HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

FAAE • NUMBER 060 • 2nd SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Chair

Mr. Dean Allison

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● (1105)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC)): Good morning, everyone.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are resuming our study of the protection of children and youth in developing countries.

To all our witnesses, thanks for coming back. This has got to be like déjà vu for you, showing up again. We'll actually let you testify this time. How does that sound? Why don't I start by just introducing people.

We have with us Bryn Styles, who's a trustee from The Rotary Foundation. Welcome. We also have with us Robert Scott, chair emeritus of the International PolioPlus Committee. Welcome, sir. We're glad to have you here. And we have Wilfrid Wilkinson, the past international president of Rotary International. It's great to have you here as well. Then we have John Button, the president of Kiwanis International. Thank you for returning again today. We have Debra Kerby, president and chief executive officer of Canadian Feed The Children. And finally we have Sohel Khan, senior program advisor, food security and environmental sustainability, Canadian Feed The Children.

We'll start with opening remarks and once those are done we'll go back and forth among the parties to ask questions over the next hour and a half.

We'll start with John Button from Kiwanis International. Sir, we'll turn it over to you for seven minutes. The floor is yours.

Dr. John Button (President, Kiwanis International): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning. My name is John Button. I am a retired family physician from southwestern Ontario and I'm currently the president of Kiwanis International, a global organization of over 640,000 members in more than 16,000 clubs in more than 80 nations.

We are engaged with our partner UNICEF in a campaign to raise $110 million to eliminate maternal-neonatal tetanus, which tragically and cruelly kills a newborn baby every 11 minutes and a new mother every 25 minutes in the developing world. We are extremely grateful for the generous matching-funds donation of $2.5 million from the Government of Canada, which makes it the largest government donor to our campaign.

Since our partnership with UNICEF began four years ago, we have eliminated maternal-neonatal tetanus from 16 countries; however, 23 remain. We are prevailing. We are now beginning to see some unexpected but very positive outcomes to our campaign beyond the elimination of maternal-neonatal tetanus. Whole communities in the developing world are being opened up to new health care initiatives, because they see that their babies are no longer dying because of three injections of tetanus vaccine, because of the education of health care workers in safe birthing practices, and because of the women's assertion of their right to access safe health care.

Integrated immunization programs for measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, childhood diarrhea and pneumonia—both leading baby killers—and cervical cancer are being introduced and eagerly embraced. Educational programs on midwifery, hygiene, sanitation, and child care to name a few are being implemented and expanded. As well, we are starting to see something much more subtle and, I believe, something more profound going on.

The first 28 days following the birth of a child are known as the neonatal period. Every day, 70 new mothers in the developing world die during this time. Eighty-nine percent of children in the developing world whose mothers survive this period live long enough to go to school, compared to only 24% of children in the developing world whose mothers die during these critical 28 days. The presence of absence of a father makes no difference.

The loss of a mother has a devastating effect on a family, especially a family in the developing world. The effect on girls is particularly devastating. In most instances the mother, as well as being everything else, is the family's principal breadwinner. So the family’s income is reduced if not lost altogether. School becomes unaffordable and so educational opportunities dry up. The dropout rate soars.

All too often, the end result of all of this for girls is early marriage out of necessity. Every day 39,000 girls are forced into early marriage. That adds up to over four million girls every year. Around the world, there are currently 700 million women living in forced marriages. One third of these marriages occurred before the girl was 15 years old. In the African nation of Chad, seven out of 10 girls are married before they are 15. As well, in Chad, a girl is much more likely to die in childbirth than she is to attend secondary school. Chad is one of the target nations for Canada’s contribution. Child marriage is a human rights violation.

Studies show that immunization leads to improved academic performance. Why? We don't know. But we do know that improved academic performance gives young girls and boys a greater chance of breaking the cycle of poverty, malnutrition, dependence, and child marriage. Interestingly, an increased education leads to a decrease in the fertility rate, which is not such a bad thing in developing countries struggling with population control.

Educated girls are empowered girls, and empowered girls can and will say no. Recently, in a UNICEF journal, I read the story of a 15-year-old girl living in sub-Saharan Africa who was betrothed by her family to a 75-year-old man. She attended school. She was educated. She said no. She rallied her classmates to her cause. They said no. Together, they marched on the village elder's hut and said no, and they prevailed. There was no marriage. That was empowerment. That 15-year-old girl was empowered because she was in school. She was in school because she lived long enough to attend and because her mother could afford to send her. She was there and the money was there because her mother survived the neonatal period because she had been immunized and had had access to safe obstetrical care.

What we Kiwanians started four years ago with UNICEF has taken on a whole new significance in the lives of children, families, and their communities. The elimination of maternal-neonatal tetanus will be our finest accomplishment, but we will have achieved so much more. As they are now, whole new communities in the developing world are opening up to health care and health education initiatives that will improve the lives of children for generations.

They will be raised in healthy and nurturing communities where they will be able to pursue opportunities to grow, to develop, to go to school, to dream, and to succeed. They will be raised in communities where young girls are empowered to learn and have hopeful futures and empowered to say no to forced marriage and the miseries that come with it.

We are advancing Archbishop Tutu's Girls Not Brides campaign. Girls are being empowered to demand access to safe health care and empowered to assert their rights over their bodies. We are transforming societies and how they work.

By choosing to serve the poorest of the poor, we Kiwanians are sending a loud message, a message that says these children and women matter. They have the right to access safe health care and enjoy the benefits that come with it. Women deserve to give birth to healthy babies, and not die because of it. Their babies should not die because they were born, and they deserve the opportunity to live full and productive lives. The accident of geography should not determine a child's destiny.

