

Changing
THE WAY WE
careSM

Year Two

Annual Report Summary



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*Changing the Way We Care*SM (CTWWC) promotes safe, nurturing family care for children reintegrating from residential care facilities (often referred to as orphanages) and prevents child-family separation by strengthening families, reforming national systems of care for children, and working to shift donor and volunteer support away from residential care and toward family care alternatives. Launched on October 1, 2018, the CTWWC initiative is organized around three main strategic objectives: (1) Governments promote family care; (2) Children stay in or return to safe and nurturing families; and (3) Key stakeholders make meaningful commitments toward family care. The second year of the initiative is summarized in this report of progress.

Year Two was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw activities suspended in early March and numerous immediate and ongoing impacts on children and families across the world. This created a need for CTWWC to revise some of its approaches; namely to shift to virtual operations and remote support for children and families. Impacts from COVID-19 were felt throughout the initiative, from direct case management work with children and families to global management and learning activities. Despite this, the solid foundation established in Year One allowed CTWWC to respond rapidly and adapt plans and implementation.

CTWWC PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Governments Promote Family Care

After an intense first year spent building strong foundations, relationships, and monitoring systems, and despite significant difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Year Two of the CTWWC initiative saw marked progress towards its objectives.

In Guatemala:

CTWWC advanced its work with the national government to strengthen and reform its national childcare systems. A *National Care System Assessment* was completed to serve as important baseline information against which progress will be monitored with four key government agencies supporting children and families.

CTWWC supported the government in their guidance for children during COVID-19, titled *Pathway for the Integration of Children and Adolescents in Foster Care During COVID*.

The Zacapa Municipal Office for Children and Adolescents was assisted in identifying vulnerable families at risk of child separation and providing appropriate family strengthening services and support to prevent more children from entering institutional care.

In Kenya:

CTWWC worked closely with the government to produce several tools to guide the child care reform process in Kenya, including the *National Care System Assessment*, *Gatekeeping Guidelines*, and the *Alternative Family Care (AFC) Guidelines* training package, among others.

Technical support and guidance were provided to the Kenyan National Council for Children's Services (NCCS) and the National Care Reform Team to begin developing a National Care Reform Strategy.

In Moldova:

CTWWC continued to build strong relationships with the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection and the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Research, as well as with the USAID Moldova Mission, UNICEF, and other non-government advocates for care reform.

CTWWC participated in regular meetings of child protection working groups at the national level, including a task force to create a national coordination mechanism for childcare, which is critical to ensuring successful and sustainable reforms of the national childcare system.



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CTWWC PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Children stay in or return to safe and nurturing families

In Guatemala:

The Zacapa municipal government's psychosocial team was trained in case management, and undertook a mapping of available social services and a needs assessment of vulnerable families to inform the development of comprehensive family support services and a referral system aimed at preventing the separation of children from their families.

The Zacapa municipal government began providing psychosocial support, violence prevention, and household economic strengthening services to prevent family separation, with training and support from CTWWC.

In Kenya

Remote case management tools were used country-wide to support and collect data on children released from residential institutions during the pandemic through a government mandate.

Training on virtual case management was provided by CTWWC to 30 staff members from the governmental Department of Children's Services and from SOS Children's Villages.

CTWWC and local partners provided economic support payments to 618 households, including 505 families whose children had been sent home from residential institutions (with a combined total of 787 children), 61 families at risk of child-family separation, and 52 care leavers. The families received economic support in the form of cash transfers, COVID-19 protective products, hygiene packs for children, and support for economic strengthening income-generating activities. Post-distribution monitoring indicated that families benefiting from the economic support had allocated some money to either revive small businesses, improve housing, start new income-generating activities or establish a kitchen garden.



