and recreation for young children.

- Educational Support: BELONG supported OVC enrolled in both community and Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) schools with school requirements such as shoes, books, uniforms and bags, and school fees.
- Medical Care: With BELONG support, Bwafwano provided OVC with medical prevention, care and treatment and child survival interventions such as growth monitoring and promotion (GMP) and immunizations for OVC under five through the Bwafwano Community Clinic in Lusaka and its health outposts in Chibombo, Chongwe, Lusaka and Mkushi districts. OVC enrolled in Bwafwano’s community school also received de-worming tablets and health and hygiene education. Bwafwano referred children for Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) HIV testing for infants at Chipata Clinic and provided HIV+ OVC with palliative care and adherence support services. BELONG supported caregivers in the 13 HBC/ART CBOs to provide GMP services during home visits, which included weighing children, monitoring growth rates and conducting physical assessments to check for abnormalities in growth and development. BELONG provided HBC/ART partners with OVC care toolkits that included thermometers, weight-scales, cotton wool, bandages, soap, and disinfectants.
- Shelter and Care Support: BELONG linked Bwafwano to Habitat for Humanity to construct new houses and renovate dilapidated ones for Bwafwano’s neediest OVC beneficiaries. HBC/ART CBO partners provided OVC with material support including blankets, clothing, and shoes and food leveraged through local and international donations.
- Child Protection: BELONG collaborated with the Zambia Civic Education Association (ZCEA) and the Victim Support Unit (VSU) of the Zambia Police to train caregivers in protection services including education on child rights, child abuse and neglect; helped OVC caretakers to write wills; and placed children in abusive situations in transit homes.
- Vocational training for older OVC: Bwafwano provided vocational training in tailoring, carpet weaving and tie and dye to older OVC through its tailoring school.

School-Based Platform

The community schools were the largest platform through which BELONG reached OVC. During the LOP, BELONG worked in partnership with 200 schools in the five districts of Chongwe, Kalomo, Kafue, Lusaka and Mongu and served a total of 71,246 OVC (34,504 females and 36,742 males) as per Table 3 with the range of essential services described below.

Table 4. BELONG schools by District and OVC reached

District	Total Number of Schools	OVC reached over the LOP
Chongwe	45	21,378
Kafue	44	10,524
Kalomo	40	13,760
Lusaka	30	17,690
Mongu	41	7,894
Total	200	71,246

- Health Care: BELONG partnered with the DHMT to provide OVC with health care services including immunization, nutrition and breastfeeding counseling, dental health, vaccinations

and GMP during the LOP. Through this partnership, BELONG implemented routine child immunization programs at BELONG-supported community schools. BELONG replicated and utilized the School Health and Nutrition (SHN) medical cards for referring pupils for medical treatment that were designed by Community Health and Nutrition Gender and Education Support 2 (CHANGES 2). In partnership with Reaching HIV/AIDS Affected People with Integrated Development and Support (RAPIDS), BELONG provided OVC with Insecticide Treated Mosquito Nets (ITNs). BELONG also partnered with Colgate Palmolive and the Lusaka Dental School to provide dental health education and Colgate toothpaste and toothbrushes to OVC in Lusaka, Chongwe and Kafue districts. In addition, BELONG supported drama groups and Anti-AIDS clubs to increase HIV/AIDS awareness in schools and facilitated participation of schools in World AIDS Day activities.

- Water and Sanitation: BELONG constructed 119 Ventilation Improved Pit (VIP) latrines in 24 community schools in Chongwe, 69 pit latrines at 14 community schools in Kafue during the LOP and assisted schools in Chongwe and Mongu districts to secure support from Rotary Club, Oxfam and YWCA to drill boreholes.
- Educational Support: BELONG provided its 200 partner community schools with teaching and learning materials, such as textbooks, blackboards, desks, chairs and the like over the LOP. In addition, BELONG linked partner schools to other NGOs, the MoE and the GRZ Constituency Development Fund (CDF) for infrastructure improvement, including the construction of classrooms. BELONG also facilitated monitoring visits to schools by Standards Officers from the MoE to provide technical assistance in aligning the community schools with national standards. Through this effort, BELONG assisted 20 schools in Kalomo and Mongu to meet minimum MoE standards and receive GRZ teachers and 11 schools in Mongu became GRZ basic schools. As a result, the GRZ provided the 11 schools with infrastructure development and teaching and learning materials.
- Nutrition: OVC benefited from nutritional support through WFP as well as through school feeding programs initiated and run by communities. In partnership with MACO, BELONG provided agricultural training and on-site technical assistance and monitoring of agriculture activities including livestock rearing (chickens, pigs and goats) and rice, vegetable, cassava and fruit cultivation. BELONG provided schools with agricultural inputs including vegetable seeds and watering cans. BELONG also supported the establishment of other income generating activities (IGAs) which included carpentry and broom and basket making. The funds generated from these school gardens and IGAs helped to support school feeding programs, procure learning and teaching materials, provide stipends for teachers and sustain school operations beyond the LOP.
- PSS: BELONG trained teachers to provide PSS services to students through one-on-one counseling and sports and recreational activities at school, including football, netball, relay races and other games. Issues addressed through one-on-one counseling included trauma, illnesses and violence and negligence at home by caretakers. BELONG provided recreational supplies, including footballs, netballs and nets, to partner community schools. Through the under-five plus up funds, BELONG developed *Say and Play*, a tool for providing PSS to children under five and leveraged funds from UNICEF to train teachers and PCSC members in its use. This is described in more detail under IR3.

- **Vocational Training:** Mongu District used local experts in basket weaving, carpentry, gardening, sewing, fishing and fish preservation to conduct vocational skills training at all 41 of its partner schools.

Economic Empowerment Platform

BELONG utilized the WORTH groups described under IR2 as a platform to provide direct services to OVC by training WORTH participants to provide essential services to the OVC under their care and in their communities. As a result, WORTH participants provided a total of 10,599 OVC (5,587 females and 5,012 males) with a range of essential services during the LOP, including health care services through child health week activities and referrals to local clinics for immunizations, vitamin A and GMP services. Using funds earned through IGAs, WORTH group members provided OVC with books, school uniforms, school shoes and other school necessities as well as food and nutrition support to OVC in their households. WORTH group members trained in child rights conducted child rights awareness trainings for other WORTH participants. WORTH participants identified OVC under their care in need of PSS and provided one-on-one home-based counseling.

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, BELONG reached a total of 187,295 OVC over the LOP with a range of essential services as per Table 5 and the narrative below, representing 1,200% of its Year 1 Work Plan LOP target of 15,599 OVC. BELONG increased this target in subsequent annual work plans due to a more accurate estimate of the number of OVC who could be reached through its school-based activities in Ethiopia. The FY10 annual target for Ethiopia was 144,000 OVC.

