

WAR CHILD PRESS PACK



WAR
child

We look forward to a world in which the lives of children are no longer torn apart by war

CONTENTS

- **An Introduction**
- **Background**
- **Programmes – Our Work in War Torn Countries**
- **Music**
- **Raising Funds & Awareness**
- **Notes to Editors & Contacts**



AN INTRODUCTION

CHILDREN DON'T START WARS.

But their homes, schools, families and communities are torn apart by war. These are the very things kids rely on for protection and the chance to build a life free from poverty.

War Child is a small international charity that protects children from the brutal effects of war and its consequences. We currently work in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Uganda.

We're on the ground – supporting the most vulnerable children that are too often forgotten in the aftermath of conflict. These include:

- Former child soldiers
- Children living on the streets
- Children put in prison
- Girls at risk of rape or violence

We may be a small charity but we've got big ambitions. Our staff are living and working in some of the world's most dangerous war zones helping thousands of kids to rebuild their lives.

By working with local partners, we provide a number of services for children including:

- Rebuilding schools destroyed by war and getting children back into education
- Separating children from adult detainees in prison and providing legal aid
- Reintegrating child soldiers with their families
- Getting children off the streets after war has forced them to leave home
- Counselling to help children cope with the effects of war
- Vocational and professional training which gives them future opportunities
- Changing harmful attitudes in the community towards children

We're also passionate about helping millions more – so we're raising awareness of the issues with the public and lobbying politicians to get children's voices heard by the people who have the power to change things on a grander scale. Examples of what we do are:

- Persuading governments to spend more money on children in conflict zones
- Suggesting practical ways politicians can make a difference to children affected by war

BACKGROUND

War Child was founded in 1993 by British film-makers **Bill Leeson** and **David Wilson**, when they returned from filming the war in former Yugoslavia. Shocked by what they had seen, they raised enough money to return later that year with a **convoy and mobile bakery** to help provide for the children affected by the conflict.

The War Child family soon grew as **War Child Holland** was formed in 1994 and **War Child Canada** started in 1998.

Our first album 'Help' was launched in 1995 in order to raise money and awareness for the children affected by the conflicts in the Balkans.

The money raised helped fund a music therapy programme at the flagship Pavarotti Music Centre, which after 10 years of our involvement was handed over to a local organisation to continue to serve children in the future.

During that time we have expanded our programmes into the four countries we work in today - Iraq, Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. We have also released four more critically acclaimed albums; most notably 'Help! - A Day in the Life' in 2005 and 'Heroes' in 2009.

WAR CHILD INTERNATIONAL

is a network comprising War Child UK, War Child Holland and War Child Canada. Together we help children affected by conflict in a total of 14 countries. All three War Child organisations have won prestigious awards for their work and bring expertise to working with children in conflict affected areas.

The War Child family also has two affiliates formed in 2002 – War Child Australia and War Child Ireland – who raise money to co-fund projects delivered by War Child UK, and raise awareness of the effects of war on children.

PROGRAMMES: OUR WORK IN WAR TORN COUNTRIES

Our work in war torn countries has won several awards, including the UN Grand, IPRA and BeMobo Awards. We currently work in 4 countries and have plans to expand to the Central African Republic.

IRAQ

War Child UK has been working in Iraq since 2003. We are one of the few international Non-Governmental Organisations offering child protection.

Our work is currently focused on three of the most disadvantaged groups - Marsh Arabs, Bedouin and Internally Displaced Communities - to increase education opportunities and promote child protection and rights.

EDUCATION

Our aim is to increase the very low school attendance rates in the South by helping children

access schools. We provide alternatives for child labourers, livelihood grants for children and families, school uniforms and materials. We're also working to improve the quality of classrooms and playgrounds and targeting the Ministry of Education to improve teaching standards as well as working with communities to raise awareness of the importance of education.



CHILD PROTECTION

Child Protection Committees and Children's Groups are being set up in slum and rural communities. The Child Protection Committees will lobby government to provide services for children affected by violence and address issues of risk to children within their communities- for example, by setting up safe play areas that are free from unexploded ordinance and repairing dangerous paths to schools.

The Children's Groups provide education in essential life skills. A specific group targeting vulnerable girls who are not in school will provide an opportunity to meet others, share problems, build self-esteem and improve literacy.

AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan remains one of the most dangerous countries in the world to be a child and 1 in 4 children won't live to see their fifth birthday. Those that do may face a life living or working on the streets to survive without education or opportunity. Deep conservatism and a lack of legal protection make the lives of women and girls particularly difficult.