CTWWC PROGRESS TOWARD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Global Commitments Shifting to Family Care

Year Two of the initiative produced several significant achievements toward the global shift to family care. In early March 2020, CTWWC, along with more than 15 organizations working on care reform, came together out of concern for children in care during the COVID-19 pandemic. A global virtual working group was formed to plan for and respond to children at risk during the pandemic, which produced two comprehensive technical documents to guide policy makers and practitioners in addressing the needs of children at risk of family separation and/or in alternative care during this global crisis.

In June 2020, CTWWC and partners at the non-profit organization, Faith to Action (F2A), led a collaborative workshop with key faith and sec-

ular leaders and launched four working groups related to the transition of care from institutional to family-based care, including defining transition, transitioning donors, practitioner support, and referral mechanisms for transition support.

On December 18, 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted a new resolution by consensus which included ground-breaking language on the harm of child institutionalization and urges states to progressively redirect resources to family and community-based care services. CTWWC contributed to this achievement by participating in key events and decision-making, and through its support of the Better Care Network (BCN).



By the numbers



292 
government

personnel participated in awareness raising events on care reform in Guatemala, Kenya and Moldova

231 
social service

workers were trained on new case management materials in Kenya and Guatemala

6 
studies

were completed or contributed to better understand the status of children's care systems in Kenya and Guatemala, including the *Kenya Care System Assessment*, *Guatemala Opinion Study*, *Kenya Situational Analysis of Residential Care in Four Counties*, *Guatemala Census of Residential Care Providers*, *Guatemala Public Expenditure Analysis* and the *Kenya Funding Streams Analysis*

21
children



were reunified with their families with CTWWC support, and 808 children received post-placement support in Kenya and Guatemala

745 
households

benefited from emergency economic support funds or received training on kitchen gardens and small business management skills in Kenya and Guatemala

10 
placements

of children into residential care were prevented through case management efforts and family strengthening support in Guatemala



3,149
community members



received sensitization messages on the harm of residential care and the need for family strengthening in Kenya and Guatemala



93
CTWWC



learning briefs/
reports were
published with
5,064 downloads

5
faith-based



organizations
mentored/trained
in child care reform
processes and tools

273
organizations



participated in the U.S.
*Catholic Support for
Overseas Residential
Care Survey*

4,200
Better Care Network (BCN)



subscribers were reached
by 12 comprehensive
newsletters



Mama Loice was reunified with her two granddaughters from a residential care facility after they were sent home due to the COVID-19 emergency. CTWWC supported her to establish two homestead gardens so Loice no longer needed to buy her kale from the local market.

When I harvest more than I need from my garden, I sell the surplus and use the money to buy other food like small fish. The children like them so much and they are a good source of protein, said Mama Loice.



CASE STUDY

Zacapa, Guatemala: Delila, 14 months later

July 3, 2020 marked one year since CTWWC's first family reunification. In January 2019, five children were separated from their family. At the time, there were all living with Ana Maria*, who was grandmother to four of them, Amelia, Leonardo, Rosa, and Daniel, and mother to the oldest, a 10-year-old daughter, Reyna. One day, Ana Maria had to go to work and left the children in the care of 10-year-old Reyna, because she could not afford childcare. The local authorities felt this was putting the children "in danger" and so they removed the children immediately and placed them in an orphanage. The mother of the four younger children, Delila, was living elsewhere with her new husband and newborn baby. A CTWWC case worker took on the case, conducted a family assessment and prepared to present the case to court advocating for

a reunification of all five children with the grandmother. In July 2019, they were legally reunited by the court. With the support of CTWWC, Delila reestablished a positive bond with her children, improved her parenting skills, secured a household income, and connected to a church all in preparation for the legal reunification of her four children with her, her husband and the baby. Currently, they are all safe and healthy. Martita, the CTWWC case worker, provided virtual case management during the early months of the pandemic to ensure that the family was doing well and that the children were adjusted to their new home. Now Martita can conduct physical home visits again and loves to see the children happy and healthy. They also live very close to their grandmother and Reyna and get together frequently.

**Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the family*