Table 5. Number of OVC reached by PEPFAR core service area in Zambia

Core Service Area	Number of OVC Reached over the LOP
Food and Nutrition Support	147,724
Shelter and Care	181,314 ⁴
Protection	1,727
Health Care	183,219
Psychosocial Support (PSS)	11,230
Education and Vocational Training	185,680

School-Based Activities

Building on its collaboration with WFP in Zambia, PCI partnered with WFP in Ethiopia to meet the priority needs of OVC and their communities by working through the existing WFP's school-based feeding program in 200 schools. In addition to school feeding, BELONG supported implementation of the Children in Local Development (CHILD) Methodology in collaboration with WFP and the Ministry of Education (MoE). CHILD is a community development approach that empowers communities to analyze their challenges and design appropriate local-level action plans to overcome these challenges using locally available resources. BELONG and WFP provided guidance and technical assistance to Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), local leaders, Woreda⁵ Education Offices, members of the Synergy Group⁶ and other key stakeholders in the

⁴ Shelter, water and sanitation and personal hygiene improvements at the school level

⁵ Administrative unit in Ethiopia equivalent to a district

⁶ The Synergy Group is a team composed of representatives from relevant government offices at the Woreda level representing the departments of Education, Health, Agriculture and Rural Development. The Synergy Group is

use of the CHILD methodology. After the communities and their respective local governments apportioned contributions to implement their action plans, BELONG resources were used to cover the remaining amount to ensure availability of sufficient resources to implement the community action plans. This funding arrangement was designed to foster community resource mobilization and self-reliance. BELONG partnered with a total of 200 schools: 108 schools in six Woredas in the Tigray Region and 92 schools in five Woredas of the Amhara Region. Over the LOP, BELONG reached a total of 181,314 OVC (92,609 males and 88,705 females) through the school platform with a range of essential services including the following:

- Personal hygiene and sanitation campaigns that promoted hand washing and checks the
- Establishment and strengthening of anti-HIV/AIDS school clubs that provide age-appropriate HIV/AIDS prevention education
- Establishment and strengthening of pedagogical centers and girls clubs and child rights clubs to provide gender equity and child protection education
- Construction, renovation and/or maintenance of additional classrooms and satellite schools, water harvest structures such as roof catchments, drip irrigation and ground water development, construction of latrines and tree planting
- Provision of scholastic materials, such as textbooks, pens, pencils, school bags, rulers, erasers, teaching aids and desks
- Establishment and improvement of school gardens using drip irrigation
- Establishment and strengthening of IGAs such as dairy production, livestock fattening, poultry production, and fruit tree planting in school grounds
- Capacity building of PTA members
- Provision of PSS to OVC by trained PTA members

Community-Based Activities

BELONG's nine local NGO direct implementing partners provided a range of critical OVC support services to 5,981 OVC (3,052 males and 2,929 females) over the LOP including PSS, education, food and nutrition, health and medical support, child protection and livelihood promotion as described below. BELONG provided trainings and community awareness and mobilization activities aimed at protecting and promoting child rights, preventing HIV/AIDS and associated stigma/discrimination and building the capacity of Idirs⁷ and other community groups working with OVC. As a sustainability strategy, PCI trained all partners to provide both OVC support services and economic empowerment interventions for caregivers. As of FY09, all nine implementing partners provided integrated IR1 and IR2 activities.

- Home-based care (HBC): During home visits, volunteer caregivers physically observed children and their overall living conditions, addressed their individual needs, mediated conflicts/misunderstandings between OVC and their guardians, provided individual and family counseling as needed, and made referrals to service providers as necessary to address unmet needs. Home visits also provided opportunities for the volunteer caregivers and guardians to review health status and school performance. Volunteer caregivers were responsible for following up on referrals made and ensuring that the services rendered met

trained in the CHILD methodology and assists CHILD schools as a team to implement the CHILD methodology more effectively and coordinate resources from each office.

⁷ CBOs whose primary responsibility is to organize burial ceremonies; they also have other social and development responsibilities.

the identified needs of OVC. Volunteer caregivers met with OVC officers weekly or monthly to evaluate their progress, share challenges and discuss how they resolved those challenges.

- Educational support: Through BELONG support, HAPCSO successfully created linkages with government schools administrations and PTAs to waive school-related fees, such as registration fees and school contribution requests. Volunteer teachers and PTAs provided tutorial support to improve school performance. BELONG also provided scholastic materials, such as textbooks, pens, pencils, school bags, rulers and erasers to facilitate enrollment in school. ACSO and ADV provided Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) support for OVC two to four years of age to prepare them for the structured environment of elementary school, provide them with age-appropriate education, and ensure regular monitoring of their health and psychosocial status.
- PSS: Implementing partners provided individual and group counseling to OVC in schools, service provision centers, and through home visits conducted by teachers, community facilitators and volunteer caregivers trained in PSS service delivery. Key psychosocial interventions included grief counseling, memory work and group recreational activities.
- Life skills: OVC received life skills training and education through volunteer caregivers and community facilitators to help them develop/acquire various skills including interpersonal communication, negotiation and decision-making skills. This education also emphasized sexual/reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Health Care: Community facilitators and volunteer caregivers assisted OVC in obtaining support letters from the local administration which enabled them to access free medical services through government services. When medical care was needed and free medical certification was either too time-consuming or impossible to obtain, implementing partners reimbursed OVC for medical expenses. Sanitary materials, including soap and towels, as well as personal hygiene and sanitation education were also provided to OVC. BELONG distributed 1,552 ITNs to 1,095 OVC and their families who reside in malaria endemic areas and trained them in their use. During home visits, volunteer caregivers monitored improvements in health conditions of OVC as a result of these health related interventions and ensured proper health practices and that materials distributed were being utilized.
- Protection: In order to increase community awareness child rights protection and OVC in particular, implementing partners conducted community awareness and sensitization activities in neighborhood settings, service delivery centers and in schools targeting both adults and children. BELONG partners also referred 24 potential cases of child abuse (15 female and 9 male) to child rights protection committees in their communities. These committees participated in the subsequent investigations and ensured follow up of the abuse cases through the appropriate legal channels.
- Food and Nutrition Support: Volunteer caregivers of HAPCSO, ADV LCO and ACSO leveraged food support for OVC through local community contributions and referral linkages created with WFP food support services in Addis Ababa. OVC guardians served by SWDA, AFSR, LCO, HAPCSO and NPHHC participated in urban gardening activities.

Intermediate Result 2: Strengthened Capacity of Older OVC, and of Households Providing Care for OVC, to Support Themselves and Their Children through Economic Empowerment Initiative

Zambia

Since women are more likely to care for orphans, the economic and social burden on female caregivers is significant. PCI signed a sub-grant agreement with Pact to implement its WORTH model of economic empowerment through BELONG in Chongwe from March 2006 through December 2007. Pact's WORTH program is an innovative, sustainable, low-cost program of women helping women to foster grassroots development, increased family income and developed local control of resources through community-controlled village banks. The increased income for caretakers and local groups enable improved care and support for OVC in their communities. In March 2006, BELONG launched this component; activities were designed to be self-sustaining by the end of Pact's contract. BELONG partnered with seven local CBOs in Chongwe to implement WORTH activities. Each CBO recruited two Empowerment Workers (EWs) in their catchment areas to support WORTH implementation at the community level. EWs each provided 14 WORTH groups with on-site technical assistance and training. Over the LOP, a total of 5,232 women formed 210 WORTH groups. Through this process, participants improved their literacy, significantly increased their savings, increased the number of women with micro-enterprises and saw their business income rise. WORTH participants organized a total of 2,420 functional businesses, including 2,212 individual enterprises and 104 group businesses and increased their savings from ZMK 12,000,000 (USD 3,158)⁸ at baseline in FY06 to ZMK 203,127,500 (USD 51,864) through the first half of FY08 when the WORTH groups began operating independently. WORTH participants were also trained in the Journey of Life⁹, PSS, child rights, nutritional support, breastfeeding and GMP and conflict resolution to provide them with the skills necessary to provide critical services to OVC as described under IR1.

In order to expand the successful WORTH model, PCI leveraged funds from private donors and signed a sub-agreement with Bwafwano in March 2009 to replicate the economic empowerment model for families of OVC in Chazanga. During the LOP, PCI trained two Bwafwano group facilitators in economic empowerment, Journey of Life and group savings. Bwafwano established 24 WORTH groups with 331 members that collectively saved over USD 2,400.

