

Northwest University

Integrative Project

Redirecting Funds Given Toward Vulnerable Children

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Integrative Project II

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April 24, 2022

Thesis project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in International Community Development.

Author's Note: Some material written in this Thesis was generated from different courses of the MAICD Program: Culture Studies in the Global Context, Social Entrepreneurship, Research for Social Change, Children Poverty and Development, and Community Development.

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Introduction

Children grow best in families. When a baby is born, he is completely reliant on a responsible, loving, adult to ensure he is provided for, loved, nurtured, taught, and protected. As that baby grows, the loving adult continues to be present to guide and teach him. The majority of parents want to be this stable, loving force in their child's life, yet sometimes the impacts of poverty can make a parent unable to meet their child's needs, and too often, as a result, the child ends up in an orphanage. However, with a small amount of help, that separation can be avoided, and the child can remain with his family and have the chance to live a full and stable life.

To ensure children have an opportunity to experience a fuller life, American donors must redirect their giving toward family preservation and away from orphanages. The vast majority of children living in institutions have at least one living parent but are living in an orphanage because of poverty. Orphanage life is not the best for children due to the mental, physical, and emotional distress it causes, yet Americans donate billions of dollars every year toward orphanages ("Residential Care"). Orphanages are not ideal and parents in developing countries instinctively know that. Based on lessons learned through qualitative research in Honduras, parents do not desire to relinquish their children. There are family preservation organizations doing great work, but donors are unaware. This thesis will discuss how orphanages continue to proliferate and ways for churches and family preservation organizations to redirect funding toward more helpful approaches.

Colton

Twelve years ago, a baby was born in a garden outside a hut in Southern Ethiopia. His mother loved him but knew she could not keep him since she was already a single mother of a two-year-old. Her

husband had recently left her, and she did not have the means to provide for two children. She had to make the decision to a) keep both children and potentially watch them starve to death, or b) place one of them in an Ethiopian orphanage with the hope of 'a better life'. She chose the second option and that is how I now know her. My husband and I adopted that boy and will forever have a deep connection with his mother, Alemitu. We met her in the summer of 2010, in a guest house in Addis Ababa, the capitol of Ethiopia. She had to travel to the city to officially sign away her rights as his mother, not by choice, but because there was no other way out. Since then, I have been on a journey to discover ways to decrease the number of women who must make this impossible choice.

As a thriving 12-year-old in Ohio, one could argue that our son, Colton, has indeed been given 'a better life', but what if he had not been adopted? What if he had been raised in an orphanage until he aged out at 18? International adoptions are becoming increasingly more difficult to perform, yet children are being placed in orphanages at the same or greater rates.

History

Orphanages can be traced back to the Middle Ages. Homes for abandoned children were set up by the Church in Italy (Pinheiro 178). The purpose behind them was to get unwanted or abandoned children off the streets, an 'out of sight out of mind' solution to the problem. The idea of institutions grew as colonialism spread to poorer countries. The intention was to "rescue poor children from their families-often judged to be delinquent or depraved-and protect them in residential institutions" (Pinheiro 179). This idea of poor people not being fit to raise their own children because of poverty is an idea that continues to permeate the 'need' for orphanages.

In an interview with Tara Garcia, director of Identity Mission in Honduras, we discussed the origin and proliferation of orphanages. She explained that based on her experience in Honduras, it is rarely a Honduran church that opens an orphanage, rather "it's always American or European churches

that start them. It's a western mindset" (Garcia). She went on to describe that "families are very willing to take care of children. We need to get back to that communal attitude". This communal attitude of 'it takes a village to raise a child' is integral in many of the developing countries and the research backs it up. Faith to Action, an organization that helps American churches better serve orphans and vulnerable children, has found that "findings consistently show that most parents, when presented with some support from the community, government, and/or social services, would resoundingly choose to keep their children at home" ("Children, Orphanages and Families" 16). So why has there been a turn toward institutionalization?

Unfortunately, orphanages are the prevailing solution for children in crisis no matter if the child has lost both parents, one parent, or neither parent. Institutions should be "an option of last resort" (Children: The Hidden Pandemic 24), but when a global crisis emerges, like AIDS, Ebola, earthquakes, COVID-19, or conflict; all of which contribute to extreme poverty, an orphanage is built, even though there are often extended family members who would take in the children if given some assistance. Sadly, the old saying 'if you build it they will come' is all too true in the context of orphanages. Tara Livesay, director of Heartline Ministries in Haiti, writes about the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in 2010. Families were left destitute and living in the streets. Well-intending Christians heard about the crisis and orphanages became the answer. Aid flooded in to help these children and "what should have been a short-term emergency response to help vulnerable children separated from their families became a permanent-and devastating- solution" (Livesay).

Thesis research confirmed what Tara Garcia was saying. Governments and locals do not often open new orphanages. Rather, they are planted by churches and NGOs from other countries, specifically countries that have "justifiably phased out" the use of orphanages on their own soil (Cantwell and Gillioz 3). Americans have phased out the use of orphanages in the US but continue to give vast amounts of money to support them in other countries. This seems problematic, but Faith to Action's research

suggests that those who give financially to support orphanages abroad do not tend to think critically about their donations and are unaware of the negative ramifications to a child's emotional, social, and physical health by growing up in an orphanage ("Residential Care"). In general, American Christians do not critically evaluate their donations. This paper will examine ways to confront that tendency by explaining the negative effects of institutionalization, while also offering alternative approaches for vulnerable children. I will offer research-based evidence for American churches, NGOs and donors who should redirect their funding away from orphanages and toward family preservation as the preferred alternative to orphanage life. Concerned individuals, churches, and NGOs must focus their giving more on proactively keeping families together, rather than retroactively caring for children who have had to be relinquished.

A Better Life?

Children are born with the right to not just survive, but to thrive. Orphanages may provide some aspects of survival; like meals, shelter, clothing, and schooling. These are the driving forces that 'pull' a child toward an institution, known as "pull factors" (De Silva and Punchihewa 54). This is why parents often mistakenly believe that by relinquishing the care of their child to an institution, they will be giving their child 'a better life'. When a parent is living in extreme levels of poverty, like Alemitu, they think an orphanage would be a better option than what they are able to provide.

