



HANDS TO HEARTS INTERNATIONAL

Nurturing Children ~ Empowering Women

2009 Review & Annual Report

Hands to Hearts International (HHI) was founded in the fall of 2004 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to improving of the health and well-being of orphaned and vulnerable children through improved early childhood care.

Background

Hands to Hearts International (HHI) originally began working in orphanages in Chennai, India, in February 2006. Caregivers trained by HHI demonstrated: significant gains in knowledge of early childhood development; more responsive interactions with children; greater awareness of child health and development; and improved hygiene and nutrition practices. The children in their care showed: increased weight gain; decreased illness; more responsive to soothing; increased language development; and better digestion and sleep after receiving HHI baby massage.

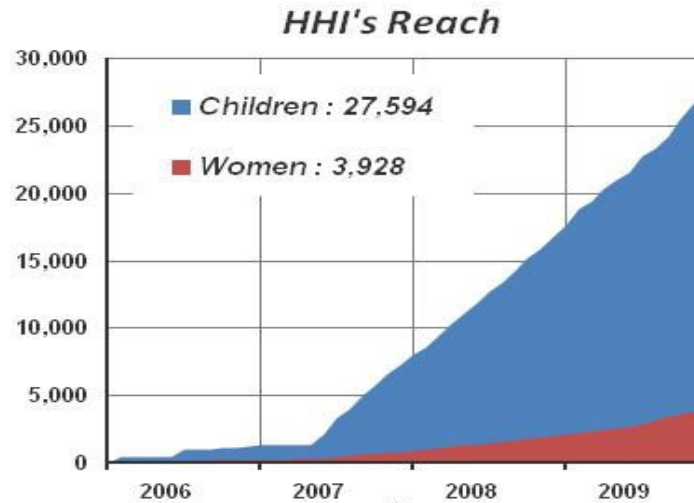


The value of HHI was quickly recognized by the world's largest early childhood development program—India's integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)— HHI now trains their teachers in both Kerala and Orissa. This partnership spurred a new dynamic of HHI— to reach further by offering technical assistance services to other NGOs and government groups focused on child health and integrating HHI's approach into their own programs.

In 2009, Medical Teams International sought out and included HHI's services as the "Innovation" in its new USAID funded Child Survival Project in the post-conflict area of northern Uganda. These strategic partnerships have propelled HHI's model: to better the health of the maximum number of children at the earliest time with the most simple, cost effective form of care.

Achievements in 2009

This was our fourth year of operations in India, and once again we surpassed our anticipated goals while remaining under our very conservative international budget projections.



In 2009, HHI accomplished two groundbreaking feats: a record number of indigenous women completed HHI's training program, while HHI had decreased spending from 2008. This was achieved through strategic investments made in prior years, as well as new expansion via partnerships and existing networks in India.

Each year HHI has provided greater and improved services; signifying that the 2008 investments reaped notable rewards for 2009. In addition to new partnerships, HHI's investments included creating our own unique and comprehensive curriculum on early childhood development that would be applicable cross-culturally. Our previous curriculum was designed and owned by an university. Though it was a great starting point, the original modules were not inclusive enough to meet the varied and challenging situations that are common in the multicultural, developing world where HHI focuses.



Women and children participate in HHI training in South India

HHI's new curriculum was a product of collaboration with PhD level experts working on the ground with HHI's local trainers throughout India. It is uniquely designed to empower parents, teachers, and other caregivers in how their direct and daily actions of nurturing and caring can improve their child's development. HHI consciously designed its curriculum with examples of how parents anywhere can support their child's development with their everyday interactions; regardless of a lack in toys, resources, or even the care giver's own level of literacy. HHI infuses local knowledge of stories, games, songs and dance to adapt its curriculum to any culture. This empowers people to act!