BELONG implemented a Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) urban garden project at 14 HBC sites and Bwafwano. With technical assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture, BELONG provided training in basic agriculture skills to HBC caregivers. The urban gardens assisted caregivers to address the nutritional needs of their households and meet a portion the HBC organizations' administration costs through the sale of excess produce. During the LOP, 470 HBC caregivers, 125 households and 500 OVC directly benefited from the FNS gardens.

Ethiopia

PCI initially planned to implement the WORTH model in Ethiopia in partnership with Pact. However, PCI took responsibility for the implementation of IR2 activities in July 2006 due to challenges related to the WORTH model's cost. PCI adapted the savings-led, Self-Help Group (SHG) approach as its IR2 implementation strategy and hired a Women's Economic

⁸ All calculations are based on an exchange rate of 3,800 Zambia Kwacha = 1 USD

⁹ Journey of Life is a methodology that uses community resource mobilization, PSS, participatory learning, and planning for action to develop community-based systems for OVC care.

Empowerment Coordinator with in-depth knowledge and experience in this approach. PCI provided technical and M&E oversight and backstopping to the BELONG implementing partners that had previous experience using the SHG approach. Six of the BELONG implementing partners, namely, AFSR, DFT, ISAPSO, LCO, NPHHC and SWDA, implemented the SHG approach. The remaining three partners—ADV, ACSO and HAPCSO—the Savings and Credit Association (SCA) approach. In the SCA approach, seed capital is required, while SHGs rely solely on the internal resources of their members. Furthermore, SHGs usually have 15-20 members who live in the same neighborhood and are usually of a similar socio-economic status; members of the SCAs are not necessarily of the same socio-economic status. To strengthen the economic capacity of HIV/AIDS-affected households caring for OVC, all partners further incorporated various IGAs into their SHG, saving and credit interventions.

Over the LOP, the six partners implementing the SHG approach established a total of 373 SHGs with 7,795 members. To date, the 373 SHGs have mobilized a total of 1,447,305 Ethiopian Birr (ETB) (USD 108,002)¹⁰ of which 833,281 ETB (USD 62,182) was loaned out to members. Loans enabled members to start small-scale businesses and cover household needs, including school fees, uniforms and other needs of children. Micro-enterprise activities supported by individual and group loans included sale of food products cooked in the home, weaving, knitting, sheep rearing and others. SHGs also engaged in group IGAs such as in bulk purchases of consumable items (e.g. cooking oil, flour, vegetables, spaghetti and soap) from wholesalers and resell these items to members and their neighbors. Because the goods are purchased wholesale, the women are able to purchase them at a reduced price which reduces the transportation cost. The women charge a small additional amount that is put into the group savings. The profit from these micro-enterprise activities increased family income and enabled families to improve the infrastructure of their homes and their general living conditions. In addition, accessing loans provided participants with the additional experience of taking a loan and making regular payments, which developed the skills necessary to take larger loans from established microfinance institutions.

In addition to training on the SHG model members received support from project staff during weekly meetings. Key trainings provided to SHG members included the following:

- Basic Concepts of the SHG Methodology and SHG Management
- Leadership and Communication
- Savings and Credit
- Basic Business Skills (BBS)
- HIV/AIDS
- OVC Care and Support

The activities of SHGs were not limited to livelihood diversification and income generation. Other priorities, such as strengthening social networks and addressing health and HIV/AIDS issues, were integrated into the SHG methodology. SHG members utilized traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremonies to exchange ideas, experiences and challenges related to key social and economic issues facing their members, their families and their communities, such as parenting skills, gender issues, HIV/AIDS, child abuse, environmental issues and others. Community facilitators also utilized the regular SHG meetings to facilitate discussion of various socio-economic issues and generate possible strategies and solutions to address these issues. For

¹⁰ Exchange rate used in all calculations of USD was 13.40 ETB = 1.00 USD.

example, 40 SHGs supported by SWDA benefited from Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) and 108 SHG members participated in voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) services made available through networking and referral linkages established by SWDA. In addition, ISAPSO, in collaboration with the Kebele Education Desk, took the initiative to initiate weekly adult literacy class for interested members of two SHGs.

In addition to successful SHG formation and savings, the SHGs have formed 44 Cluster Level Associations (CLAs). A CLA is typically composed of eight to ten SHGs who undertake activities to promote their common agenda in order to create wider access to benefits for their members. Organizing SHGs into CLAs in Ethiopia facilitates access to local resources needed for effective implementation, management and expansion of business activities and creates collective advocacy and bargaining power that increases the economic, social and technical benefits of SHG membership. In addition to their efforts to link member SHGs with micro-finance institutions for resource mobilization and market opportunities, 31 of the CLAs established networks with health facilities, schools and other economic institutions for the benefit of the OVC under members' guardianship.

As stated above, BELONG also supported SCAs through ACSO, ADV and HAPCSO. These three partners collectively provided technical support to form and strengthen 12 SCAs with a total of 498 members (466 females and 32 males). All of the SCAs are registered under the Cooperative Societies Proclamation of the Government.

Experience Sharing Visits

Cross-visits and experience sharing among SHGs organized by the different partners helped participating members to adapt new and better business skills as well as learn from the challenges faced by other SHGs. Over the LOP, a total of 635 members of 254 SHGs, 44 CLAs and two SCAs participated in experience sharing visits to build the organizational capacity of SHGs and SCAs through exposure to similar institutions. Experience sharing visits also provided the opportunity for non-BELONG supported SHGs to learn from the success of the BELONG project. For example, SHGs organized by SWDA were chosen to host 25 pastoralist women from Afar who are members of SHGs supported by another PCI project that operates in the Region. In addition to this, 162 SHG members from another PCI project in Oromia Region participated in experience sharing visits to SHGs and CLAs under LCO and SWDA. The exchanges enabled participants to assess their strengths, limitations and coping mechanisms and learn from their experiences implementing SHGs in different contexts.

Urban Agriculture Activities

One of the strategies BELONG and its implementing partners adapted to improve household income, food security and dietary composition among their beneficiaries was the promotion of urban agriculture activities IGAs such as small-scale poultry farming and school and homestead gardens. Over the LOP, BELONG and its partners provided trainings and basic inputs such as hoes, shovels, rakes, and pickaxes and a variety of seeds to a total of 451 household heads (447 females and 4 males). Families, schools and members of SHGs who had land available for urban agriculture and interest in participating in IGAs activities were provided with technical support including training in horticulture, agronomy, the relative nutritional value of vegetables, plot preparation, direct sowing and transplanting of seedlings and marketing.

Intermediate Result 3: Increased Capacity of Local NGOs/CBOs/FBOs to Provide Quality Services to OVC

Zambia

During the LOP, BELONG developed the capacity of 15 partner HBC CBOs, 200 community schools and 210 WORTH groups to provide quality services to OVC through systems strengthening activities and training.

HBC Partner Capacity Building Activities

Capacity building activities addressed management and administrative topics, such as legal registration, financial management and resource mobilization as well as the provision of essential services to OVC and their caregivers. BELONG conducted the following key capacity building activities for 13 HBC/ART partners, Bwafwano and CBTO over the LOP to strengthen both their institutional capacity as well as the capacity of their direct service providers.