STREET WORKING CHILDREN

Together with local partners, we're working with children who have missed out on an education because they've been working to support their families on the street or in the home. We provide drop-in centres and help some return to formal schooling. We also provide vital outreach work with the families to raise awareness of the importance of education, as children need the support of their parents in order to attend school.

CHILDREN LIVING BEHIND BARS

When women are imprisoned in Afghanistan often due to poverty related 'honour crimes' or family breakdown they often have to take their children with them as there's no one else to care for them. Inside adult prisons children lack access to basic care. War Child has set up a kindergarten outside the prison and arranges transport for children to attend during the day, which gives them access to food and a chance to play. We also work with mothers offering counselling, training in childcare and a family liaison service to support them on their release from prison. Family liaison is essential because many women are murdered on release because of the shame they supposedly bring to their families.

CHILDREN ARRESTED OR IN PRISON

Many children are imprisoned alongside adults in Afghanistan. War Child works with a Juvenile

Rehabilitation Centre that supports children we have been able to separate from adults in prisons. At any one time there are approximately 80 children being held in the Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre. Some are held without charge or for crimes they did not commit – for whom we provide legal aid, family liaison, access to education and healthcare. We also teach them about their rights.

SOCIAL WORKER TRAINING

To effect long term change and child protection more broadly, we're working to improve training for social workers with the implementation of a national social work training programme. We also run the country's only higher education Social Work course at a local University.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

More than 2.5 million children under 5 have died due to the effects of conflict since 1998.

VULNERABLE GIRLS

In Eastern DRC War Child is supporting former girl soldiers, young mothers and those who have been affected by sexual violence. Our project funded by the European Union and Comic relief provides informal education and vocational training. We also reunite the girls with their families where possible and where not, we help them cope on their own through life-skills training and seeking alternative living arrangements for them.

STREET CHILDREN

It's estimated that over 13,000 children live on the streets of Kinshasa. War Child is about to launch a new 24 hour drop-in centre that will provide street girls with a safe space where they can get food, counselling and medical advice. The project will also promote the rights of these vulnerable girls amongst the community. We'll also have a night bus service for street children where both boys and girls will have access to basic health services from nurses and counsellors.



GIVING CHILDREN A VOICE

Didjak Munya is a Congolese hip-hop artist who has often devoted his time to War Child. He has worked with street children and youth from a camp for internally displaced people, giving them the chance to express their views through music on issues affecting young people in the DRC today such as HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence. Not only have these children been engaged in these important topics in an accessible way but their messages have been conveyed to thousands more on national TV and radio.

'CITY OF HOPE' INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS CAMP

This settlement in Kinshasa has been home to 10,000 people since being set up in response to severe floods in 2007. With few basic facilities or services, we supported the camp by building three youth centres and two football pitches to provide children there with informal education, vocational training and sport. War Child will now hand this project over to local NGOs to ensure that its important work continues.

UGANDA

Uganda is a country recovering from 20 years of violence. War Child works in two areas in the North of the country, Pader – which was severely affected during the conflict and Karamoja – a deeply impoverished and neglected region where conflict is ongoing. Both areas are home to thousands of children who have extremely limited access to education and healthcare.

EDUCATION AGAINST ALL ODDS

War Child's projects in Uganda seek to improve access to education for children who have missed out on school due to the effects of war or poverty. These include children formerly abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army, young mothers, children living with disabilities as well as orphans and vulnerable children. We strive to provide them with the opportunity to enrol and stay in formal education where possible. Where not possible and for older children, we offer vocational training in a variety of professions as well as life-skills workshops that will enable them to make a better future for themselves.

LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT FOR ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

War Child develops care plans for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). We conduct adult literacy classes as well as vocational and micro-enterprise training for households caring for OVC. We're also distributing start-up grants enabling families to start up their own small enterprises.

CHILD PROTECTION

We're also working with communities to form Child Protection Committees that monitor, prevent, report and where appropriate respond to child protection issues of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

JULIET'S STORY – UGANDA



Juliet was abducted by rebel forces in Northern Uganda at the age of just 12 and spent the next six years in captivity. Aside from a daily life of danger and uncertainty, Juliet endured some unimaginably terrible personal experiences including forced marriage with a rebel commander, failed pregnancy and a botched operation carried out with no anaesthetic that left her with severe health problems from which she thought she'd never recover.