Kiwanis and UNICEF are wiping maternal neonatal tetanus off the face of the globe. By ridding the world of this vicious killer, we will make history. But we will also be making a more subtle and perhaps far more profound difference. We will be delivering hope. Children will live long enough to be educated. Girls will be empowered to demand their rightful place. We will be changing the way whole societies will function, not only for now but also for generations to come.

We will do it, and I am so proud to be part of it, and I am so proud that my government and my country are playing a leading role.

Thank you very much.

● (1110)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Button.

We'll now turn it over to Mr. Wilkinson, who will have seven minutes, sir.

Mr. Wilfrid Wilkinson (Past International President, Rotary International): Thank you, Chairman Allison.

Members of the committee, Rotary International appreciates this opportunity to provide information about the work of Rotary International and Rotary clubs in Canada to support the study on the situation of children and youth in the developing world, and the role Canada continues to play in the protection of children and youth.

Rotary is a global network of leaders who connect in their communities and take action to solve pressing problems. For the past 37 years, Canadian Rotary clubs and the Government of Canada have partnered effectively to increase the impact of Rotary projects in the developing world through the auspices of the Canadian Rotary Collaboration for International Development, known as CRCID.

CRCID was formed in 1986 as the Canadian Rotary coordinating NGO to help implement the Government of Canada's international development priorities. The projects supported through this collaboration have an estimated value of over $30 million, with over $15 million contributed through Rotary community fundraising efforts and The Rotary Foundation, with the balance provided by the Canadian government.

A proposal for continued partnership between Rotary and the Government of Canada is currently being considered. Rotary is grateful for the opportunity to pursue continued collaboration toward shared development objectives, particularly those which benefit the most vulnerable and at risk.

The building of a school in Nasrat, Afghanistan is a signature project of this collaboration. A two-storey school was built through a partnership of Rotarians in Canada, the United States, Afghanistan, and with the Government of Canada. The school, which was built in 2010, now serves 3,615 boys and girls. An equal number of male and female teachers were hired and trained through the project.

Rotary also has action groups composed of Rotarians who are experts in particular fields and who voluntarily share their expertise to support club and district projects. The Rotary Action Group against Child Slavery features participation of Rotary club members in 65 countries. They create awareness among Rotarians and the general public about the millions of children who are held captive for commercial gain, and help Rotarians take action to protect children through programs, campaigns, and projects. This group participated in a conference about modern slavery organized by Britain's Home Office in January of this year and is also participating in a summit that will be held at the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia, in May, featuring the participation of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

The Rotary Action Group against Child Slavery has supported several shelter and rehabilitation projects in countries such as India, Thailand, and Ghana. Through these projects, rescued children can stay in safety and be trained in vocational skills that will enable them to support themselves independently.

Rotary also has an impressive network of alumnae from our Peace Centers program who represent the world's most dedicated and brightest professionals. For example, one alum is now the Latin America and Caribbean policy director for the International Center for Missing & Exploited Children, based in Brasilia, Brazil. Another founded her own NGO, Children United, which partners with grassroots organizations to fight for the elimination of sexual exploitation of children. One serves as an expert for the gender and children unit of the Office of the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Court and for sexual and gender-based violence for the United Nations Women's Justice Rapid Response team. Still another of our distinguished alumnae is a senior adviser focused on child rights governance for Save the Children in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

These are just a few of the key examples of how Rotary's investment in some of the most talented among our youth is paying off as these outstanding individuals assume key leadership positions and devote their lives to serving others.

Rotary's highest priority, global polio eradication, offers the best example of our collective work to reach every child. We are proud of our long-standing collaboration with the Canadian government on this issue. This global project has revealed what we can accomplish through collective action and partnership and by elevating the projects we undertake to ensure sustainability and maximum impact.

● (1115)

Our partnership with the United Nations agencies, governments around the world, private sector lenders such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and a wide range of other civil society organizations has opened the doors for collaboration in other areas of shared concern, such as those we are addressing here today.

In addition to the more than $1.3 billion that Rotary has spent, Rotarians have negotiated access to children in such places as Sri Lanka, Angola, and Côte d'Ivoire. We have been successful in our efforts to negotiate access because we are part of these local communities. We are neutral, non-partisan, and not affiliated with any religion.

Using a best practice developed in India, Rotarians in Pakistan have established health camps that offer health interventions besides the polio vaccine. These are supported by all Rotary clubs in Pakistan and have been crucial to ensuring continued demand for the vaccine in high-risk communities. Similar health camps have also been set up by Rotarians in Nigeria.

In 2014 Pakistan saw internal displacement of more than one million people. Rotary has funded numerous permanent transit points and mobile health clinics, both with the goal of immunizing mobile populations, including internally displaced persons and migrant populations, to ensure that the disease doesn't spread throughout Pakistan or beyond. These clinics, supervised by the World Health Organization, are staffed around the clock and reach hundreds of children daily.

Rotary has been referred to as the conscience of the global polio eradication initiative in recognition of our work to hold governments accountable. I and my fellow Rotarians Bob Scott and Bryn Styles, who are here with me today, have travelled to Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Chad, and Nigeria, as well as to other donor countries, to meet with the heads of state and provincial leaders to urge them to provide the highest level of attention and oversight to polio eradication activities and ultimately ensure that every child is reached and protected from polio.

This is relevant for this committee because, if we can achieve this for polio, we can do it for a range of other efforts that benefit those most in need of our support.

Again, we thank the committee for this opportunity and we encourage the continued leadership of the Government of Canada in protecting the most vulnerable among us. Please be assured of Rotary's continued commitment to complementing this work when and where possible.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Wilkinson.

Now we're going to turn over to Ms. Kerby.

Ms. Debra Kerby (President and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Feed The Children): Thank you very much.

It's great to be back here. Thank you again for the invitation and the opportunity to appear before the standing committee today.

