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Christian Children's Fund drops 'Christian' from name

Adelle M. Banks Religion News Service | May. 15, 2009

Christian Children's Fund, an organization that helps needy children across the globe, has decided to change its name to ChildFund International as part of its plan to broaden its outreach.

"We are now part of an alliance of 12 organizations around the world who have the same goal of working to help deprived children in developing countries," said Anne Lynam Goddard, president and CEO of the Richmond, Va.- based charity. "All members of the alliance are taking on the same name, ChildFund."

Goddard acknowledged that "some people are concerned about the name change." But she said some supporters who have phoned and e-mailed the charity have welcomed the new name, saying it is more inclusive.

The charity was founded in 1938 by a Presbyterian minister and originally called China's Children Fund. One of the first organizations to offer "sponsorships" of individual children, it changed its name to Christian Children's Fund when it broadened its work beyond China. The new name change will take effect on July 1.

Goddard said CCF had not offered Christian education in its programs since the 1970s.

MinistryWatch.com, a watchdog organization, sent out a "donor alert" in 2004, warning that Christian donors should reconsider giving to CCF because its use of "Christian" in its name was "misleading."

Goddard said the watchdog's concern did not prompt the name change, which had been long considered before a board decision on April 21.

"We have been thinking about this for a while, but not as long as five years," he said. "It does indicate that the name currently is confusing to people."

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