Thankfully, Juliet did recover and eventually she was able to escape from her rebel group. Since then, she has been reunited with her family and with War Child's help she is getting her life back on track.

Juliet currently attends a school supported by War Child that is unique in providing education for young mothers and those denied years of schooling because of the ongoing conflict in Uganda.

Juliet has made such remarkable progress that she is now the school's Head Girl and fully intends to continue her studies after leaving, with dreams of qualifying as a nurse or teacher.

JOEL'S STORY – DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



Joel is training to be a mechanic. The skills he's learning have helped him repair a lot more than just cars. They've helped put his family back together.

A War Child project found him on the streets of Kinshasa. They'd been his home since his dad died and his family fell apart. He was just 14 at the time.

We provided sanctuary from the dangers of the streets and now we're giving him the skills that can earn him a decent income for years to come.

Now he's been reunited with his family and he can help support his younger siblings so they can stay in school.

£1.30 can provide three meals a day for a child living on the streets in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo.

£10 can pay for a year's primary school materials including books, pens and paper for a child living in Uganda.

£125 can pay for a year's training for a girl in Afghanistan to learn income generating skills such as tailoring.

War Child has a proud and unique relationship with music, dating back to the 'Help!' album in 1995. War Child has since released an award-winning catalogue of five albums, winning gongs at The Brit Awards, The Q Awards, The MOBOs, The NME Awards and the only compilation up for the Mercury Music Prize.

Our music supporters include Sir Paul McCartney, David Bowie, Radiohead, U2, Coldplay, Bob Dylan, Oasis, Lily Allen, Stevie Wonder, Elbow, Tinchy Stryder and Pixie Lott. The support of these amazing artists has helped raise over £4m for War Child's work.

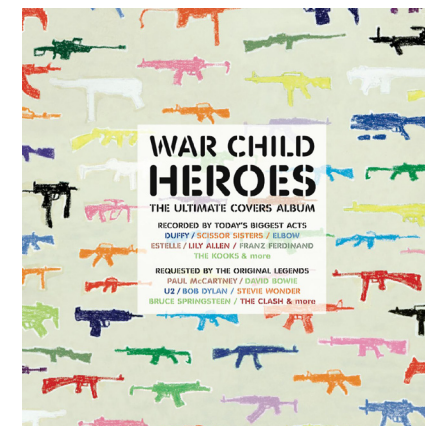
War Child's albums are legendary, breaking records for both the fastest album ever recorded and the fastest downloaded album.

1995: HELP! Album – Blur, Oasis, Radiohead, Paul McCartney, Portishead, Stone Roses, Massive Attack...

- Most legendary charity album
- Made £1.5 million
- Won Q award in 1995, presented by Tony Blair
- Received the Freddie Mercury award in 1996 at The Brit Awards

2005: HELP: A Day In The Life – Coldplay, Gorillaz, Kaiser Chiefs, Razorlight, Radiohead, Keane, Bloc Party...

- Became the fastest recorded (within 24hrs) and downloaded album in music history with over 300 tracks sold every minute
- Made over £500,000
- NME's best compilation album of the year



2009: WAR CHILD 'HEROES' – Elbow, Lily Allen, Duffy, Estelle, Rufus Wainwright...

- Released in February 2009
- 15 of the hottest contemporary artists in the music industry recorded cover versions of classic tracks by 15 musical legends
- An extraordinary collection of artists who have jointly sold more than 1.4 billion albums
- Won Third Sector's Best Charity Trading Award

2009: 'I GOT SOUL' Young Soul Rebels

- Released in October 2009
- Featuring N-Dubz, Tinchy Stryder, Pixie Lott, VV Brown, Kid British and more
- The single was inspired by the February 2009 Coldplay and The Killers gig at the O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire in support of War Child and is a reworking of the iconic Killers' track 'All these Things That I've Done'
- Reached the UK Top Ten singles chart in its first week
- Young Soul Rebels' performance of I Got Soul closed the 2009 MOBO Awards
- Won the MOBO'S BeMOBO Award
- The single released on Island Records aimed to raise awareness of the 250,000 child soldiers around the world

See www.warchild.org.uk/music for more information.



RAISING FUNDS & AWARENESS



LIVE EVENTS

War Child's live events have brought some of music's most legendary talents together on stage, including Kasabian, Calvin Harris and La Roux (2010), Coldplay, The Killers, Bono and Gary Barlow (2009), Pet Shop Boys, Keane and Lily Allen (2007) and Pavarotti, U2 and Brian Eno (1995). 2010 also saw War Child named the charity partner for the Camden Crawl, an increasingly popular London music festival.