Stephen Ucembe, who lived in an orphanage in Kenya from age five to eighteen, looked back on his time in that orphanage and said, "no child with living, loving family members should ever be trapped in an orphanage like I was, or forced to choose between family and education or material support" (Ucembe, "Christians Must Help"). Yet it continues to happen. In the world today, 80% of children living in an orphanage have at least one living parent (Csaky vii). These children are known as 'poverty orphans', meaning their parents are unable to provide the necessities of life and therefore placed the

child in an institution. An institution will possibly meet those physical and educational needs (though certainly not always), but the detrimental effects that orphanage life can have on a child's social, emotional, and cognitive development cannot be ignored ("Children, Orphanages and Families" 5).

Many children, like Stephen Ucembe, quoted above, are recipients of these physical and educational aids. So why does Ucembe write that no child should be "trapped in an orphanage"? Typically, orphanages leave one with a feeling of solitude, though the children are rarely afforded any 'alone time'. Even if the rooms are well-lit, they still feel dark, intimidating, and dreary. Children are group-fed on a schedule, diapers are changed on a schedule (rather than as needed), and little attention is paid to a child's individual growth needs. Gates surround the building to keep unsafe people out, but they also work to keep the children inside the compound, leading to a prison-feel. Cribs are lined up like feeding troughs and there is always a stench of diapers that need to be changed or clothes that need to be washed. Children cry but the overworked and underpaid nannies do not have the time or the desire to respond. Eventually, the babies stop crying, not because they are satisfied but because they are losing hope that anyone will care for them. This loss of hope leads to great emotional stress and will most likely lead to significant emotional deficits. Older children run to short-term mission teams looking for hugs and attention but running to a stranger for affection is a sign of serious emotional trouble.

Emotional issues are just one of many negative effects of children growing up in institutions. The ACE's (Adverse Childhood Experiences) that are compounding upon these children will have short-term and long-term consequences (Anda). Research shows that "institutional care is detrimental to the cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and social development of young children" (Mutenyo et al. 1). Babies who give up crying because they know their needs will not be met, and children running to strangers so they can receive some physical contact are both examples of these negative effects on emotional and social development. The negative impacts of institutional life are varied and numerous and in some cases will impact children for the rest of their life. The physical needs being met do not supersede the

emotional needs being unmet. However, the orphanage model continues to proliferate. If American donors knew about the negative impacts, they might be more likely to look for other approaches to aid vulnerable children around the world.

Negative Impacts: Mental

The mental impacts that occur to children in orphanages must be shown to the American donor. Children living in orphanages end up with a lower IQ and intellectual delays (Van Ijzendoorn et al. 342) and “very significant deficits in cognitive development” (Mutenyo et al. 1)). This is very likely caused by an orphanage’s lack of toys, individual attention from adults, and intentional one-on-one educational time. Babies babble and search for eye contact. When there is a lack of eye contact, the “essential neurological processes within the brain are sometimes never triggered” (Csaky 6) which can “result in damage to brain development” (“Children, Orphanages and Families” 7). A healthy baby is very active in her own intellectual development. She will investigate everything that comes her way (usually by putting it in her mouth). She will stare at something new and will pick up anything she finds and examine it fully. Babies in an institution do not have those options. Intellectual development is rarely the top priority of the workers. The children spend significant amounts of time in their cribs with a “vacant stare” because they “have already become habituated to the novelty of the non-interactive soft toys left with them and any pictures on otherwise blank walls” (Brown 9). When children are under stimulated mentally, they will likely be behind their peers all through their educational career.

Children in institutions also deal with an unhealthy amount of stress, due to the complete lack of control over anything in their life. The sustained levels of stress experienced by a child living in an institution will weaken their psychological development. Education expert, Paul Tough explains that “stress, especially in early childhood, hinders the development of a child’s prefrontal cortex, the part of

the brain that controls our subtlest and most complex intellectual functions” (Tough 20). The stress literally prevents the children from fully developing mentally and emotionally.

Negative Impacts: Social/Emotional

Children living in orphanages also experience social stunting, which must be communicated to American donors as well. Orphanages are often located on the outskirts of town, or at the very least are gated with no opportunities for the children to socialize with children other than the ones with whom they are living. This is detrimental as “children’s feelings of confidence and self-esteem are particularly reinforced by opportunities to meet together and develop solidarity with other children” (Ray 32). They are excluded from the benefits of family and community relationships, therefore losing the opportunity to learn key social conventions (Ucembe 19). They do not see a typical family dinner. They do not have a parent to rock them to sleep when they are sick. They do not have a trusted adult to work through the trauma they experienced in life. When they age out of the institution, they do not know how to handle money, how to cook, or how to navigate an independent life (Csaky 2). A family is the “child’s primary socializer, providing context for learning coping and problem-solving skills that are necessary for life success” (Miles and Wright 131). When a child does not live with a family the opportunity for learning these life skills is diminished and effects can be felt for the rest of their lives. Therefore, funding must go toward investing in families to help them support their children and away from institutions.

The emotional health of a child is also stunted in an institutional setting. When I visited an orphanage in Haiti, I distinctly remember a teenage boy practically begging me to adopt him. I doubt I was the first person he had approached with that request. It is difficult to put oneself in that situation and feel what he must have felt. How many times had he asked a stranger to take him in, accept him, guide him, and love him? How many times had he heard ‘no’ or ‘I wish I could but I can’t’, or even worse, ‘Ok I’ll try!’ only to never hear from that person again? These are the experiences that build up

like plaque and reinforce the feelings of not being good enough or acceptable or loveable. Children who grow up in institutions are at risk of physical and sexual abuse because they crave attention and affection from others that was left unmet (Brown 17). They are also more likely to be homeless, become teenage parents, have greater levels of unemployment, and exhibit antisocial behavior (Ucembe 5). They are more emotionally vulnerable, so they are more likely to cling to adult attention and are unable to discern when that adult is unsafe. Childhood is a period that requires love, attention, guidance, and support. When those are all missing or in very low supply, the lifelong ramifications are in many cases, irreparable.

Negative Impacts: Physical

Children in orphanages are also in poorer physical health. While we waited for all the paperwork to go through for our adoption, we would constantly receive notices of upper respiratory infections that he was continuously dealing with. Every baby in his room went through having chickenpox because of the “swift spread of infection in any crowded residential setting” (Pineiro 179). The cribs being lined up back-to-back lead to greater infection rates. Additionally, most children stay indoors (especially babies), which inhibits the development of the immune system (Brown 10). Spending careless days outside with germs and dirt is the traditional way for kids to build strong immunities (as well as learn and discover things in nature), and institutionalized children rarely get this chance.