- Registration of HBC Partners: BELONG assisted the 11 HBC/ART partners that were not registered prior to BELONG to obtain registration through the Registrar of Societies. This provided the organizations with the legal recognition required to apply for loans, funding and operate independently as official CBOs.
 - Financial Management Systems: BELONG provided subgrants to 13 HBC/ART CBOs, Bwafwano and CBTO to implement project activities. BELONG also provided each of the 13 ART/HBC partners with a cashbook and cashbox and assisted them in opening bank accounts and provided training and technical support in financial management systems.
 - Computer Donations: PCI distributed laptop computers donated by Sony to 11 HBC/ART partners and trained their staff in basic computer skills.
 - Strengthening Partnerships with Local Health Centers: BELONG developed a referral form to improve tracking and follow-up for OVC referred through BELONG HBC/ART partners for health services at government health centers. HBC Coordinators and 13 clinic officers from local health centers in the HBC sites reviewed, pilot-tested and rolled out the form.
 - Quality Improvement Verification Checklist (QIVC): In close collaboration with HBC caregivers, BELONG developed a QIVC to improve the quality of HBC service delivery. This tool included questions related specifically to the needs of OVC under five as well as school-aged children. BELONG trained 30 caregivers from 15 HBC organizations on the use of the QIVC who then used it as a regular supervision strategy to ensure that HBC caregivers consistently addressed key issues during each visit to OVC households (see Appendix F).
 - Proposal Development: BELONG trained 15 HBC partners in proposal writing and assisted them to write project proposals to donors including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the US Ambassador small grants program and corporate organizations. As of this writing, one school was short listed for the small grants program and awaiting a decision.
- Linkages: As a sustainability strategy, BELONG facilitated linkages to various organizations including MoH, DHMT for health services, Habitat for Humanity for shelter and care support and Colgate-Palmolive for dental hygiene education and supplies. BELONG also established and maintained partnerships with Valid International for micronutrient supplementation to children under five and WFP for food and nutrition support.

BELONG also provided partners with other capacity building activities including training in will writing, Journey of Life, M&E and report writing, Children's Clinic Cards¹¹, Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses and nutrition and breastfeeding counseling.

Community Schools Capacity Building Activities

BELONG provided various trainings and systems development activities under the community school platform. A total of 1,264 teachers, administrators, PCSC members and other OVC caregivers from the 200 community school partners were trained during the LOP. Capacity Building Activities included the following:

- Nutrition and breastfeeding counseling: In partnership with DHMT, BELONG trained caregivers as ToT in nutrition and breast feeding counseling.
- Read on Express (REX): In partnership with the MoE, BELONG trained community school teachers in REX, a MoE-recommended training program for community school teachers to build their capacity in literacy skills and language teaching methodologies.
- 12 core teaching skills: BELONG trained community school teachers in the 12 core teaching skills, which are 12 basic skills required for quality teaching and classroom management.
- MoE Training on Policy Guidelines for Community Schools and other Teacher Trainings: BELONG, in partnership with the MoE trained school coordinators on the MoE guidelines for community schools, lesson planning, record keeping and M&E.
- Financial Management and Resource Mobilization Training for PCSC members: PCSC members were trained in Financial Management and Resource Mobilization. Participants developed action plans for IGAs and mobilizing resources.
- Proposal Writing: BELONG facilitated the construction and rehabilitation of eight community school early childhood development (ECD) centers in Kalomo by assisting the centers in writing proposals to CARE International's SCOPE OVC project.
- New Break Through to Literacy (NBTL) methodology: BELONG trained teachers in the NBTL methodology in partnership with MoE. NBTL is a teaching methodology that emphasizes the use of local languages in education of primary school-aged children.
- VIP latrines: BELONG supported the construction of VIP latrines at 38 community schools in Kafue and Chongwe.
- Agricultural inputs and technical assistance: BELONG provided community schools with agricultural technical assistance and inputs such as seeds, fertilizer and manure which helped schools to establish schools gardens for generating income.
- Linkages: BELONG linked community schools to DEBS offices for continued provision of teaching and learning materials, training, school grants and qualified teachers. BELONG also linked community schools to GRZ schools for the School Program of In-Service for the Term (SPRINT) in-service teacher-training program, a GRZ initiative to provide continued capacity building and support to community schools. SPRINT helped improve the quality of teaching and learning in community schools. In addition, BELONG linked the schools to other GRZ agencies, NGOs and CBOs to increase BELONG's efficacy and foster synergy, linkages and networking to maximize sustainability of program activities

Other capacity building activities provided to community schools include the provision of teaching/learning and recreational materials to all 200 school partners. BELONG also conducted

¹¹ Children's Clinic Cards are GRZ-issued cards to track children's medical and social histories, height, weight and immunizations from birth to 5 years. The Cards also contain essential growth monitoring, home-based care and referral information for health care providers.

training in M&E, basic child counseling, other MOE-endorsed teaching methods such as Read on Course, life skills including HIV/AIDS prevention curricula such as “True Love Waits”, first aid, peer mediation, PSS and the Journey of Life and Appreciative Inquiry methodology. The Journey of Life and Appreciative Inquiry methodologies, in which 181 schools were trained, enabled PCSC members to mobilize resources to support infrastructure development, teaching and learning materials and IGAs.

WORTH Capacity Building Activities

During the LOP, BELONG provided the 210 WORTH groups with a number of trainings, including the following:

- Management Committee Trainings: PCI WORTH staff and the focal point persons for the seven CBO partners were trained in fundamentals of the WORTH village banking system.
- Basic Literacy and Numeracy Skills Training: WORTH members were trained in basic literacy and numeracy to help them in their savings and businesses.
- Basic M&E Training: BELONG conducted training in basic M&E for economic empowerment SHG members.
- Journey of Life Training: BELONG trained Cluster Leaders, EWs and WORTH participants in Journey of Life.
- PSS Training: Cluster Leaders and WORTH members were trained in PSS to help them provide quality PSS services to OVC.
- Child Rights Training: WORTH members were trained in child rights and protection. This training resulted in some cases of child neglect being reported to the Zambia Police’s VSU, which investigated and prosecuted the cases in the local court system.
- Nutritional Support, Breastfeeding and GMP: BELONG partnered with DHMT staff to conduct training in nutrition, breastfeeding counseling and GMP.
- Conflict Resolution Training: BELONG trained CBO focal point persons and WORTH participants in peer mediation. Participants were provided with skills to resolve differences through mediation, which helped to strengthen their SHGs.

OVC Under-5 Capacity-Building Activities

In FY08 USAID provided PCI with funds to establish the OVC Under-Five Project that operated as a plus-up extension to the BELONG program. During the LOP, the OVC Under-Five Project supported US Government (USG) partners such as CARE International, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision/RAPIDS, Family Health International and others to develop stronger and more comprehensive strategies for the under-five age group. The project worked closely with USG partners and their local NGOs/CBOs/FBOs to meet the needs of OVC under-five in Zambia. Through these funds, PCI developed *Say and Play*, an interactive tool that uses pictures, stories and games to address the psychosocial needs of under-five OVC. The tool works with children to identify what they need to grow, their problems, being on their own, when a parent is sick, death, their dreams, and caring for them. The tool also contains information cards for caregivers of under-five OVC that provide more detailed information about children’s holistic needs, signs of child sexual abuse, talking to children about death, and parenting in difficult times. PCI launched *Say and Play* with USAID to officially introduce and share the tool with USG partners, government officials, and other key stakeholders in April 2010.

