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SAVE THE CHILDREN CELEBRATE RECORD SPENDING ON PROGRAMMES...

Record funds of \$8.7 million were spent on programmes by Save the Children this year while almost \$10 million was raised overall - something that is being celebrated at the Annual General Meeting in Wellington this weekend.

Save the Children has used this funding to create lasting improvements in the lives of children in need around the world, as well as here in New Zealand.

"Save the Children's work of protecting and improving children's lives is vital in a world where 600 million children live in families which survive on less than \$1 per day," he said.

President of Save the Children New Zealand, Martin Hawes, has been re-elected and says being non-aligned and non-religious means we are free to work with all cultures on immediate and lasting development. That is one of the key reasons for his commitment to the organisation.

This year Save the Children New Zealand worked in 19 countries on a variety of projects from emergency aid to long term education programmes. For example, after the 8 October 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, Save the Children provided more than 42,000 families with materials to build shelters; established 66 temporary schools; distributed 153,070 quilts and blankets; distributes food to more than 126,000 people, treated 17,784 patients at interim health facilities, constructed 41 community kitchens at Meira Camp; and provided ante-natal checkups.

In India, for example, we provided education for the low caste Coolie children in Karnataka, South India Education and skills training was given to Coolie children, with special access for girls who previously couldn't always access education; supported girls to stay in school and avoid early marriage; provided back up for teachers who may be confronted about encouraging girls to stay in school; and provided monitoring and support for the under-five creche.

Becoming the official charity of the All Blacks has also been a highlight of this year's work. NZRU General Manager of Corporate Services, Therese Walsh has joined the Board of Save the Children this year and is playing a key role in the governance of the organisation. She says the NZRU and the All Blacks are committed to helping Save the Children. "We hope that our relationship with Save the Children will help put a spotlight on the problems children face while growing up in poverty."

Executive Director John Bowis says that Save the Children's relationship with the All Blacks presents us with many opportunities to work together at test matches, in publicity materials and such like, to raise awareness of the plight of vulnerable children.

For more information on Save the Children New Zealand's work over the last year you can view a copy of the 2005/2006 Annual Report on the website (www.savethechildren.org.nz).

To make a donation please visit www.savethechildren.org.nz or freephone 0800 167 168.