Not only do children get sick more often, but they also lag behind other children in their physical development. Compared to non-institutionalized peers, they “show a typically short height, low weight, and small head circumference” (Mutenyo et al. 1). As these are the very measurements doctors use to determine if a child is thriving, this demonstrates how physically detrimental institutional life can truly be. Early childhood stunted growth “has significant impacts on cognitive development and children’s abilities to learn in school” (Dornan 2). Child development expert Angela Oswald writes, “it’s like children

have a window of opportunity when they are ready to grow in certain ways if they have the right stuff and tools in their environment. When that window closes, it will never be as easy to grow in those ways again” (gulfbend.org). Small children growing up in an orphanage will most certainly not have the ‘right stuff and tools’ to grow to their fullest potential.

The negative impacts are numerous and this paper only seeks to establish that fact quickly and then move on to ways to redirect the billions of dollars donated to institutions every year. Yet first, the question must be asked, ‘why do orphanages continue to be built if the negative impacts are so widely known?’.

Orphanages continue to proliferate

What follows is an in-depth study into why orphanages are continuing to be the solution for orphaned and vulnerable children. Megan Pratt, who has worked for both World Vision and Faith to Action, emphatically told me that “there doesn’t need to be any more research on the impact of institutionalization on children” because the research has been done. As this paper has already discussed, research continues to show the detriments to a child living in an institution rather than a family. Orphanages are not helping children, yet they continue to be built. Faith to Action and the Barna research group found that American Christians are donating \$3.3 billion toward institutions every year (“Residential Care”). If the research has already been done, and the information has been made available to all who care to notice, then why are donors still sending this astronomical amount of money to something that has been proven harmful for children? And further, what would help redirect that funding to more effective models of family care?

Children as commodities

One reason is because there is a business side to orphanages. An experience with an ‘orphan’ child is something that can now be bought and sold. Churches go on short-term mission trips to ‘love on

orphans' overseas, or 19-year-olds take a gap year between high school and college to serve in an orphanage. This has become known as 'voluntourism' (volunteer tourism) and is becoming more prevalent in recent years. Because of a lack of education, and the fact that poverty has been sensationalized, well-meaning do-gooders have a desire to serve overseas and find the idea of cuddling an orphan as a great opportunity. Cantewell and Gillioz explain that the money comes in easily because of the "charitable compassion that 'orphans' arouse" (4), which serves as an incentive to not only keep orphanages open but also to build more. This becomes an issue of supply and demand. The influx of volunteers works to increase the demand for orphans which "incentivizes those involved in the orphanage industry to bring children from villages to orphanages in the city and tourist areas" (Havens 9). The people who benefit most from these volunteer trips are rarely the children, but "rather the owners of the residential care facilities, their employees, tourists and volunteers, and the state" ("Kenya's Overreliance on Institutionalization" 11). Children should never be a commodity that is used to bring in money.

Another hurtful side effect of the voluntourism industry is the negative emotional consequences that befall the 'orphan'. When groups visit, the children are often portrayed as "objects of pity: 'deficient' and 'helpless', 'impoverished', 'inferior', 'traumatized' and 'abandoned' (Ucembe 18), sometimes even forced by the orphanage directors to look pitiful in the hopes that more money will be donated. Children are photographed (usually without permission) and "used to influence some cause" which is "patronizing" (Hart, 9). I distinctly remember crying when I visited an orphanage in Ethiopia. What does it do to a child that a stranger cries when they see you? I can imagine the hurt, pain, and smallness they feel every time they are paraded in front of a new group of pitying volunteers. Continuing to produce tears in a stranger will chip away at whatever is left of a child's self-esteem.

The increase in volunteers brings with it potential danger for vulnerable children. First and most commonly, the constant stream of foreign faces gives rise to attachment disorders as well as "a feeling

of serial abandonment among children” (Cantwell and Gillioz 6). The adults shower attention on them for a few days and then leave, bringing about fresh experiences of rejection. Perhaps more frightening is the lack of regulation and open access that volunteers have regarding the ‘orphans’. Researchers with UNICEF interviewed past volunteers and found that they had “large amounts of access to children, dressing them after baths, feeding them, and giving them hugs” (“With the Best Intentions” 26), with no background checks. American parents would never allow a stranger to have that access to their own child in these ways, so why is it acceptable to fund and engage in these experiences elsewhere?

This was the type of trip I was on when I visited the orphanage in Haiti. Back then I was unaware of the social and emotional ramifications of smiling adults handing out candy and leaving after seven days, never to be seen again. My time in Haiti was spent handing out toys, painting fingernails, decorating for Christmas, and repainting a stairwell that most likely had been painted by teams every year. I have a deep love and compassion for hurting children and would never intentionally cause more harm to their already fragile emotional health, yet my presence did exactly that. I believe the churches and NGOs that send out teams also have a deep love and compassion for hurting children, but because of lack of education they are creating “more demand for institutionalized care” (Cheney and Rotabi 104). There are ways to have a volunteer experience that does not put children in jeopardy which will be discussed later.

Parents are not given a voice

Another reason orphanages continue to exist despite all the trouble they cause is because the poor have started to believe the story they have been told. They have started to see themselves as objects of pity. I distinctly remember the sick feeling I had in my stomach when I was on a bus in Ethiopia and some people on my mission trip were throwing candy out to children in the streets as a way to ‘love on them’. Does this really communicate love, respect, honor? Does it communicate a

thankfulness of being a visitor in a different culture? If a stranger tried to lure my child into the street with candy I would call the police. Am I a better parent than parents in underdeveloped countries? Certainly not, but “when people are deprived of hope often enough and for long enough periods of time, then a community’s culture itself gets hijacked...tell someone they aren’t valuable or important and, in time, far too many of them will begin to believe it” (Bryant 15).

This may be what has happened to families in the Global South. They have started to believe that they are unable to raise their own children. In Bryant Myers’s book, “Walking With The Poor”, he writes about the identity crisis that has occurred in the poor. The Global North has attempted to bring development, help, and aid to the Global South which has had some unforeseen effects. The outsider ends up being a type of “development santa claus” (Myers 113) who brings all good things from the outside. The poor then start to think they are without hope and without purpose. Hope does not come out of pity; hope comes out of understanding your identity and value. Myers also writes that “the poor suffer from a marred or diminished identity and degraded understanding of their vocation. The non-poor on the other hand, suffer from an inflated sense of identity and vocation” (178). This discrepancy is seen again and again in the world of orphan care. The poor start to believe that an institution funded by an American church can do a better job raising their children, which is very much not the truth.