As a Canadian secular international development agency founded in 1986, Canadian Feed The Children has as its mission to reduce the impact of poverty on children by providing children, parents, local partners, and communities with the resources needed for self-sufficiency and resilience and by strengthening local organizations with a focus on change that benefits children.

Our current countries of focus are Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Bolivia, Haiti, and First Nations communities here in Canada as well. Over the past five years, we've streamlined our development approach and increased our focus on the related issues of education and food security based in strong local capacity building. We have transformed from an agency that historically delivered a wide variety of activities in many countries each year to one that now targets specific outcomes to address broad development challenges and create tangible long-term results using a "theory of change" approach.

As identified by a previous speaker to this committee, CFTC is aligned with UNICEF's vision of the evolution of the child protection sector, characterized by "a move away from addressing child protection issues in isolation to a more holistic approach...with a focus on overall systems strengthening, and addressing social determinants of child protection failings."

CFTC addresses the social determinants of child protection through adequate nutrition in the early childhood and primary school years and access to education, especially for girls. Access to nutritional food and to education is only possible where food security—especially for mothers—exists. Working through women to increase the health and well-being of children is central to our work and to the contribution we can make to the Government of Canada's mandate on maternal, newborn, and child health.

At CFTC, systems strengthening takes place on two levels: through organizational systems development at our global headquarters here in Canada and locally, where we support strengthening of local NGO partners and communities themselves.

In Canada, we are honoured to have been recognized for excellence in good governance and financial transparency, winning the Voluntary Sector Reporting Award for transparency in financial reporting for our annual reports in 2012, 2013, and 2014, as well as for being one of the first non-profits in Canada to achieve Imagine Canada standards accreditation.

In turn, CFTC shares these best practices in governance and financial excellence, as well as technical and capacity building expertise, with our local NGO partners to support their ability to move from dependence to independence. For example, over the last two years local partners in Uganda and Ghana have secured significant levels of institutional donor funding—in the six-figure level—in part through our support for their strengthened governance, financial, and monitoring and evaluation systems, which have allowed them to demonstrate both greater accountability and greater impact.

In 2013, CFTC received a DFATD grant of $2 million for what we call CHANGE—the climate change adaptation in northern Ghana enhanced project. CHANGE has helped to transform the lens through which we view our contribution to child and youth protection. The cross-cutting themes of environmental impact, disaster risk reduction, and gender equity are core elements within CHANGE that help create more resilient and food-secure communities. CHANGE is perhaps the best example of a project in which the interconnections between women's health and participation in the local economy and the resulting positive impact on children's nutrition and health are most evident.

We agree with DFATD's position that if child protection and security issues are not addressed, "investments in health, education, and other areas may not bring lasting improvements." This is why CFTC's programs, especially those that strengthen opportunities for women, are at their heart child-centric. For example, women in one CHANGE focus group, held in early 2013, spoke about growing food insecurity resulting in an increased incidence of stunting and wasting among children and a reduction of meals from three times to twice, and sometimes, to only once a day as a result of a shortage of food or the lack of income to buy it. They also reported reductions in household income as a result of crop failures, leading to their inability to keep their children in school and pay for health insurance. These are all examples of how the changing environment and reduced agricultural production in northern Ghana are directly impacting the safety and protection of children.

Since that time, CHANGE has included women in agricultural training opportunities, given women leadership positions in farmer-based organizations, and granted land to women to grow crops and materials required for agricultural and non-agricultural income generation. Right now in CHANGE communities in northern Ghana, more than 70% of farmer beneficiaries are women, far in excess of the original target of 40%. We have seen a dramatic improvement as well in women's crop yields: from 1 to 2 bags to up to 10 bags per acre, close to a 10-fold increase.

● (1120)

Women are now participating at increasing levels in farming activities. They are gaining the knowledge they need to boost their own productivity and a stronger voice in community economic development. They are being recognized for the value they can contribute to both household and community food security. Most importantly, they are now able to feed their children nutritious food, send and keep them in school, and pay for basic necessities like clothing, repairs to their homes, and health care.

CFTC also supports women's micro-finance groups in Ethiopia and Uganda, where more than 10,000 members, 80% of whom are women, are earning income. These groups offer important channels to ensure that increased household income leads to better nutrition for children. CFTC's local NGO partners are delivering nutrition education to group members, which is designed to ensure that household income directly translates into improved quantity and quality of the food children eat.

We are seeing these efforts pay off. There has been a 73% increase in income among self-help group members, and 93% of those who reported increased income have spent some or all of it on food.

We're also seeing significant progress in our work in first nations communities in Canada, where we started with breakfast and lunch programs and now are rolling out community-led, community-based nutrition programs, one in Eel Ground First Nation outside Miramichi in New Brunswick and another north of Owen Sound, Ontario with the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation.

Our work on child protection in Canada is informed by our international work, and is in turn informing our education and nutrition programs in indigenous communities in the developing world, such as Bolivia.

It is CFTC's position that increasing women's livelihood opportunities plus empowering women in agricultural training, leadership, and nutrition education leads to healthier, safer, more secure lives for children.

Development that is truly community-based and community-led is critical to ensure community ownership of long-term development goals and processes. Community-led adaptation and action can also reduce the risks and effects of environmental-related disasters should they occur, therefore decreasing reliance on humanitarian assistance.

In closing, it's been stated that the single most important determinant of whether a child in the developing world will live to see her or his fifth birthday is a measure of that family's access to education and income, particularly the mother's access.

We appreciate the Canadian government's maternal, newborn, and child health strategy, and its commitment to long-term engagement in development. We call upon the Government of Canada to continue to support long-term approaches to the protection of children, focusing on mothers' access to education, enhanced income, and the provision of nutritious foods to drive food security for the protection of both children and their families.

Thank you.

● (1125)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Kerby.

We're going to start the first round of questions and answers with Madame Laverdière, for seven minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, NDP): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank all the witnesses for their excellent presentations this morning. They were very interesting.