PCI also linked community school ECCD centers through the BELONG program to another PCI initiative that provided capacity building for the teachers. ECCD teachers and PCSC members from 10 community schools in Mongu and 12 community schools in Chongwe benefited from this linkage. The teachers were trained in the Women’s Global Connection’s *Early Care and*

Child Development Teacher Training Institute, which closely follows the draft national ECCD curriculum, and were trained in the latest ECCD methodology and grief and loss counseling for young children. They also received training on *Say and Play* and *Child Development Assessment in Zambia (CDAZ)*, a tool to assess child development, and parent-community mobilization through support leveraged from UNICEF. Each school created six-month action plans for parent sensitization groups to increase ECCD knowledge and awareness in their communities. These capacity building programs strengthened the BELONG schools to improve early childhood learning and stimulation and increased community awareness of the benefits of ECCD.

Ethiopia

BELONG began implementing activities under IR3 in Ethiopia by establishing a Capacity Building Taskforce (CBT) comprising PCI, CRDA and one representative from each implementing partner to assess the technical and organizational capacity of each implementing partner, develop a needs-based capacity building plan and facilitate the implementation of that plan. BELONG adapted the CORE Initiative's capacity assessment tool¹² to make it applicable to OVC programming in Ethiopia. and the OVC and developed a HIV/AIDS Skills Mapping Tool to assess the technical and organizational capacity of each partner organization. Based on the findings of these assessments, a capacity building plan was developed and implemented over the LOP for its nine implementing partners. The key capacity gaps identified by the majority of partners through the capacity assessment process were M&E, financial and sub-grant management and project cycle management.

In order to build the capacity of implementing partners in M&E, BELONG worked in with Costella Futures¹³ to develop a workbook that included standardized data collection, aggregation, and reporting forms with detailed instructions that complied with PEPFAR's Required Emergency Plan Indicators and operational definitions. Because of frequent staff turnover both within PCI as well as with implementing partners, BELONG conducted three M&E trainings over the LOP. PCI reinforced these trainings through quarterly visits to partners to provide on-site technical support and backstopping. Similarly, PCI provided customized financial and sub-grant management training to the financial managers and accountants of all partner organizations. PCI utilized its Sub-Award Manual to guide the content and process of sub-grant management trainings and protocols. PCI also conducted Project Cycle Management training for the program staff of partner organizations to enhance their capacity in designing and implementing projects with sustainable impact. In order to improve the scope and quality of OVC service delivery provided by all its implementing partners, BELONG provided a series of capacity building trainings in PSS, Memory Work, Positive Parenting, Life Skills, Journey of Life, CHILD Methodology, Quality Standards and the Child Status Index (CSI). To strengthen capacity in economic empowerment, PCI trained the six implementing partners using the SHG model in SHG and CLA formation and management, bookkeeping, record keeping, communication and leadership, saving and loan management, BBS and business development.

As part of the capacity building process, BELONG provided backstopping and technical support to its partners through quarterly field monitoring visits. PCI also facilitated and hosted quarterly and semi-annual review meetings as a capacity-building mechanism. These meetings brought all partner organizations together and provided a forum to exchange experiences, promising

¹² CORE Initiative (2005). CBO/FBO Capacity Analysis: A Tool for Assessing and Building Capacities for High Quality Responses to HIV/AIDS.

¹³ BELONG contracted with Costella Futures for M&E activities from project inception through 12/31/06.

practices and interventions. In these review meetings, partners presented their achievements against their work plans, challenges they encountered and how they resolved them, lessons learned and future plans. These presentations were followed by questions, feedback, comments and discussion from PCI staff and partners aimed at improving performance to provide quality OVC service delivery, highlight successful practices and address common field-level challenges.

Intermediate Result 4: Increased Capacity of Selected Local NGOs/CBOs/FBOs to Serve as “Centers of Learning” in Order to Facilitate Rapid Scale-Up of Services

Activities under IR4 complemented those of IR3 but focused on capacity building among partner organizations through peer-to-peer learning and coaching processes. The initial concept involved identifying select community schools and partner organizations to serve as “Centers of Learning”, or models of excellence, for other partners. Based on the FY08 MTR findings, PCI modified the approach to IR4 activities from a “Center of Learning” to a “peer learning” approach. To this effect, all implementing partners were viewed as having an equal role in the learning and sharing process, rather than viewing one partner as mentor and others as trainees. The revised approach recognized and appreciated the experiences and models of all partner organizations and the value of sharing these lessons and expertise through a collaborative capacity-building process.

Zambia

Bwafwano and CBTO as Centers of Learning

Bwafwano and CBTO served as Centers of Learning for NGOs/CBOs reaching OVC through the HBC platform through the provision of mentorship in OVC services with a focus on HBC. Shuko CBO was linked to Bwafwano for mentorship in the provision of life skills training for older OVC in FY09. In FY09, BELONG facilitated an exchange visit for 11 HBC/ART CBOs during which they observed and discussed Bwafwano’s model of providing comprehensive care to OVC and how to implement successful IGAs. In FY10, BELONG facilitated an exchange visit for Kalinomute CBO to Bwafwano.

Community School Platform

Under the school-based platform, BELONG initially selected one school per district as a potential model community school that could be groomed to serve as a Centre of Learning for the other community schools including Makangwe and Kampekete community schools in Kafue and Chongwe respectively. BELONG supported the selected school by strengthening existing management systems at the schools, strengthening linkages with relevant ministerial departments, training key staff in planning and resource mobilization, and facilitation of mentorship and exchange visits to and from other community schools. As described above, the original concept of having one school identified per district was expanded to include identifying the promising/best community-driven practices at every school that could be scaled up at other schools rapidly and cost-effectively. BELONG facilitated linkages of schools to share best practices and through quarterly district-level implementing partners. BELONG documented the promising practices in sustainable school garden IGA programs that were implemented in Mongu and disseminated this information to promote replication of these activities in other BELONG schools. In Kafue, BELONG also identified Mthunzi Community School’s agricultural enterprises as a promising/best practice and the BELONG Project Officer for Kafue linked other schools to Mthunzi’s agricultural enterprises, which resulted in shared knowledge, skills and resources.

In partnership with the MoE's Curriculum Development Center (CDC), in FY08 BELONG conducted a SPRINT training for 10 representatives from the five BELONG community schools initially selected as Centers of Learning. In this model, Government schools that serve as SPRINT centers are "twinned" with community schools. The SPRINT centers assist their community twin school partners to develop school term plans that are consistent with the MoE approved syllabus and support them with teacher text books and other materials needed to implement the term plans. The SPRINT centers also support schools with continued technical assistance and trainings. Each of the five schools represented in the SPRINT training was linked to a SPRINT center and this model was very successful in Kalomo. In FY09 and FY10, however, the SPRINT program in some GRZ schools was not active, which hampered efforts to scale up linking BELONG-supported community schools to designated SPRINT Centers.

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, BELONG employed several strategies under IR4. BELONG assisted each implementing partner to identify their technical expertise and competencies in HIV/AIDS and OVC programming most relevant to the BELONG Project through skills mapping and facilitating the sharing of such technical expertise to the rest of the implementing organizations. Key models identified and shared are described below.

1. AFSR's "*Speak Out*" program promotes the prevention of sexual violence, child abuse and HIV/AIDS through media in schools and open discussion forums among neighborhood.
2. HAPCSO's "*Expert Patients*" Project engages Persons Living with HIV/AIDS in ensuring ART adherence.
3. LCO's "*Child Watch Unit*" (CWU) which works towards the prevention of child abuse and facilitates medical, counseling and other referrals through active child participation;
4. SWDA consolidated best practices in SHG management and cases of individual successes from its SHGs.

BELONG facilitated a three-day Lessons Sharing Workshop for 23 executive directors, project officers, Project Advisory Committee members and Idir leaders who worked with BELONG implementing partners in FY09 to share these promising practices. In addition, quarterly review meetings were utilized as learning opportunities and experience sharing for BELONG partners and the above four partners presented the development, implementation and key features of these methodologies during quarterly review meetings for all partners.