Americans like to help ‘orphans’

When I spoke with Alycia Pinizzotto, who runs Story International, a family preservation organization in Guatemala, we spoke about the need to change the American donor perspective in their giving to children overseas. Her organization had shifted from an orphanage model to a family care model, and they had a hard time convincing some of their donors this was a better way. She told me that “people might not be self-aware enough to voice it themselves but they like the emotional connection with one child”. The sadness the American donors feel when they hear of a child in an

orphanage “draws them in” (Pinizzotto). The job of family preservation organizations is to help connect the dots and encourage American donors to have a more critical approach toward their giving. It seems overly simplistic, but donors must recognize that if a child in an orphanage is sad, then they should redirect the donations toward keeping children in a family and out of an orphanage.

This simplistic but integral aspect is missing. In Ghana, researchers studied the issue of reunification, which is the attempt to get children back into their families and out of an institution. The authors interviewed a social worker who shared the challenges because of the lack of funds given toward families. “We have donors who helped the orphanage take care of the children. After we sent the children home, we wanted the donors to continue helping the children. Unfortunately, the donors made us aware that they will only support the children if they are in the orphanage. So, the moment the children went to their parents, they withdrew their support” (Frimpong-Manso and Bugyei 370).

This thesis will attempt to build blocks toward changing the donor’s mindset. These factors that contribute toward orphanages can be seen with a positive perspective. American donors feel a responsibility to help vulnerable children around the world. This can be clearly seen through the vast amount of money contributed toward institutions every year. However, the issue arises that Americans (because of the ‘santa claus’ mentality referenced by Bryant Myers) have not stopped to ask how the poor would solve this problem. Family preservation organizations are finding however, that once they can help the donor see the benefits of family and help them become emotionally connected to the community and not just the child, then “they’re donors for life because they understand the long-term impact and they’re all in” (Pinizzotto).

A Shift in the Donor’s Mindset

American Christians must be shown that children are in orphanages because orphanages sell. The shift must occur to help family preservation sell. Donors should be made aware of mothers who

want to provide for their families but need a slight bit of assistance. I distinctly remember talking with a mother in Ethiopia who stood out from among the crowd because she was driven to provide for her children. I was doing a focus group with about 20 mothers whose kids were recipients of a free breakfast and lunch program at their school. All these mothers are miserably poor and barely surviving. None of the mothers were currently working. They had been beat down to the point where they no longer saw themselves as having value or purpose. The majority were waiting for me to just hand them money, but this one mother was begging for investment. From the back of the room she yelled, "if I had startup money I could start a business and do anything". Jemanesh, the school director, said later that "the problem is working on their [the mothers'] mind, and that will change their behavior. Money doesn't do anything if you don't know how to deal with it". She said all the mothers in the room "need training and could work but people are waiting and expecting a handout. We need to change that". Steps must be taken to preach the message that "God values them as much as God values the non-poor" (Myers 170). Rather than being told about ways to support a child in an orphanage, people in churches need to hear about families who just need investment to be able to give their kids what they need for a full and healthy life.

The urgent need vulnerable children are facing is being "mishandled, overlooked, or ignored" (Bornstein and Davis 30) and the woman in Ethiopia was willing to take risks and make mistakes to see what else could work. That attitude is not as common as it should be in the developing countries because the poor have been beaten down by well-meaning NGOs and churches who thought they knew what was best. The organizations have not stopped to truly seek to understand the "end user" (Kelley and Kelley 68). In this case, the end user is the family who feels they have no other choice but to relinquish the care of their child to an institution.

Attached to this thesis is a marketing campaign that can be used by any organization that is trying to raise funds for family preservation. Family sponsorship and community development does not

sell in the way 'orphans' sell. My personal theory is that much of the \$3.3 billion coming from the US and going toward orphanages is given by Christians who are picturing these 'poor orphans' as their own children. Therefore, the solution is to help donors shift their perspective. When they picture the 'orphan' child, they are picturing their own child and would never want their child to live on the street fending for himself. They may even have a physical picture on their refrigerator of 'their' child. Much would change if the donor's perspective could be shifted away from the 'orphan' and toward the loving mother or father, thereby placing the donor in the role of a friend/sister/neighbor. The idea from Kelley and Kelley about empathizing with the end user is a key component to this redirection. The donors must gain empathy toward the parents. The poor are not poor because they are stupid or lazy. They are not relinquishing their children because they are mean or uncaring. Yet American donors might think these things because they have not experienced the life of an impoverished single mother in a developing country. Kelley and Kelley write that "when you specifically set out to empathize with your end user, you get your own ego out of the way" (85). The end user should be the family, not just the 'orphan' child.

The attached marketing campaign aims to shift that perspective toward the mother. The campaign can be used by churches and NGOs in the US and will attempt to get the donors to consider the mother as someone who is just like her. That mother loves her child and wants what is best for her. There will be stories of family sponsorships or other family-focused campaigns that will exhibit the power of keeping families together. I have suggested the campaign be used around Mother's Day to solidify the role of the mother even more clearly and to prevent any ideas in the donor's head that this child is a true orphan.

A Better Approach

If the billions of dollars given every year toward orphanages were redirected, the potential for children to stay with families and avoid all the negative effects of institutionalization is worth working

toward. Families often need help. As explained above, there are 'pull' factors vulnerable parents feel toward an orphanage. Parents often feel like they cannot provide an education, health care, food, and shelter so they relinquish their children to an institution. Yet there are organizations in the world which are helping these at-risk parents to provide those 'pull' factors in their own homes. If a child can receive everything the orphanage will provide yet without all the mental, emotional, and physical detrimental effects, then it is worth collaborating with all the stakeholders in a certain context to make that happen.

Fieldwork-Honduras

A better approach is what I sought to understand during my fieldwork in Honduras. I arrived in Honduras in the summer with a question. My research question was focused on the 'pull factors' mentioned above. How can community developers empower vulnerable families to provide for their own children? I wanted to know what type of family preservation programs exist that can be implemented to reduce the number of children in residential care. Authors of 'Qualitative Research', Merriam and Tisdell encourage researchers to find the "thing you are curious about" (77) and that took me to Honduras to work with an organization called Casa de Luz (CdL). I spent ten days living and working with Valerie Schubert, who is CdL's president. Casa de Luz is an organization that aids vulnerable families in many ways. She is passionate about keeping kids with their families and out of residential care and I was lucky to be able to glean much wisdom from her during my time there.