One theme that came up often in the presentations is the idea of education and the question of women. I really appreciated that your approach was focused on women's empowerment, women taking charge of their own lives. I particularly liked the focus on human rights, in other words, considering that it involves the issue of human rights.

I am always impressed to see that women are becoming more and more active in agriculture. We know that small farms, particularly in Africa, are often run by women. We see the productivity increase, and it reminds me of the few years I spent in Africa. The people we often saw working in the field were women.

I have a series of questions. I am forgetting my specific questions because I am impressed by what you said. I had a question for Mr. Button, in particular.

You have worked a lot with UNICEF. What are the advantages for you of working with a multilateral organization?

[*English*]

Dr. John Button: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

If I might respond to the member, the advantages of working with UNICEF are manifold. Kiwanis International has a history of working with UNICEF. In the late 1990s, we partnered with UNICEF to virtually eliminate iodine deficiency disorders, the commonest cause of preventable mental disability. We have history there.

UNICEF has the feet on the ground and they have the credibility. They do not go into a country where they are not welcome. When they're in the country, they use local people to provide the education, as well as to provide the health initiatives. It is our experience that people in the developing world are much more likely to accept health care teaching and health care initiatives from their neighbours than they are from someone from across the Atlantic Ocean.

● (1130)

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: That's a very good response.

Thank you very much indeed.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Kerby, one thing that struck me in your presentation was the fact that you work abroad, but also with First Nations here, in Canada, and that in both cases, your work is community-based. It's conducted by the community itself.

This universality is one of the millennium development goals. No longer is it really the so-called developed countries coming to the aid of developing countries, but a situation that allows us to realize that we all have challenges to face.

To the extent that you are interested in the sustainable development goals that will be applied, do you think enough importance is being placed on the specific needs of women and children? That is an important aspect of your work. Perhaps the others could answer this as well.

[*English*]

Ms. Debra Kerby: That's a very good question.

I think that the focus on women and children in the SDGs can always be deepened. I think it needs to keep going further to understand the shifts and changes at the community level. From our experience with the CHANGE project in northern Ghana, where we've been working for a number of years and where we knew that women were engaged in agriculture, it was very much at the direction of their husbands to a great extent in the communities where we were working.

When we set a goal of 40% women's participation, we were told, "That's very aggressive, good luck with that". The fact that we have almost doubled that and have released.... It's the community that's facilitated it by helping create leadership and opportunity in the community and by having a certain percentage of women lead farmer-based organizations, for example, when they never did before. It has helped to give them profile and confidence that they are able to do this work.

Through CHANGE, we've worked with Farm Radio International. The great work of Farm Radio International has helped us use women's voices to take those messages out to women who are in more remote communities. I think women learning from women, as some of my colleagues have mentioned, and communities learning from each other is the most powerful learning. It's also important to take into account the domestic changes that can happen with men in the community. If women take on more agricultural responsibilities, but the men don't pick up the domestic responsibilities, that is not so great for the women.

It's important that we have sensitization for the men about the contributions that women are making to economic development, to social development, and to child development. It's not just about women working; there's the role of women in the community that we very much need to pay attention to because that's the environment the child will grow up into. I think we can continue to keep pushing for more focus on women and children in the SDGs.

The Chair: Thank you.

That's all the time we have.

We're going to go over to Ms. Brown for seven minutes, please.

Ms. Lois Brown (Newmarket—Aurora, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all of you for being here this morning. We apologize for the short change you got the other day when you got cancelled, but some things are beyond our control.

I really appreciate the comments that each of you made about collaboration. You talked about collaboration with governments, with UN agencies, and we just had a conversation about collaboration with UNICEF.

Mr. Wilkinson, you said:

> Our partnership with the United Nations agencies, governments around the world, private sector lenders such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and a wide range of other civil society organizations has opened the doors for collaboration in other areas of shared concern, such as those we are addressing here today.

One of the things we know is that the call for ODA has recently been $135 billion, and we know that in the future it's going to take trillions of dollars. That is the expectation to fulfill the development goals that we're looking at. One of the areas that has not been well explored for a long time is the collaboration with private sector.

Mr. Wilkinson, I wonder if you could speak a little bit about that. How have you found success in working with private sector? Are there areas where we can move forward with that to leverage knowledge and expertise and financing?

Ms. Kerby, I'll give you a little side note. My son-in-law, who did his doctorate in electrical engineering here in North America, is back in Ghana, his country of origin, and he is building solar fields north of Kumasi. The project is $150 million U.S. going into that country, creating jobs, creating prosperity, creating tax revenues for the government, but it's also creating sustainability. I wonder if each of you could speak to how we can harness this kind of an investment going into a country that will enable us to do more with our development dollars.

Mr. Wilkinson, perhaps you'd like to start.

● (1135)

Mr. Wilfrid Wilkinson: Thank you, Ms. Brown, for that.

No one was more surprised than I was when I was the president of Rotary International to find out that we had just received a transfer of $100 million into our bank account from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It's always a nice surprise to have that.

Ms. Lois Brown: May I say that the money that goes into their foundation, by and large, comes from contributions from Microsoft and its success?

Mr. Wilfrid Wilkinson: We wish that Bill Gates was a member of Rotary. However, his father is, or was, and so I'm sure that had some influence. I hope I influence my sons as well. But we just have to look at the facts, including the fact that the divide between the wealthy and the impoverished is getting bigger. In addition to that, because of communications, the impoverished are finally getting more of what the haves have, and therefore they want to see more of that. If we're ever going to have peace in this world, we have to find some way to bridge that gap.

We see in Rotary an organization of over 1.2 million members—not to take away from all our youth programs, the Rotaract programs, the Interact programs, and the EarlyAct programs—who are concentrating on the need for those living in have countries to share with the people who live in have-not countries. We believe that Rotary is providing that exchange. It's not an easy exchange, but we're providing that exchange, and I think it's working.