Major Challenges, Constraints and Responses

Cross-Cutting Challenges, Constraints and Responses

- Staff Turnover: Partners in both Zambia and Ethiopia faced high staff turnover which created continuity gaps at some sites as trained staff departed without ensuring adequate coverage of roles and responsibilities. This adversely affected capacity building efforts and M&E in particular as new staff required training to ensure quality, timely service provision and reporting. To address this, PCI cross-trained partner organization staff and, in Zambia, trained PCSC members at community schools to ensure continuity of services.
- Disbursement of Funds: The disbursement of funds to partners in Ethiopia was a persistent challenge. CRDA was often late in disbursing funds to implementing partners and schools also faced delays as the disbursement channel selected by WFP was not efficient. After the

MTR, PCI revised its agreement with CRDA and began disbursing funds directly to partners. PCI continued to work with WFP over the LOP to streamline its disbursement process.

- Transportation: Both countries faced transportation challenges due to long distances between sites, limited funds for transportation, poor roads and periodic flooding. In Zambia, schools were often closed due to flooding and cholera outbreaks. This limited the number of field visits project staff could make, which reduced the frequency of technical assistance. In Ethiopia, this issue was partially addressed by the provision of bicycles to community volunteers in areas where bicycles are an appropriate and feasible means of transport through a partnership with Global Bikes. In addition, PCI staff conducted multiple support activities during one visit to maximize the efficiency of site visits.
- Limited Partner Capacity: Capacity gaps existed among implementing partners in core competency areas including project design, program integration and referral linkages, quality service provision, resource mobilization, report writing, M&E and data quality management. This meant that significant investments in training and ongoing technical support were required to ensure quality service provision. Staff turnover at partner organizations exacerbated this problem as the loss of trained staff often resulted in losses of institutional memory. PCI and partners strengthened capacity through ongoing training, cross-training of staff and more intensive onsite technical support.
- Data Quality: As mentioned above, due in part to high staff turnover and limited capacity at partner organizations, adequate understanding of project and donor data requirements was an ongoing challenge. Data quality and evidence-based strategic planning were new skills for many staff and required continual reinforcement. PCI addressed this challenge through technical capacity building activities and ensuring uniform understanding of operational definitions through M&E trainings, materials and on-site and remote backstopping.

IRI Challenges, Constraints and Responses

- In most cases, OVC and their households are in need of direct food support. Creating access to sustained food support through networking and referral linkage is a useful strategy but did not prove adequate or feasible, particularly given the cost and resource limitations. In order to address this, PCI supported implementing partners to engage SHG members and OVC caretaking households in urban gardening and household poultry farms in Ethiopia. In Zambia, PCI expanded the SHG model to Bwafwano and instituted the FNS project.
- Ongoing support of the FNS project in Zambia by agriculture extension agents from the MACO failed due to their request for financial compensation to visit gardens and provide technical assistance. To address this, staff and caregivers who completed the initial training conducted by the agriculture extension agents provided technical assistance.
- Community schools in Zambia were created to address the need for education of OVC who cannot pay school fees and are not supposed to charge tuition. However, BELONG discovered that most community schools in urban areas have a fee, which affected the ability of OVC to attend community schools. BELONG negotiated for fees to be waived by some schools and paid for other OVC at schools that could not waive fees.
- Bwafwano faced challenges in enrolling older OVC in the vocational training program as many older OVC needed to work to support themselves and their family and were not able to finish the one-year training course. Bwafwano linked these OVC to the economic empowerment program described under IR2.
- During the LOP, 19 schools were permanently closed due either administrative challenges, inadequate community commitment to support teachers, or land disputes, resulting in

schools not having places in which to operate. Children who had been attending these schools were transferred to other community schools or enrolled in GRZ schools.

- Although schools in Zambia expanded their IGAs, earnings remained insufficient to cover the operating costs of the schools or pay teacher salaries. To address this, BELONG trained schools in community mobilization and linked them to local NGOs and CBOs for support.

IR2 Challenges, Constraints and Responses

- The low level of literacy among SHG members in Ethiopia presented a challenge for teaching and learning. To address this, project staff used participatory methods of adult education techniques whereby participants were encouraged to share their views, experiences and suggestions verbally. BELONG also supported SHGs in assigning bookkeeping responsibilities to members with relatively stronger literacy and numeracy skills.
- Managing community expectations for start-up capital for SHGs limited efforts to establish new SHGs in both countries. This required continual sensitization efforts to ensure that community members understood the purpose and benefits of the savings-led approach.

IR3 and IR4 Challenges, Constraints and Responses

- Capacity building activities are costly and require follow up and technical assistance to ensure the application of new skills. However, the project budget did not provide adequate resources for capacity building and training. To address this, BELONG utilized a training of trainers approach and used partners' meetings as experience sharing platforms.
- The "Centers of Learning" concept and, in particular, the term "Center of Learning", seemed to engender inter-agency competition as per the MTR findings. In addition, the organizations and schools initially identified as Centers of Learning required significant capacity building and infrastructure improvements to serve in this capacity, which was time and cost-prohibitive. In response, PCI shifted from a "Center of Learning" to a "peer learning" approach in which all implementing partners had equal roles in peer education.
- High staff turnover reduced the impact of capacity building activities as trained staff often left shortly after completing training. As a result, BELONG began cross-training staff as well as incorporating PCSC members into school-related trainings in Zambia to address teacher turnover and ensure sustainability.

Lessons Learned

- The economic empowerment approaches used by the project had benefits far beyond income. These approaches resulted in participants gaining respect in their families, communities, and building respect and social capital within their groups. Husbands saw the benefit of the program because their wives were making increased financial contributions to their households and running sustainable micro-enterprises. Many women who asked for land upon which they could build their market stores to further expand their business opportunities from chiefs and/or headsmen of the villages were provided with land.
- The WORTH groups in Zambia would have benefitted from a longer period of technical support than the 18 month period provided.
- PLWHA are essential to include in HIV sensitization activities, as their testimonies encourage people to access VCT services.
- Involving caregivers in decision making increases support and acceptance of program activities in the community.

- The FNS urban gardens proved to be an incentive because the income generated from these gardens improved the nutritional and economic needs of volunteer caregivers. Training also motivated volunteer teachers and caregivers to implement programs.
- Communities that are sensitized on their rights were more likely to seek support from government district offices and other stakeholders independent of project facilitation.

II. SUSTAINABILITY AND/OR TRANSITION

BELONG was designed and implemented with a focus on sustainability from the beginning by implementing all activities through government entities and local NGOs/CBOs. BELONG identified existing community initiatives that provided HBC and progressively built their capacity to perform at a higher level technically and organizationally. In addition, BELONG employed methodologies that built the capacity of local organizations to integrate OVC care and support into their existing activities. Specific strategies included:

- Capacity Building: IR3 and IR4 focused on building the institutional capacities of schools and local partners to achieve sustainable delivery of quality OVC services. Through activities under these IRs, BELONG strengthened both the technical and institutional capacities of partners. In Zambia, this resulted in 11 HBC/ART CBOs becoming legally registered, 11 community schools becoming Basic Schools supported by the GRZ and 20 schools receiving GRZ teachers. In Ethiopia, 9 local CBOs developed the capacity to implement both OVC and economic strengthening initiatives and 200 schools developed and implemented CHILD action plans to improve school infrastructure, support IGAs and other activities.
- Economic Empowerment Approaches: PCI chose savings-led approaches in Zambia (WORTH) and Ethiopia (SHG) as they are inherently sustainable—participants are trained create and run groups to save and loan their internal resources rather than relying on external inputs. Building the capacity of vulnerable households to increase their incomes also provides a long-term, sustainable solution to increase the care and support provided to all household members. Because of the extensive training and mentoring provided under the project, these groups will be able to continue their activities independent of project support and continue to address social issues, such as caring for OVC in their communities and eliminating HTPs through their group strength.
- CHILD Methodology (Ethiopia): The CHILD Methodology builds local capacity through a participatory process that teaches community organizations to identify and prioritize development issues and mobilize locally available resources to address these issues. Partner schools in Ethiopia will be able to continue to use this methodology to strengthen and expand their OVC services beyond the LOP.
- Linkages with Government: BELONG facilitated and strengthened linkages between the community schools, CBOs and government entities that will continue to provide sustainable material and technical support to project partners after project completion.