In 2007 War Child launched its annual ARMY OF YOU London showcase, bringing together some of the most exciting names across the UK's thriving new music scene at Camden's Koko. The event is now an established date in the music calendar for profiling up-and-coming acts. Previous sell-out gigs have brought performances from artists including The Noisettes, Friendly Fires and Filthy Dukes. All our music events raise money and awareness for War Child.

FUNDRAISING

War Child works with corporate partners, major donors and public fundraisers who help raise vital funds to continue our work. We've worked closely with partners from across the music, fashion and art worlds on projects ranging from high-profile art auction events to in-store promotions, in support of War Child. War Child has also developed strong links with the computer game industry for example, we enjoy beneficial partnerships with Sports Interactive and Sega.

We're also extremely grateful for the continued support from major donors who in addition offer their time and expertise to War Child and of course to individual fundraisers who often take part in extreme challenge events to raise cash and awareness.

ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS

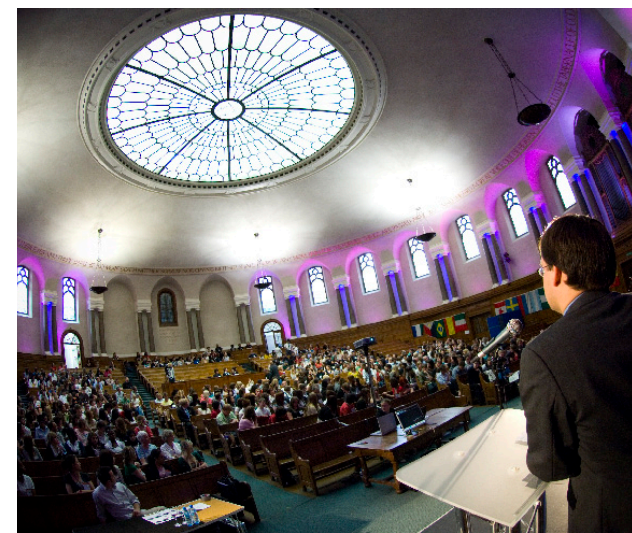
War Child campaigns for policy changes to help many more children than we could possibly hope to work with ourselves. We lobby governments and decision makers and work closely with other charities to ensure issues faced by children living in conflict zones remain on the political agenda.

We also work to raise awareness of the issues with the public in the UK through our Campaigns work and highlighting the work we do in the media.

SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

War Child's Schools Programme, which has been acclaimed in the Times Educational Supplement, aims to promote understanding and concern among students about the needs of people living with conflict-related poverty and highlight the role they can play in helping those people to improve their circumstances.

We produce tailored resources for use in schools under the Citizenship curriculum, introductory assemblies and workshops for students and an interactive online resource site www.angrymob.org.uk



Sir Paul McCartney

"I have been supporting War Child since 1995. Their work with children in war zones saves lives and their work with those who take decisions that help them to do something about it saves even more lives."

Prime Minister, David Cameron

"...protecting children in war zones around the world – there are few more important causes than that."

Chris Martin, Coldplay

"War Child is one of the world's most important charities."

Guy Garvey, Elbow

"War Child do exactly what it says on the tin. These kids shouldn't be in such circumstances in the first place, but they are, so thank God someone's doing something about it."

Farrah, Age 10, Iraq

"Before I wished I could be like other children whose parents give them everything that they want. I dreamt about going to school and learning as others do. Now all my dreams are coming true through War Child's help."

Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell

"War Child has been remarkably successful in representing the interests of the children they work with in some of the worst affected conflict areas, and channelling those interests through to decision makers in a way that compels attention and action. We should be particularly proud of their success in placing the plight of the Democratic Republic of Congo – where more than 2.54 million children have died as a result of war – squarely in the sights of the British Government's overseas development assistance programme."



NOTES TO EDITORS

War Child is a UK registered charity number 1071659
Visit www.warchild.org.uk for up to the minute War Child news and information.

Become a friend of War Child on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/warchilduk

Or follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/warchilduk

CONTACTS

For further information about War Child including case studies, statistics and photos please contact:

Nivi Narang, Campaigns Director, War Child

Email: Nivi@warchild.org.uk

Tel: 020 7916 9276

Address: 5-7 Anglers Lane, London NW5 3DG