I couldn't believe that last week the EarlyAct programs running in elementary schools raised $3,000 to buy goats to send over to Ethiopia. Kids in grades five, six, seven, and eight are learning at their age that the world is changing. Among the leaders of those groups are young women, young girls. I think we're developing that.

I think the country has to do that, our country has to do that. I think countries all over the world have to do that. Because of the influence that the Canadian government has and organizations like Rotary have, we're able to share that idea with other countries. So we were immensely pleased when the Government of India encouraged every country to give a percentage to charity. Rotary has benefited, not to the extent it would from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, but from very large corporations in India that have contributed substantially, millions and millions of dollars, to help India become polio-free. They've put the pressure on the government, but they've done it by contributing their own funds to it. So I think we're bridging that gap that you so clearly identified.

I don't know whether any of my colleagues would like to add anything, but I think it's very important.

● (1140)

Ms. Lois Brown: Do we have time for the other two?

The Chair: You have about 30 seconds.

Ms. Lois Brown: Ms. Kerby.

Ms. Debra Kerby: On the subject of private sector collaboration, as somebody who comes from the private sector, I recognize and respect the value that the private sector brings to the table. As someone with grassroots development experience, I see very much that they have to work in harmony. They are not separate spheres, as all of us know. The challenge is to build those bridges. By taking a grassroots approach, we're trying to create capacity-building and capability-building so that those solar panels, when they're being put in place, create an enabling environment so the community will thrive and not feel that they're outside of that.

There's an element that's working, of course, at the national level and the global level. But I think we really need to look at those streams, at the value chain, if you will, from the community up to the global level to see the interfacing points of ODA financing and development financing. Then we need to find a really smart way to work in the best interests of our beneficiaries, to have a pro-poor approach to make sure that the poor are part of inclusive economic development.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

That's all the time we have.

We're going to move over to the Liberals.

Welcome, Mr. Bélanger. It's good to have you here. You have seven minutes.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Thank you.

My colleague Mr. Garneau sends his apologies for not being here today. He had another commitment.

I want to thank all of you, and your hundreds of thousands and millions of members for the work and the generosity you demonstrate in helping the world. Thank you very much for that.

Mr. Wilkinson, I totally agree with your views that if we want peace in this world, if we want peace in any country, we have to address the growing divide between the haves and the have-nots. I'm not even talking sometimes of the have-nots. This issue has been identified three or four years running now by the World Monetary Fund as being the single largest difficulty we have. So again congratulations for the work you do.

I have some very specific questions.

One is for Madam Kerby. What are all of the social determinants that you were talking about?

Ms. Debra Kerby: In terms of the social—

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: You mentioned nutrition and education. Are there others?

Ms. Debra Kerby: We focus on nutrition and education. Actually, I'll step back. Our theory of change model has three key pillars. The first is food security, where we're looking at access, availability, and utilization. The second pillar is education, where we're focusing on early childhood and primary education. The third pillar is capacity-building, which is to make sure that we're building and supporting leaders and community members to learn how to build strategic plans. How do you do monitoring and evaluation? How do you empower women through leadership? How do you do training? You can't really have the first two without the third. Of course, we have cross-cutting themes of gender and the environment, but those are the key areas of focus for our work.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Just out of curiosity, has anyone ever run into Help Lesotho? It's a group that's funded mostly out of Ottawa that helps girls in Lesotho. They've been doing it for 10 years now. You may want to take a look at what they do because in terms of capacity-building, there might be some things there that could be of assistance.

For three years now, I've learned a great deal about cooperatives, all kinds of co-ops. So my question is, when you're helping local farmers is the cooperative model one that you look at? Madam Brown and I have met with the representatives of the Aga Khan Foundation and they are helping rice farmers and coffee farmers develop co-ops. It's a model that helps the members but also affirms and creates greater capacity-building, if you will. Is anyone involved in this kind of thing? Is the co-op model one that you've looked at?

Ms. Debra Kerby: I'd be happy to turn that over to my colleague, Sohel.

Mr. Sohel Khan (Senior Program Advisor, Food Security and Environmental Sustainability, Canadian Feed The Children): Thank you very much for your question.

In fact, that's exactly what we're doing when we are implementing our projects, for example, in Ghana. Our focus is very much on farmer-based organizations, which are basically the farmer-led organizations. But our target is to bring them into a cooperative model and extend their capacity from the financial management perspective, and technical capacity, as well as other aspects of agriculture. We try to bring the lead farmers into being active members of the cooperative, because they can help the cooperative members, for example, with demonstrations of climate smart agricultural practice, the sustainable application of fertilizer, and so on.

● (1145)

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: They could even own solar energy production too.

Mr. Sohel Khan: Exactly.

Also, they can mobilize their own resources through different mechanisms. There are two other aspects we're trying to integrate in this cooperative model. There is a risk transfer mechanism to establish, so they can absorb the risks of climate related or disaster related or any other kind of issues that come up.

So I think, yes, that is an area we would like to focus on and are focusing on.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Anyone else?

Mr. Styles.

Mr. Bryn Styles (Trustee, Rotary Foundation): Thank you.

Mr. Wilkinson pointed out that Rotary in Canada is working out a new arrangement with the Canadian government for some funding for some of our projects. It's going very well. We're very close to signing a final document, which is excellent.

The reason I mention this is that in December another Rotarian and I took two of your senior staff members, including the director of the partnerships for development innovation branch, to our headquarters in Evanston, in Chicago. They were extremely impressed with how we do our projects, how we evaluate them. The big thing, and this will get to your point, is their sustainability. Whenever a Rotary club is going to do a project, they have to do it with a partner club in the country they're doing it, but they also have to do a needs assessment from that community to ensure that community has a need for it and that it's not just something that the club in Canada perhaps wants to do.