My approach toward this question required qualitative research methods. In the area of orphan and vulnerable children, I find that the quantitative research is out there already. Quantitative data teaches that the vast majority of children living in orphanages have at least one living parent (Williamson and Greenberg 8). That is the 'what' of the problem. My time in Honduras was spent learning the 'why' of the problem. I needed to understand and investigate "people's constructions of reality-how they understand the world" (Merriam and Tisdell 243). Of course, this construction of reality

may differ from one cultural context to another, but it is still necessary to learn from the vulnerable families themselves.

Using qualitative research methods, I observed, interviewed, and sought to understand many people involved in CdL. I spent many hours with the teachers, the parents, and the children in the program. I learned of the numerous ways CdL comes alongside families. The initial design was to provide free childcare for working mothers, therefore freeing them up to be able to work during the day. However, that morphed into an early start tutoring program for two and three-year-olds. One of the teachers, Nicole, told me that she used to work at a public school and the difference is vast. For example, when her public school would receive donations, they would keep them rather than passing them out to the kids. "It happens all the time", she explained. This information about the corruption in public schools is just one example of the insights that came through this qualitative research because of the time spent interacting with people like Nicole.

Casa de Luz also provides 'school for parents', which are parenting classes that address issues like eating habits, bedtimes, and appropriate TV viewing habits for children. Daniella is another teacher at CdL and leads the school for parents. She explained that many of the parents do not know certain aspects of parenting because they were never taught. During the parenting classes she will address issues like food and sleep, because "the kids drink coke all day and go to bed at midnight". She will also focus on ways to deal with kids in a more loving and healthy manner. She told me of a mom who complained that her son could not read. Daniella responded, "that's weird because he was just reading with me. And actually, he told me he doesn't like to work at home because you yell at him". This would be a very strong statement to make for a teacher in the US, but because of the love, trust, and kindness that CdL has built up, the parents are receptive. The mother told Daniella, "you're right I do yell", which led to Daniella to giving this mother some tips. The parenting classes have been proven to successfully help parents avoid feeling overwhelmed, which could lead to them deciding to relinquish their children.

Valerie explained many of these aspects of Casa de Luz when we first spoke. She said they asked themselves “how can we keep the parents from not abandoning their children?”. They found that providing food was “a huge financial help”. They continued to come across women who told them, “I can’t feed my kid and I have no place to put my kid while I’m working”, so CdL provided childcare for families who are working. They also found that many parents were illiterate, therefore preventing them from helping their child in school, so CdL provides free ‘head start’ types of programs. Beginning at age two, they teach them their colors, how to hold a pencil, and how to write their letters.

I was able to interview 12 mothers who have benefited from CdL’s various services. They all are receiving support from CdL by way of free childcare while they work hard to keep their kids fed, clothed, healthy and educated. These mothers had hope due to the assistance and empowerment they have experienced from Casa de Luz. As the poor often have a deflated sense of identity resulting from struggling their entire lives, these parents had been given help and were seeing success. They all wanted the best for their children and had the same dreams for them that I have for mine. They had hope that their children would graduate from high school and college, marry someone wonderful and have their own beautiful family someday. They no longer were feeling the pull factors of an orphanage because they were finding that with a little bit of help they could provide those factors themselves, along with the factors of parental love that an orphanage can never give.

The organization has supporters from all over the United States who have realized that providing childcare, food, and academic enrichment to children is a way to care for the vulnerable and keep them with their families. The American donors have been convinced, through the stories told of families preserved, that this is an effective way to bring hope, healing, and self-sufficiency to a developing country. Through stories told by Valerie and her team, supporters have begun to identify with the parents. They see that parents are very willing and very able to raise their children when given a small step up.

Ways to Prevent Institutionalization

One of the main pillars of the ICD program is to help learners see that context matters. The 'perfect' solution for every context will depend on that context, so developers have a myriad of options for co-creating solutions. As developers and other stakeholders in the field continue to see the problems with institutionalization and begin to address the issues that are creating a false 'need' for institutions, then they will look to other options and may come up with something completely new and revolutionary for their context.

Context is key and developers have huge potential to fail in their attempts if they forget that. In an interview with National Public Radio, John Donnelly spoke about this need for context when asked why he said that American Christians are often "people with big hearts and big ideas, but without much else". He responded that over and over again, "Americans feel like they know better than people in different countries in Africa. And they feel like they've made money. They've put together programs. They've been successful in their communities, and so therefore it should work" ("Missionaries in Africa"). The aid industry is huge with more than \$100 billion going toward Africa every year (Abuzeid), yet there is not much to show for it. The lack of contextual consideration plays a big part in the huge donations leading to few lasting results.

Presently, there is a charity for anything you can think of, yet there are still millions of orphans, millions of people living in squalor, millions of children dying of (completely preventable) malaria and diarrhea (Billings 42). This leads to natural questions of why? Why are billions of dollars given to help children and it is not helping? Development work is too valuable a vocation for it to end up being a waste of time. It is tragic that "so much well-meaning compassion [does] not bring results for needy people" (Easterly 4). Developers must look at this situation and ask ourselves why we are not seeing any results and what are the necessary changes?

Often, better solutions are occurring in other countries (like Honduras), but people are unaware. A great first step would be to increase the volunteer opportunities for Americans overseas which have a family preservation focus, rather than an orphanage tour. This will serve two purposes. First, Americans will still be able to have that experience, which is something they clearly desire. Second, they will experience community development and will change their giving away from orphanage and toward development. Organizations must see the desire for people to volunteer and work toward providing ethical alternatives to orphanage volunteering. ACCI Relief provides some great ideas, such as “volunteer within family reunification programs”, and “volunteer in a program that seeks to preserve families and prevent separation” (“Ethical Volunteering”). When the volunteers return home, their chances of giving toward family preservation will increase as they have experienced it first-hand.

Searchers

In effective community development, the first requirement for coming up with contextual solutions is to locate what NYU Professor and former World Bank economist William Easterly refers to as Searchers versus Planners. Planners are the people at the top who sit far away from the problems “dreaming up large scale solutions” while Searchers are on the ground, personally interacting with the people in need “designing tailored solutions” (Woodworth 3). Naturally, these Searchers will have a more intimate understanding of the nuances in their culture. There are many problems around the world and “social problems are better solved as close to the action as possible by innovators who try and fail and try again” (Myers 36).