In both Zambia and Ethiopia, BELONG conducted closeout at the individual and group levels. Individual partners addressed closeout and transition through monitoring visits. BELONG supported partners to develop realistic sustainability plans based on local resources and established networks. BELONG also used the implementing partner meetings to plan collectively for transition during the final year of the project. BELONG held closeout workshops that involved partner staff, government representatives and other key stakeholders, such as PTA and PCSC members in each district to ensure continuity of services and facilitate networking among partners, government representatives and community organizations such as Idirs in Ethiopia. The

PCI/IO Regional Desk Officer and Vice President for Strategic Information & Impact traveled to Zambia and Ethiopia in February 2010 to provide technical assistance in project closeout procedures and met with partners in both countries to facilitate a smooth transition.

III. CAPACITY BUILDING

Please see IRs 3 and 4 on p. 13-19 for a detailed description of capacity building activities conducted under the project. Please see Major Challenges, Constraints and Responses and Lessons Learned on p. 19-22 for capacity building challenges and lessons learned.

IV. COORDINATION WITH IN-COUNTRY TEAM AND HOST GOVERNMENT, LOCAL PARTNERS

Zambia

Throughout the LOP, BELONG worked closely with the USAID/Zambia Mission OVC team. BELONG staff participated in the monthly OVC Forum and Chief of Party Meetings as well as in experience sharing meeting conducted for USG partners implementing PEPFAR programs in Zambia. BELONG staff also participated actively in national technical working groups. The BELONG Capacity Building Officer and the M&E Officer were members of the national steering committee chaired by the MOE responsible for promoting schools as centers of OVC care and support, which was a Southern African Development Countries initiative. BELONG M&E staff participated in the Monitoring and Evaluation Support Systems (MESSY) network, a national network of M&E professionals that provides a platform for the exchange of M&E technical information and skills through trainings, presentations and conferences. BELONG M&E staff participated in MESSY-sponsored trainings that addressed data verification, outcomes monitoring, advanced Excel skills and M&E frameworks among other topics.

BELONG worked in close partnership with GRZ ministries and departments including MoE, MoH, MACO, MCDSS, and the Victim Support Unit under the Zambia Police Service to ensure alignment with national policies and guidelines and to build lasting relationships between government and partner CBOs. Staff from these GRZ ministries and departments were engaged in providing technical assistance to the BELONG partners and training community school teachers, PCSC members and HBC caregivers. BELONG also ensured that all training provided was consistent with national standards and used national curricula.

BELONG supported community schools to meet the MoE minimum standards for community schools and conducted joint monitoring visits of schools with MoE, which helped MoE staff understand the needs of community schools. This resulted in the conversion of eleven community schools to Basic Schools under the GRZ system, affording them the GRZ funding; twenty other schools received government-paid teachers. BELONG partnered with the DHMT to provide OVC with health care services including linking DHMTs to provide on-site routine child immunization programs at BELONG-supported community schools. BELONG replicated and utilized the SHN medical cards for referring pupils for medical treatment that were designed by CHANGES 2. BELONG provided OVC with ITNs in partnership with RAPIDS. The 15 HBC partners worked closely with the DHMT clinics in Lusaka and Mongu to provide free medical services to OVC under the age of five. BELONG developed a referral form to be used to strengthen tracking and follow-up for OVC referred through BELONG HBC/ART partners for health services at government health centers.

Ethiopia

Throughout the LOP, BELONG worked closely with the USAID/Ethiopia Mission and other USG partners in Ethiopia. BELONG actively participated the PEPFAR OVC Partners meetings organized by the USAID/Ethiopia Mission. BELONG presented its experiences implementing BLEONG as well as presented its SHG model to other PEPFAR OVC partners. In 2009, BELONG hosted other USG OVC partners for an experience sharing visit to its project activities. The Regional Education Bureaus of Amhara and Tigray actively engaged with BELONG and WFP in the implementation of BELONG in the 200 CHILD schools. Along with the representatives of CHILD schools, key personnel for these Bureaus attended review meetings and joint monitoring visits. All BELONG partners in their respective operational areas have been working closely with the local governments to select beneficiaries and implement and monitor activities. BELONG reported on project to the appropriate government agencies through review meetings and worked closely on closeout and transition planning. Through this partnership, BELONG secured free medical services for OVC through the Kebele offices and food through WFP food distribution centers. In addition, BELONG shared its experience on OVC programming and its SHG model to the members of its Community of Practice, a separate initiative supported by PCI that brings together FNS and HIV/AIDS professionals to share promising practices for providing integrated FNS and HIV/AIDS services.

BELONG collaborated closely in FY09 with USAID/Ethiopia's technical working group to develop quality standards for OVC services to maximize program impact and guide implementing partners in service quality assurance. USAID/Ethiopia selected three implementing partners, including PCI, to pilot test the standards and share their feedback to other partners. PCI worked with HAPCSO to test the practicality and applicability of these OVC service quality standards. In addition in FY09, Save the Children USA took the lead pilot testing the Child Status Index, a new tool developed by MEASURE Evaluation to assess OVC well-being. BELONG was selected to pilot test the tool and completed this activity.

The BELONG/Zambia and Ethiopia Project Managers and the PCI/IO's Vice President for Strategic Information and Impact participated in the OVC Track 1 Closeout Meeting in Cape Town, South Africa in May 2010 and conducted four presentations addressing BELONG achievements as well as the *Say and Play* methodology, described under IR3.

V. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Overview

The M&E component of the BELONG project was under contract to Costella Futures from project start up through December 31, 2006, at which time PCI took over the primary responsibility for M&E functions. The comprehensive M&E plan developed for the project included a results framework, indicators and operational definitions, data collection instruments, protocols, quality assurance standards, guidelines for reporting and timelines and M&E capacity building plans. BELONG integrated M&E functions as part of the core functions of all staff. A dedicated M&E Officer in each country was responsible for overseeing day-to-day M&E activities at the field level. The PCI/IO M&E Unit provided technical assistance and backstopping through site visits and remote support. Project M&E staff conducted on-site monitoring visits to partners to provide technical backstopping, build capacity, assess progress and address issues in a timely and effective manner.

BELONG conducted a situational assessment during the first year of the project to assess the status of children in community schools in Zambia. The report was finalized and disseminated to project staff, partners and other key stakeholders, including USAID, in May 2008. BELONG conducted an internal MTR in FY08 to assess project progress and make recommendations to strengthen implementation and maximize project outcomes and impact during the second half of the LOP. A final evaluation, conducted in FY10 by an external consultant, employed qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the achievements of project results against the project targets and the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project.

Results Framework

Please see Appendix D for the project Results Framework.