One of the big aspects of this is the sustainability of the project. We don't want to do projects where there's a continued input of funds but no end to the funds going in. Part of that sustainability is ensuring that the community can carry on that project.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: And the co-op model is one of those?

Mr. Bryn Styles: The co-op model is a very big part of that. Many of these communities are so small that they have to work on a cooperative basis.

Mr. Wilkinson is—

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I have to stop you there, sir, because I have only one minute left.

May I suggest that, if you haven't, you get in touch with the CMC, Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada? They're a fusion of the francophone and anglophone groups. They're headquartered here in Ottawa, and they have a very significant organization that helps internationally with co-ops. If you haven't been in touch with CMC, they would be delighted to provide and share information.

I'm sorry to interrupt, sir.

Mr. Bryn Styles: No, that's fine. Thank you.

The Chair: That concludes the first round.

We'll now start the second round. Members will have five minutes for questions and answers.

We'll start with Mr. Trottier, please.

Mr. Bernard Trottier (Etobicoke—Lakeshore, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for coming in today.

I really appreciated your presentations. One thing I sensed in all of your presentations was a certain optimism. I know it's a real challenging world out there, and it can become very frustrating. Especially when I think about your large organizations, with all of your volunteers, how do you keep that optimism? If you take the long view and you look at the last 50 or even 100 years of human history, you see that in certain developments—access to drinking water, primary education, infection rates—we are actually making headway in many parts of the world.

All of your organizations have been successful in various ways. I think one of the things your organizations and your individual volunteers bring is this skill set or this diversity of backgrounds that you're able to deploy and focus. Management thinker Peter Drucker talked about SMART goals: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals. There are elements of all of that when you describe what you're doing as being very achievable. I think about the eradication of polio; we know it's achievable. You have a certain timeframe you want to do it by, and that's why you're able to get people to focus on these things.

Mr. Styles, you mentioned that you're in discussion with the Government of Canada right now. You have partners around the world in terms of different countries that you're operating in. When you're discussing with the Government of Canada, are there calls for proposals? Are they looking at other organizations? Is it a competitive bidding process? I always say that we don't fund NGOs, we fund programs and projects, and then we look at who is the best partner to deal with. How is that discussion taking place with Rotary right now?

● (1150)

Mr. Bryn Styles: When we were operating under the auspices of CRCID, the Canadian Rotary Collaboration for International Development, that had been in place since about 1986. It was a call for proposal method. When CIDA was disbanded and CRCID had kind of outlived its purpose—it had become too bureaucratic for Rotarians and for the government—we met with Minister Paradis and decided that the Canadian government still wanted to work with Rotarians. They're very proud to work with Rotarians. We do good work. But the model we had wasn't working.

They're coming up with a model where they will grant us *x* dollars a year for five years, and we will administer that through Rotary Foundation Canada, reporting to the government. So it wasn't a direct call for proposal, as such. In terms of government, it's not huge dollars, but....

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Okay.

At Kiwanis, you mentioned there was a partnership with UNICEF and also with the Government of Canada. How does UNICEF decide whom to partner with? There are other service organizations around the world. How do they arrive at that decision? Or is there more than one organization they're partnering with on this program on neonatal tetanus that you described?

Dr. John Button: UNICEF had partners in the private sector, and they were tapped out. UNICEF still required $110 million. UNICEF came to us with a proposal and we embraced it. They came to us, I believe, because of our success with our previous joint project that eliminated iodine deficiency disorder.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: I see.

Ms. Kerby, you talked about this idea of goal-setting and setting action plans to achieve those goals. How did you arrive at your areas of focus? There were different things that were very measurable, again, and very specific in certain countries. What's the planning process at Canadian Feed The Children to figure out the goals you're going to set and how to mobilize your organization to try to achieve those goals?

Ms. Debra Kerby: Well, to call on Drucker again, you can't manage what you can't measure, or is it that you can't measure what you can't manage?

When I came to CFTC in 2010, five years ago, we had a lot of good work under way, but it wasn't great work. For me, the difference between good to great in the not-for-profit sector is that good work is when you can tell a great story about it; great work is when you can define measurable impact and very clearly defined indicators.

The impetus for our theory of change journey over the last five years has been the absence of a monitoring and evaluation framework to be able to very clearly define impact. It was a very messy but very important process to go back to our community partners and the communities we're working with to talk about theory of change. It meant we needed to focus our efforts. Instead of sprinkling a bit of sugar on everything, we needed to be very focused. That was how we came up with our theory of change map. Then, we drilled down, working with the communities to talk about the clear and measurable indicators for food security, education, capacity building.

That was done in each country. Now we're coming to the end of a three-year period, and we'll be able to measure against very specific and clearly defined indicators that were developed by the community, that also link in with global indicators, to make sure we can track impact at the community level, at the country level, and against global indicators.

Mr. Bernard Trottier: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

That's all the time that we have.

We're going to go over to Madam Laverdière, for five minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is for Mr. Wilkinson and also for Mr. Button.

Do you face a large number of difficulties, risks or threats to the security of staff who administer vaccines in the field? As you know, there are many problems in a number of countries.

What is the best way of getting around and mitigating those difficulties?

[*English*]

Mr. Wilfrid Wilkinson: Thank you very much for the question.

I don't believe that we've had a lot of difficulty. I can remember being in Nigeria, and the difficulty was that the workers were not being paid.

On the other hand, I can remember an imam at one of the mosques saying that you'll never get rid of polio in Nigeria until you stop the money. I asked what he meant. He said, “Well, you know, the people here have figured out that you used to hire people to do this”. When he said “you”, it's the government, which we were supporting. They would get drops once a year. Then they were getting drops twice a year. Now you're up to immunizing them every three months, and all that. He said that they'd figured out that if they immunize all the kids, you wouldn't need them anymore.