The first step is to locate people in the context who are willing to address these needs in a new way. As David Bornstein and Susan Davis write in *Social Entrepreneurship*, development “typically grows out of one person’s direct interaction with a problem and a simple question: ‘Hey, what if we tried X?’”

(34). They go on to point out that, “while conventional entrepreneurs can build upon well-established business models, social entrepreneurs often forge ahead without road maps” (57). This is the Searcher mentality required in the field of vulnerable children. The conventional orphanage model is not working. Fortunately, there are people willing to look past that traditional model and find new ways to strengthen families. Searchers can be the development professionals, the local leaders, or the parents. The background for each might be different, but the bottom line is they can see a better way and are willing to work with others to make that better way a reality.

Tara Livesay is one of those people. She and her husband, Troy, have worked tirelessly in Haiti to keep families together. She is a Searcher and found that in Haiti, “moms give birth, go home to their small house, put the baby down and go back to the massive amount of work it takes to live in Haiti. They haven’t learned about skin-to-skin contact or bonding. Then when things get hard, since they haven’t done that bonding, they are willing to relinquish” (Livesay). This led them to become directors of a relationship-based maternity center, Heartline Ministries, where Tara works as a midwife. She has found that in her context, promoting maternal bonding is the best orphan prevention. She told me that they have delivered over 1,000 babies and to her knowledge only one has been relinquished to an institution.

Programs such as Heartline Ministries, and Casa de Luz are working. These “early childhood development centers, parenting support groups, livelihood support, and services that mitigate the negative impacts of poverty, have been shown to have long-lasting gains” (“Children, Orphanages and Families” 7). The women I met in Honduras are committed to their children, they know they are loved and valued, and they are learning parenting skills. The women in Haiti are given time with their babies. They are bonding and experiencing care, love, and help at a time when they need it most and would not receive it otherwise. When these initiatives are given funding, the families are maintained, and the children are given opportunities to thrive.

Life Cycle Approach

Often children are placed in an institution, parents relinquish control completely and no plan is put in place for reunification. One way to preemptively prevent this from happening is through the life cycle approach, which is a holistic view of child development from birth through adulthood. Social workers help parents to address “specific vulnerable periods at which child development may be affected and identifies specific interventions that focus on eliminating these problems” (Miles 307). Or put another way by World Vision, “a life cycle perspective gives attention to the special needs of girls and boys at each stage of development” (“Child Well-Being” 6). If done well, this would work with babies (before they are even born), starting kids out with proper nutrition and health. As the baby grows, the intervention grows as well, to include social skills, education (in school and life lessons), and ultimately works with this ‘child’ as they are an adult having their own children. This life stage intervention grows and adapts and meets the clients where they are and (ideally) gives them the resources they truly need to see success. This is an effective alternative to orphanages, leading to better outcomes for parental support and child well-being.

Bethany Christian Services is utilizing this approach in their family preservation program. I spoke with Christina Uplinger who works with this program, and she told me that Bethany is doing a good job of holistic care. She explained, “we can’t expect someone to start a business when they’re suffering mental distress because of a crisis in their life. If we can help them with good coping strategies and help them get on their feet then it’ll be more sustainable” (Uplinger). It takes organizations like this, which are working directly in the community and learning what the people need. Then they can help the American donors have a better context for what works in other countries.

Gatekeeping

Another aspect of effective family preservation includes ‘gatekeeping’. Gatekeeping is a way to help struggling families. Unfortunately, there may be abuse, neglect, or extreme and debilitating poverty

in families. Rather than the country's version of children's services coming and taking the children away (and placing them in an orphanage), they could step in and help. Gatekeeping identifies the needs of each family and attempts to assess and aid in those needs, while reviewing the care plans for each specific child (Bilson and Harwin 7). The social worker in charge of gatekeeping would be a Searcher who knows the context, knows the opportunities for help, and knows the families involved. One specific aspect of gatekeeping that is significant is the level of participation that parents have. Parental participation is "considered important in promoting their commitment to, and understanding of, any decisions made" (Bilson and Harwin 14). When there is no family and community support, children end up paying the price.

This approach is similar to a family group conferencing (FGC) model that continued to come up in my research. FGC brings the family together "to work out and implement a plan to safeguard children and their families" (Roby et al. 3). This plan widens the support system around the children. This is what Alycia Pinizzotto is doing in Guatemala. The Story International team works to meet this need because "a lot of families don't have a support system at all" (Pinizzotto). She told me stories of her team providing support and accountability for the families in their organization because they do not get that anywhere else. "We have families who call us for everything- 'my son has a cold, how much of this medicine should I give him?'. They don't have those contacts, so they look at our team for that. We show them that there's somebody who cares if they keep their job and if they treat their kids well". She believes this accountability is more valuable than any physical help they can give them.

There are as many ways to approach this problem as there are families in crisis. This paper does not attempt to provide every answer, because the answer will be different depending on context. I am merely hoping to provide the facts about orphanage life and offer up solutions that are working around the world. Currently, family preservation movements are dwarfed by the orphanage industry, but my hope is that individuals and organizations working in this area will continue to make the switch that will

benefit children, families, and communities. The global humanitarian organization, World Vision, implores community developers to “create the space and opportunities to empower [children] to reach their fullest potential” (Cuevas). Orphanages are not helping children reach their fullest potential, another approach is desperately needed.

The funding is available, it just requires redirection. A loving mother in the US hears about a child in an orphanage and her heart strings are pulled and she is moved to support that child. As the approach changes, the loving mother in the US will hear about a loving mother across the world and she will be moved to support that mother so she can support her own child. This can occur through volunteering trips, marketing campaigns to focus on the parents, and hearing stories from families who have been helped. As funding begins to move toward family preservation, more community development programs will be able to begin and more hope can come to vulnerable families.

Creating a different vision for Alemitu

My son’s birthmother, Alemitu, is still struggling. She is still extremely poor and vulnerable to her husband who has stolen from her, beaten her, and abandoned her many times. They have three sons together and are currently living together with their youngest son in a thatched roof hut sleeping on a dirt floor. This is not the life I wish for Alemitu or her sons. However, there is hope for their family. Jemanesh, the Searcher who runs a school in their village, is helping them. She is running a great school where she loves the children and the families. The nonprofit that I created provides Jemanesh the funds to give the poorest children at the school breakfast and lunch every day. Both of Alemitu’s sons are going to that school because of scholarships that my family provides. Her sons are receiving a stellar education and are being well fed. There is hope for this family. I firmly believe there is hope for all the families like them as soon as well-meaning NGOs and American donors begin to redirect their donations away from institutions and toward families. The benefits to the child, the parents, and the community

could be monumental and world changing. They are worth the consideration and work it will take to change the current 'orphan' care model.

