

Dear Partner,

One year ago the world seemed to be collectively teetering on a precipice. What lay beyond was shrouded in economic uncertainty.

For World Vision—and many others—it looked like the momentum from a global financial freefall could pull us over and down.

Fast-forward 12 months to today. World Vision is still standing at the edge. The danger hasn't past. And our prayers haven't stopped.

But **some remarkable things have happened in the last year.** Things that I never would have dreamed. Things I admit were beyond my faith. Things that can only be attributed to God and His power.

Here are just a few of those remarkable milestones:

#### FINANCIAL

- Our total revenue in 2009 *increased* by 10 percent over 2008.
- Our total overhead rate *decreased* nearly 2 whole percentage points to our lowest ever, 11.4 percent.
- Funds allocated for direct ministry to children and families have *increased* by \$87 million.

#### PARTNERS

- We were joined in 2009 by 111,000 new child sponsors in the U.S., helping us now touch the lives of 3.8 million children through sponsorship worldwide.
- We have welcomed more than 73,000 new donors to our family of more than a million partners.

#### IMPACT

- We oversaw the distribution of more than \$216 million in food grants and 242,000 metric tons of emergency food supplies to ensure that hungry children and families received the nourishment they need.
- We accepted in-kind gifts of brand-new, top-quality products worth \$413 million from generous corporations and manufacturers—items such as seeds, pharmaceuticals, clothing, building supplies, and more to benefit millions of people in need.

**If someone had predicted these numbers a year ago, I would have said one word: *impossible*.**

At that time my focus was singular. You can see it in my 2008 annual letter to you, our donors and supporters:

*"We've taken decisive actions in recent months to cushion the impact of the current [financial]*

*(continued . . .)*

*crisis on the most vulnerable... And now we are tightening our belts—reducing expenses, forgoing pay increases, and making significant operational adjustments so we can dedicate more funding to those who need it most.”*

Our strategy was to cut every expense possible so more funds would be preserved to help vulnerable children and families.

I am so proud of what each and every World Vision employee has helped us accomplish. **We have always been committed to the highest standards of wise and biblical stewardship.** But this year, I asked our employees to take your donations—a sacred trust, belonging to God—and go further, reach deeper, work harder.

Do *more* with *less*. And that’s what they did.

But I believe there were even greater sacrifices made in the last year.

- We have 694,000 faithful child sponsors and thousands of consistently generous donors in the U.S.—many of whom lost their jobs, their homes, and more during this last year. You may be one of them. But **you didn’t give up on the children who depend on you.** In fact, our total number of sponsored children grew by more than 3 percent in 2009. This is remarkable—and it’s nothing less than God’s love and generosity in action.
- Corporations, foundations, government agencies, and major donors—many aware of how the global escalation of food and fuel prices delivers a one-two punch to the poor—were moved to help in unprecedented ways.

These courageous acts of generosity during a time darkened by financial uncertainty are inspiring. These acts speak of a shared compassion *for every child.*

I’d like to think that one year ago, during the time that all of us—our donors, partners, and staff—peered over the precipice, we saw more than our own fears for the future.

We saw *children.* Loved by God, yet forgotten by the world. Vulnerable, yet full of potential.

Together we anchored ourselves more firmly upon God’s promise of sufficiency. And by His grace, together we helped save the lives of countless children and families in the last year.

But we’re still not satisfied. In a world where more than 24,000 children die every day from preventable causes, **we must strive with even greater passion to save more lives** and restore hope where it is threatened by despair.

So we stand here today, still looking out into the unknown. We are resolved that this climate of economic uncertainty must not continue to affect the most vulnerable. And we are grateful for your unwavering support of this mission.

May you feel God’s presence abundantly in the year ahead.



Rich Stearns  
President, World Vision U.S.