What you have to do is to convince them that there are other things to do. That's why we have the whole area of the camps to provide not only polio vaccine but also health care in other areas, so that they know there's a future.

Sometimes governments are less than perfect, but because the members of Rotary are not being paid—they're there as volunteers—they're able to influence the local population and local business people tremendously. I think that's how we are getting around this problem. It's a problem, and it doesn't matter what country you're in. You might even say that we have some of those problems right here in North America as well. We're constantly at it.

However, our big argument is that our people are all volunteers. They are not being paid.

● (1155)

Dr. John Button: We've had no problems with security, and I think that is probably because no one wants to see their babies die. Mostly our teams are welcomed because they know what's going to happen; they're not going to see their babies and their new mothers die.

The other thing is that by using local people to provide the immunization and the education, there's a much greater acceptance. The other thing we've seen is that just like in areas of war where you have raid parties, people doing the vaccinations are also doing raid parties. When the belligerents leave an area, the raid party goes in and provides vaccination.

Dr. Robert Scott (Chair Emeritus, International PolioPlus Committee, Rotary International): Chair, may I answer that?

The Chair: Yes.

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: I'm sorry. Yes. Absolutely.

Dr. Robert Scott: I think we should be quite clear, and your question is very pertinent, that there is great danger out there for vaccinators, particularly at this moment in Pakistan, where I know the situation extremely well.

The children are being vaccinated at the cost at this time of nearly 200 lives. Vaccinators, mostly 18- to 19-year old young women, are getting paid the equivalent of $2.50 a day for three days' guaranteed work. There is great danger. The government is trying to combat that risk with people with rifles. I've vaccinated children with somebody who has an AK-47 protecting me. This is a real danger. We are overcoming it by constantly negotiating with these people, and it is only through negotiation that we will get it done, as we have in Afghanistan.

It will work, but there is danger out there. I don't want Mr. Wilkinson or Dr. Button's answers, which are very relevant, to go by without telling the committee that there is danger out there.

The Chair: Thank you. That's all the time we have.

We're going to move over to Mr. Goldring, sir, for five minutes, please.

Mr. Peter Goldring (Edmonton East, CPC): Thank you very much. Thank you for appearing here today. I'm not going to be able to get all the questions in I'd really like to ask.

I'm going to touch on one area. The *Financial Post* put out a report card on charities, identifying that there are some 86,000 charities out there in Canada. That's absolutely astounding. Some $10 billion has been raised, but not all of them are good charities.

We know the good work you do. As the charities are competing for the same dollar, you might say, what type of organization other than the *Financial Post*...? Is there some type of regulating committee that sets some standards? There were even 54 charities that didn't spend any of the money at all that they raised.

Is there some type of standard that is understood by everybody by which charities can be rated, such as an ISO rating for charities, so that people expect their charities to qualify to a certain standard? What should it cost charities to raise contributions versus what they're actually giving out?

Who would like to respond?

● (1200)

Dr. John Button: Our money for our maternal and neonatal tetanus program flows through the Kiwanis International Foundation. Like other foundations, it is assessed regularly by an outfit called Charity Navigator, which determines how efficient it is at raising its funds.

Right now I believe that the Kiwanis International Foundation is somewhere between a 3.8 and a 3.9 out of four.

Mr. Peter Goldring: Is that internationally...?

Dr. John Button: Yes. UNICEF's costs for our maternal and neonatal tetanus program are 10% or less. We insist upon that, and in our fundraising effort for the $110 million, we insist that our cost be 10% or less.

Mr. Peter Goldring: How do those other organizations justify going beyond the 10%? Is it justifiable? I see in this report that MADD Canada was identified has having irregularities.

Ms. Debra Kerby: I'd be happy to take that one on.

I think one needs to take care in simply looking at ratios of 10% or saying that 80% is a good ratio. I think it's really important that we raise the bar in terms of whether or not an organization is having a demonstrated impact, because I think a 10% ratio might look good but that organization might not be having a strong impact and there could be governance issues within that organization.

I sit on the advisory council of Imagine Canada. Some of you may be familiar with it. It's an excellent Canadian-grown organization, and they have put together a fantastic model for excellence in good governance and financial transparency. It's almost like a road map. For those 86,000 charities in Canada, there are only a couple of hundred that have been accredited underneath Imagine at this point in time, but there's a huge push forward.

Also, I think in the international development sector it's particularly important. Is say this because the Muttart Foundation issued a report on Canadians' trust in charities about a year ago, and for international development agencies, Canadians have about a 50% trust level. Of course, it's competition for funding, to be sure, but also competition for share of mind.

But I know that at Canadian Feed The Children, not only did the Imagine accreditation help us get our finance and programming in order, but it was also an important journey for our board. One mustn't overlook the role of the board in terms of excellence in governance in charities. Also, I think it's helped put us on track, so that in two years we've actually doubled our donations from our major gift donors, who are leadership donors. I think that's because of the excellence in the quality and the way we drive our organization. We have a 10% administration, and about a 65% program. But again, we're pushing impact; we're not pushing ratios.

The Chair: That's all the time we have, but Mr. Styles, do you want to add a quick comment?

Mr. Bryn Styles: I will and, Mr. Chair, I'll make it fairly quickly.

As with Kiwanis, we are also rated by Charity Navigator in the States, and we do get the highest rating. They're one of the few that do that, and we're quite happy. We have Rotary Foundation, which is based in the United States, but we also have Rotary Foundation Canada, which has staff in Canada governed by a board.