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Appendix-Marketing Campaign to Redirect Funds

Integrative Project Marketing Campaign: Shifting Donors' Perspective

Neiva McKim

Dr. Inslee

Integrative Project 1

December 10, 2021

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Introduction

Eleven years ago, almost to the day, a baby was born in a garden outside a hut in Southern Ethiopia. His mother loved him but knew she could not keep him since she was already a single mother of a two-year-old. Her husband had recently left her, and she did not have the means to provide for two children. The choice she was faced with is nothing we will ever know in the US-will she give her child to an orphanage or watch him starve? She chose the first option and that is how I now know her. My husband and I adopted that boy and will forever have a deep connection with his mother, Alemitu. When we met her in the summer of 2010, it was in a guest house in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. She had to travel to the city to officially sign away her rights as his mother, not by choice but because there was no other way out.

An orphanage should not be the only choice for a mother living in poverty in the Global South, yet because of the donation tendencies of Christians in America, that is the most highly funded option. American Christians must redirect their funding away from orphanages and toward family strengthening organizations. This will prevent children from ever having to enter an orphanage in the first place. In order for this shift to occur, the marketing practice of helping underprivileged children by way of orphanage support/sponsorship in developing countries must change. Rather than portraying children as desperate and without parental care, the marketing must change to celebrate and elevate the role of mothers in these children's lives and in developing countries. Marketing has the opportunity to help American donors reorient their lens to not solely see the need of a single child, but more holistically help the donor see the mother as friend and sister. Through this lens, the donor can see that their impact can be more holistic, caring for family in community, not simply a single child. This marketing campaign can be used by any church or organization that wishes to shift the giving of their donors from orphanages to family strengthening organizations.

Research conducted by Faith to Action shows that American Christians are giving approximately \$3.3 billion annually to residential care (faithtoaction.org). Yet studies continually prove that residential care is not the optimal living situation for children. The CDC reports that “residential care should be understood as an option of last resort, one which generates the worst outcomes at the most expense. To prioritize responses that effectively address children’s best interests, our guiding goal must be ensuring every child has safe and nurturing family-based care” (cdc.gov). Unfortunately, the opposite seems to be true with Christians giving exorbitant amounts of money toward institutionalized living and very little toward keeping children with their biological families.

Why do American Christian donors give more money toward orphanages and less toward family preservation? It is because of their perspective toward the orphan. First of all, Americans must be educated about the fact that the vast majority of children living in orphanages are not true orphans; they have at least one living parent (lumos.org). Second, the perspective must shift. People in the pews think of an orphan and put themselves in the position of that child’s mother (or father). A shift in perspective must occur so that the donor does not think so much about the child, but rather they think about the mother. This will lead to more donations aimed at helping that mother keep her child. This marketing campaign will work to redirect the giving of Christians toward family preservation rather than institutionalization.

Education

The first step in this marketing campaign is education which will be geared toward American Christian donors. Once they are educated in the reality of the ‘orphans’, the orphanages, and the mothers, they may see their giving differently and will likely redirect their donations toward family preservation. This campaign can be used by nonprofit organizations and churches who wish to shift their giving away from orphanages and need to get their congregation on board.

Education about the 'orphan'

American donors must become aware of what the word 'orphan' means. They often understand it to mean that a child's parents have died and the child is living alone and desperately needs help. This is usually not the case. Studies have found that 80% of children in institutions have at least one living parent (Csaky vii). There are a variety of reasons this may be the case, but the most prevalent reason is poverty. A 'poverty orphan' is a child who is living in an orphanage because her parents are too poor to be able to provide the basic necessities of life like food, education, and health care.

This leads into the 'push and pull' factors of institutionalization. According to the Better Care Network, the factors that work to 'push' a child into an orphanage are things like "death of parent/s . . . temporary inability of primary caregivers to cope as well as migration of parent/s or caregiver" (De Silva and Punchihewa 2). The 'pull' factors are those things that work to lure children into an orphanage. De Silva and Punchihewa found that a quality education was the foremost factor that leads parents to relinquish their rights to an orphanage. This is followed by other basic needs such as, "food, water, shelter, clothing, access to health care services, electricity, access to information and materials required for education" (2). These parents are not just people who wish to get rid of their children. They are people who are desperately trying to provide for their children but cannot. These children are not orphans in the traditional sense and should not be treated as such.

Education about orphanages

Once American donors are educated about the facts surrounding the word 'orphan', they next must be educated about orphanages. An orphanage is not a desirable place to spend a childhood. During my fieldwork time in Honduras, I continued to ask mothers what they would tell a friend who was considering placing their child in an orphanage because of poverty. All twelve mothers told me they would advise their friend to not do it. One mother said "I would tell this woman it's not easy but you can

fight to raise your children. But don't let the children go to the orphanage because it will hurt his/her life for the rest of their life". Another told me, "in an orphanage they can provide whatever they need but they forget that a child needs their parents, they need to feel their love and that they are everything to them". One mother went so far as to say she would take the child, "give them to me and I can take care of him or her so they don't have to go into an orphanage". These mothers have probably not read a single study about the downfalls of orphanages but yet they know the problems.

The research has been done and it falls in line with what these Honduran mothers were saying. First, an institution is no replacement for a loving family. Children living in institutions are physically, emotionally, and mentally stunted and are far more likely to have social and behavioral abnormalities ("The Way Forward Project" 23). One of the main reasons parents relinquish their children to an orphanage is because they will get an education, yet research is finding that children living in orphanages end up with a lower IQ and intellectual delays (Van Ijzendoorn et al. 342). Specifically, children who are institutionalized during the first six months of life "suffer long-term developmental delay, leading to a greater probability of antisocial behavior and mental health problems" (Mutenyo et al. 1).

Institutional care is not only stunting children physically, emotionally, and mentally, it is also more expensive than family-based care. The CDC article entitled, "Children: The Hidden Pandemic", explains that orphanages should be "understood as an option of last resort, one which generates the worst outcomes at the most expense" (24). Once you factor in the staffing and upkeep of the building and any other services provided, research consistently shows that "many more children can be supported in family care for the cost of keeping one child in an institution" (Williamson and Greenberg 7). If that money were given to families by more well-paid social workers who deeply understand the ins and outs of a certain community context, then the child would never have to enter the institution in the first place.