Results of Monitoring Approaches

As noted above, BELONG conducted an internal MTR in March 2008 which resulted in a comprehensive list of recommendations to strengthen the project. These recommendations were implemented by each country as described in semi-annual and annual reports.

In Zambia, PCI conducted a needs assessment in 2008 to inform the design and implementation strategies of appropriate PSS for under-five OVC. The assessment established that ECCD teachers and HBC caregivers were the ideal persons to provide these services. With input from three focus group discussions with ECCD teachers and HBC caregivers and two focus group discussions with local implementing partners, PCI developed *Say and Play*. In the first half of FY09, *Say and Play* was reviewed by 20 people from USG partner organizations and pilot-tested with seven community school teachers in Mongu. In June 2009, PCI conducted a mini-rollout of the *Say and Play* draft tool during which PCI trained ECCD Teachers and HBC caregivers from various USG partners in the use of the tool. In August 2009, PCI solicited feedback from each ECCD teacher and HBC caregiver on the use of the tool, finalized the tool and rolled it out in April 2010 to be implemented in community schools and through HBC caregivers.

New Monitoring Tools and Methods

In Zambia, BELONG developed a QIVC for OVC that addressed the specific needs of OVC under five (please see Appendix F). BELONG also adapted the “M&E System and Data Quality Checklist” from PEPFAR’s *Data Quality Assurance Tool for Program-Level Indicators* (January 2007) to assess project data quality (please see Appendix F). Bwafwano used the tool to assess its M&E systems in each of their sites supported by BELONG.

VI. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Organizational Chart

The organizational chart for BELONG is attached as Appendix G.

Changes in Key Personnel or Level of Effort

During the LOP, PCI/Zambia’s Country Directors were Tom Ventimiglia, Kurt Henne, Rajesh Singh and Lynn Lederer. BELONG/Zambia Project Managers were Kate Vorley, Yvonne Mulenga and Pule Mundende. Kurt Henne, who previously served as both the Zambia and Ethiopia Country Directors, is currently the Africa Regional Director. The first Project Manager in Ethiopia, Walleligne Beriye, was promoted to Country Director in 2008; subsequent BELONG/Ethiopia Project Managers were Kassaw Asmare and Dr. Muluken Yohannes.

VII. SUCCESS STORIES

Zambia

Matero HBC Prevents Homelessness

Eighteen year old Robert and sixteen year old Vida live in Matero Township, located in Lusaka. Since their parents' death, the children have continued living in their parents' home with support and care from the Matero HBC caregivers. In 2009, however, the Lusaka Council issued an eviction notice, and Robert and Vida were forced to vacate the home as the rent was not paid on the house. Unable to buy the house, and without financial or family support, Robert and Vida were being forced to vacate and become homeless.

The HBC group and community members met with the council authorities to negotiate on behalf of the two orphans for the council not to evict them. The council requested ZMK 5 million to purchase the house if the children continued living there. With this information, the HBC group and community members immediately approached the media to air the story and asked for financial and material assistance on behalf of the children. The response was overwhelming—Matero HBC quickly raised ZMK 10 million from corporations and individual donors for Robert and Vida to buy the house and purchase household goods. After learning about this, the council revisited their decision and decided to give the children the house at no cost. The money that was raised has been put in a trust fund to help the children with other household needs. As a result of their quick intervention, the Matero HBC caregivers not only prevented Robert and Vida from becoming homeless, they were able to mobilize resources from the public and private sectors to ensure that their basic needs will be met for years to come.

A Return to Innocence

Innocent is the youngest of three children, born eight years ago to a father who was a blue collar worker at the Lusaka International Airport and a mother who was a housewife. When Innocent's mother's health started to fail her a few years ago marital problems and squabbles became commonplace between his mum and dad. Eventually his parents divorced and his father left with his older brother and sister while Innocent, being the youngest, remained with his mother.

In order to survive, Innocent's mother began crushing stones and selling them to small-scale construction sites for a living. The small amounts of money she earned barely managed to cover her monthly rentals of K30,000 for the one-room mud house she shared with her youngest child. Having one meal per day became the norm, and many times the stone crushing business was slow and the two went hungry. The situation became so severe that Innocent and his mum would go for months without having a bath because they had no money for soap and no access to adequate clean water. For Innocent, what other kids his age take for granted (going to school, clean clothes, three meals a day, etc.) became a fairy tale.

Innocent's mother's health continued to deteriorate and, in time, she became so weak that she could no longer continue stone crushing for a living. Eventually, she became so ill that she was bedridden most of the time. With no relative, neighbor, or Good Samaritan to come to their rescue, Innocent and his mother spent days and nights hungry. The poor boy, weak from lack of

nutrition and exhausted from nursing his sick mother day and night was fast heading for both a physical and mental shut down.

Fortunately, the team at CBTO was made aware of Innocent's terrible situation through a caregiver who lives near his house. After conducting an initial assessment, the CBTO team determined that this was an emergency situation which needed urgent attention, immediately enrolled Innocent in the CBTO OVC Program and met his basic needs. Going to school, wearing a uniform, having a decent meal, dreaming about being a doctor or an engineer or a lawyer or a pilot (things that other eight-year-olds do) are now Innocent's reality. This young man's hope for a better tomorrow, of beating the odds stacked against him as a young child living in abject poverty in the slums of Lusaka, has been rekindled.



Photo 1. Innocent in class in his new school uniform

Ethiopia

Incubating an Idea

Abebech, a 45-year-old resident of Hwassa town, lost her husband a decade ago. Life became progressively more difficult for her in caring for her eight children alone. She struggled to feed her children using her meager income made from baking injera¹⁴ and washing clothes and could barely sustain her family.

One of Abebech's daughter, Zeritu, a fifteen year old girl, has been a recipient of OVC support services for the past two years through BELONG partner ADV. In addition, ADV identified Abebech as a prime candidate to become one of the 30 guardians for BELONG support to engage in poultry production. She received a package of services including training, working tools and ten-day old chicks to begin her small-scale poultry production project.

Now Abebech has started expanding and diversifying her business through the sale of chickens and has purchased sheep. Abebech says "I am confident that I will diversify my business even more and hopefully will get better income to support my children".



Photo 2. Abebech tends to her livestock and poultry

Effectiveness of CHILD

Dassa primary school is located 220 km north of Addis Ababa in a highly food insecure area of North Shoa zone, Amhara Region. Due to the failure of the belg¹⁵ crop for three consecutive years, the community in the area has been dependent on emergency food aid.

Despite these challenges, the community remains committed to mobilizing its resource to improve the teaching and learning environment. The shortage of classrooms was identified as a major challenge by the PTA members through the implementation of the CHILD methodology. As a result, the PTA member developed a CHILD action plan that resulted in the construction of four classrooms with a 30,000 ETB (USD 2,239) community contribution and a grant of 4,700

¹⁴ Very thin traditional Ethiopian bread.

¹⁵ The "short rains" crop growing season in some parts of Ethiopia (February-May).

ETB (USD 351) from PCI. Part of the grant supported other school activities including the strengthening of an HIV/AIDS Club.

The school identified sheep fattening as a viable IGA through the CHILD process and began implementing this activity. This school earned a net profit of USD 90 through this initiative. The proceeds were used to improve the school and to support OVC with educational materials. In addition to supporting the school direct, the PTA conducts sheep fattening practices to parents of school children to provide them with skills to replicate at the household level to increase their household food security. The PTA continues to meet every two months to discuss the status of the CHILD program's implementation and challenges and to expand their efforts to provide sustainable income for the school.



Photo 3. Dassa Primary School's sheep