About four years ago we commissioned Grant Thornton to do an audit of our organization to ensure that we were adhering to the Canada Revenue Agency's guidelines. We were adhering to them, but of course they found some issues that we had to sharpen up on. We did that and are now at the top with the Canada Revenue Agency now, as well.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We're going to go over to Mr. Schellenberger, who will start the third round. Five minutes, please.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger (Perth—Wellington, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much to our witnesses here this morning.

I'm a Shriner, and I understand that we aren't quite as focused around the world as you are, even though we are international.

I know that you have to have a focus area, and in our case that has been crippled and burned children. We have a cut-off at 18 years, but if someone is under our care through that time—they've been hurt or under care at a younger age than 18—as they get older, they aren't kicked out of the program, but go right through it. So I totally understand that.

One thing I see from all of you this morning is that you do specialize in focus areas, and rather than try to spread your resources over every problem that's out there, you focus on those problems.

As a government, we also have kind of learned that a wee bit, in that we have focus countries. Rather than try to fix everything around the world, we're trying to focus on, I think, roughly 10 countries for some of those types of things. So I congratulate you on that. I think it's about realizing that, if you put more into a pool, you might be able to eradicate polio or you might be able to eradicate tetanus. I appreciate that.

What lessons are to be learned from Rotary's efforts to eradicate the polio virus? How can we transmit this knowledge to eradicating or curbing other preventable illnesses?

● (1205)

Mr. Wilfrid Wilkinson: Perhaps, Mr. Chair, I could say that Rotary is made up of more than 34,000 Rotary clubs. They're all independent. They're all doing their own thing; they're all doing their work in the community. In addition to that, they're encouraged to give money to The Rotary Foundation to do bigger and better projects worldwide. To that extent they cover a wide variety of areas of focus.

The Rotary Foundation, which we're representing here, concluded that they could use this new vaccine that had come out to immunize children against polio. The local Rotarians in the Philippines carried out a project to immunize children. This was back in the early 1980s. It was so successful that the World Health Organization came to Rotary and said, "You know, if you can raise $150 million, we can do this for the whole world. We can do it in five years". That was nearly 30 years ago. It's how the program took off. There were 125 countries where polio was endemic at that time. Now we're down to the three, possibly just two. It's taken a lot longer and a lot more money than we thought. We now have $1.3 billion in this program, and we're going to see it through. That's how it works.

Rotary is working at all levels in the community. The money for polio comes from the members through The Rotary Foundation as an extra to their community service, or their educational service, or the other services they carry out in the community.

Mr. Gary Schellenberger: Would you like to comment on that?

Dr. John Button: What we have learned is that what you actually are accomplishing may be far greater than what you think you are accomplishing. The other real tangible to come out of the tetanus immunization program is the development of heat stable vaccines.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I want to put it to the committee that we will have bells. The votes will be at 12:35. We have two more individuals to finish off all the questioning, which would mean that we would still have 15 minutes to go. Should we engage? Is that okay?

What I'll do is to ask members to come back after the votes. We have to give drafting instructions. Let's see if we can come back even if it's for 10 minutes to give some drafting instructions. Let's see how the time is.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: I have a commitment after 1.

The Chair: You have commitments till 1 at this committee.

Hon. Mauril Bélanger: Yes, but if....

● (1210)

The Chair: I'm suggesting within that time.... That's what I'm wondering about. We'd probably be back here at 12:50. Is that enough time?

Mr. Bernard Trottier: We're always late.

The Chair: Let's finish off the questioning and then we'll move the drafting instructions to Thursday. We're going to have to try and look at them then. Okay, thanks.

Go ahead, Madame Laverdière, over to you for five minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Button, you told us a story about a 15-year-old girl who went to school and had social support and an environment that allowed her to interact with other girls her age. The goal was basically to help her to resist a forced marriage. Again, it shows the importance of the role of education and, in this case, the education of girls.

When possible, do you think it would be a good idea to provide sexual education courses to avoid some of these early marriages or at least help women to space out their pregnancies?

As you pointed out, a lower birth rate results in healthier mothers and children, and makes women more able to participate in the social and economic life of their community.

I know that this kind of approach is not always possible, but do you think it may be beneficial in areas when it is?

[*English*]

Dr. John Button: I don't think there's any question that sexual education courses could have a positive effect. Do I think it will have a positive effect in eliminating child marriage? No, I don't. I think education and empowerment of young girls will have a positive effect there. I do think when it comes to birth rates and fertility rates, we know that the more educated a girl is the lower her fertility rate is. The other thing we can educate her in is family planning. However, if we're going to educate her in family planning, we have to make sure the tools for family planning are available as well.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: Thank you very much.

[*English*]

Ms. Kerby or others, would you like to comment as well? Or Mr. Wilkinson?

Ms. Debra Kerby: I would just add that I would concur with what my colleague has said.

I think it is about empowerment, and it's about really creating that enabling space for young girls to have ownership over their own lives in a community that is receptive to that.

Mr. Wilfrid Wilkinson: All I would add is that we're trying very hard with our university programs, our peace and development scholarships, to provide women in that role so that they are in key positions in government and internationally to carry out that work. I've identified some of them in my remarks to you.

Ms. Hélène Laverdière: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Did you have a quick question, David?

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Mr. Chair, if you want to use my time to discuss your future activity, that's fine with me.

The Chair: Okay. That's what we'll do then.

We want to thank you all for being here. Once again, all the organizations here do outstanding work—Rotary, Kiwanis, and Feed The Children. I know Mr. Bélanger mentioned this. Thank you. Keep up the great work.

We're going to keep going here, if the witnesses could step back from the table.

The question I want to pose to the members is in regard to the suggested drafting instructions to work forward on this report. You've seen those. If we're okay with them, that's really all we need to do. It's just to give them the go-ahead to move forward on those reports.

Do I have consensus to do that?

Some hon. members: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. So we didn't need to come back anyway. We took care of all that.

Is there any other business?

Thank you.

With that, the meeting is adjourned.