Taking a different view of community development would enable the donor to see the possibility that “we are not giving enough attention to how poor people get themselves out of poverty. We always assume that we must do it for them” (Hanlon 382). According to Tara Garcia, who runs Identity Mission in Honduras, “rarely does a Honduran church start an orphanage, it’s always American or European churches who starts them. It’s a western mindset”. Before American donors got involved in providing care for children experiencing poverty in places like Honduras, there was a communal attitude toward raising children. If a parent was unable to care for their child, the rest of the community would help. Then well-meaning people came into the setting without that knowledge and started setting up orphanages. However, our orphanage ideas are not the best way to deal with children growing up in poverty.

Education about mothers of the Global South

This leads to the last bit of education that must happen. We must educate American Christian donors about the truth of the mothers in the Global South who are relinquishing their children to orphanages. I have interviewed mothers who are living in dire poverty in both Ethiopia and Honduras. I have never left those interactions thinking the mothers do not care for their children. In fact, it is the exact opposite. These mothers desperately want what is best for their children. Unfortunately, they are misled just like American donors are to believe that an orphanage is the best option for their child. During fieldwork, when the mothers were asked what their dreams were for their children, their faces lit up and they had much to say about their children becoming engineers, doctors, teachers and someday finding a wonderful spouse and having beautiful children. Those exact same answers could be heard across the US if someone were to ask a typical middle-class mother their dreams for their children. These mothers are just like American mothers, and that must be part of our approach when attempting to redirect Americans’ giving.

A change in perspective

This last bit of education is what will inform the marketing campaign to shift the donors' perspective. Given that many American Christian donors are made up of women from the pews whose hearts cry out for children in need, there is an opportunity from a marketing perspective to shift the lens for the donor to refocus their giving toward the mother. A mother sitting in the pews might instead learn the story of a loving mother who is considering relinquishing her care to an orphanage. The mother in the pew will learn that a) there is a mother in this child's story and b) will consider what that decision would feel like to her, as a mother. With this lens shift, mothers in the pews can make an educated choice to invest in mothers to help them care for their children. The campaign will seek to get rid of what they think they 'know for sure' about these women and will update donors' worldview (Kelley and Kelley 94).

This perspective can be changed. Drawing on prior research, we can assume that by changing how we display the need, we can shift donations since "many scholars proved that charitable causes could be phrased to activate different construal levels" (Gu and Chen 1912). Family preservation organizations can shift the middle-class Christian woman's gaze away from the child and toward the child's mother. When she stops seeing herself as the 'orphan's' mother and starts to see herself as a friend/sister/neighbor to the child's mother, her thoughts, beliefs, and donor actions can change. I have never met a woman who wants to see her friend (who is a good and loving mother) be forced to give her child to a group home. Every woman I know or have ever met would do anything in her power to help that friend or sister keep her child.

This shift is possible and has already been happening when consistent effort and education take place. When I spoke with Alyssa from Story International, I asked her about the organization's shift from an orphanage model to a family preservation model. Specifically, we talked about the tension with

donors who did not want to change their donations to family preservation. She explained that, within her organization, it was a tangible thing to be able to say, “I’m sponsoring this child”. Some people had a hard time getting on board with the new design. Story International kept at it though and eventually were able to help people “connect the dots and see that if it’s sad to put a child in an orphanage then wouldn’t it be good to keep a child out of an orphanage?” (Pinizzotto). This made a huge difference and her donors “became donors for life because they’re more emotionally connected to the work”. This shift must continue to happen so families can continue to stay together and avoid the trauma involved with institutionalization.

How the marketing campaign will look

The marketing campaign will shift the focus away from the ‘sad orphan’ to the loving mother. The picture of a mother in Africa or Latin America or Asia who loves her child will be placed next to a picture of a mother in the US who loves her child. The point to be made is that both women want the best for their children. The ‘best’ is not an orphanage for the mother in the Global North in the same way that the ‘best’ is not an orphanage for the mother in the Global South.

The next step in this campaign is to give examples of family preservation. As I spoke with Megan Pratt, who has worked for World Vision and Faith to Action, she shared the concern that “we say orphanages are bad, but we don’t have tangible ways to show us family care”. If we only give donors the facts about ‘orphans’ and orphanages, we might leave them feeling helpless and they might stop giving altogether. Therefore, the next step is to show positive stories of this non-institutionalization model. Each organization can share examples of mothers who were at risk of relinquishing their child but were helped by donations from their ‘caring sisters’ in the US (again reiterating the perspective of this mom being your sister/neighbor/friend). When I spoke with mothers in Ethiopia about the help they were receiving for their children’s education, they continued to share stories of how much better their child

was doing in school. This type of story will resonate well with mothers in the US because they also care about their children's education.

How the marketing campaign will be used

This campaign will best be used around Mother's Day. That is a time of the year that people in American churches are thankful for mothers and that is a perfect time to bring up this point that mothers in other countries are struggling and need help. This campaign can be used by churches and other nonprofits that focus on family preservation. The pictures of the smiling women will be accompanied by stories of families who are no longer at risk of relinquishing their children. Of course, a similar campaign can be used on Father's Day (focusing on the dads and their kids) and during December when giving increases because of holidays.

Conclusion

Residential care should be the last resort for a child. When a parent places their child into an orphanage, it brings trauma for everyone involved while also decreasing the child's mental, physical, and emotional health and costing more money in the long run. There are better options available for those who want to help these children, but the people with the money are often unaware of those options. Corinna Csaky points out, "private donors are often ignorant of the fact that by supporting residential care they are inadvertently diverting essential resources away from more positive family-based care options" (12). American Christians are donating \$3.3 billion every year. When that \$3.3 billion switches from institutional care to family preservation, lives will be completely changed and entire generations will be uplifted by this financial assistance. By bringing education to the donor and shifting her focus away from the child and toward the mother, she can support families and communities to care for their own children and prevent the trauma and pain of relinquishment. The children will grow up to be better parents to their own children meaning the money given now will go toward healing and change for years

to come. My son's mother could have had options available other than orphanage or death. If given a third option of financial assistance to help her provide for her child, she would have taken it. There are mothers in the Global South who are desperate to keep their children, and by shifting the donation focus, they can have that chance.

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