The second investment from the prior year that reaped rewards in 2009 was the creation of HHI's Instructional Baby Massage DVD with sub-titles in 18 languages. The Baby Massage DVD is a key component of HHI's strategy to offer quality training material to the public while raising community awareness of HHI's presence. Through the marketing of this innovative product on our website and local stores, HHI is creating a budding revenue stream for our international endeavors. In 2009, the DVD was purchased and offered for sale in ten US stores, as well as being purchased by other international groups to be applied in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Romania, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Liberia, Uganda, and Kenya. The DVD has also become a popular gift for new parents. The growing sales of HHI's DVD is building sustainable funds, while providing a great resource to new parents around the world.

The third planned investment HHI made in 2008 was to hire a contractor to redesign HHI's website, build HHI's online presence and support the Executive Director in building necessary infrastructure. This position increased HHI's website traffic from 800 visits in 2007 to 185,004 visits during 2008 – a massive increase in visibility for HHI! And by making it easier to accept donations and sell the DVD from the website, online giving increased as well.

Empowering Others By Design

Hands to Hearts is not built like most non-profits. Our design is not to just grow bigger and bigger, to raise more, do more, spend more, while having offices around the world. HHI is designed to grow out, not up. What this means is that HHI has found an extremely simple, cost-effective and replicable innovation that is a powerful leverage point to cause a variety of positive outcomes for women, children, communities and our world. HHI knows that to reach the furthest, our model and materials cannot be under the sole control of any one organization, even our own. HHI is designed to train other committed partners, who are already solidly established on the ground and bettering their communities via health, education or other empowerment activities and then to train and certify these groups to use HHI's resources and model to replicate our positive results for their community's benefit.



A proud group of day care workers graduating from HHI training in Orissa, India

In 2009 a group of five small, grassroots non-profit in Orissa, India applied to use HHI's tools within their own programs. In May, HHI Master Trainer, Sujatha Balaje worked with nine representatives from these organizations, providing training, mentoring, and the necessary tools to conduct HHI's early childhood development trainings in their communities. The story of what unfolded from this was inspiring, and proved the power of our model of empowering others. Read an excerpt of this story below, and the entire story is available on our [website](#).

Excerpt from ***“In 2009 HHI Spent Less & Reached Further”***

After just one year of HHI facilitating trainings in Orissa, other organizations began to notice the overwhelmingly positive outcomes and requested the funding for trainings in their own communities. Laura Peterson responded with a counter offer. Instead of “giving them the fish” by funding more workshops, she would teach them “how to fish” by offering a series of training of trainers workshops for five local nonprofits. They excitedly agreed and nominated nine new women to lead HHI’s train and spread it as far as possible throughout Orissa.

*The agreement required that each nonprofit committed to giving at least one community training per month, anywhere in their state with their own funding. Five nonprofits completed the training, creating 60 free trainings in a year. During the first six months of this experiment, the nonprofits exceeded their agreements - training **522 women, who are now able to better their care for 2,546 young children!***

Sangeeta Thapa, a newly certified HHI Trainer: *“When I go back to these villages, I see the women are sharing what they learned with others, and the children’s health and behavior is improving. What makes me happy is that these women want more training. The HHI training makes them want to learn more about how to care for their children and make their village a better place.”*

* Read the entire story at www.handstohearts.org/news, “Jan. 2010 Press Release”

USAID Sponsored Partnership for Child Survival

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) only funded eight Child Survival Grants in 2009. These selective grants were highly competitive and awarded to only the most dynamic and internationally applicable programs. The focus of the USAID grants is to improve the quality of life for some of the most disadvantaged populations in developing countries.

In effort to obtain the coveted USAID Child Survival grant, Medical Teams International (MTI) approached HHI with the request to subcontract HHI’s technical expertise and training modules. This collaboration synthesized HHI’s Early Childhood Development (ECD) program with MTI’s four-year child survival project of sustainable health interventions. Together, the projected goals of HHI-MTI are to reduce child morbidity and mortality in Uganda’s refugee sites by reaching 21,948 children under the age of five and 24,624 women for an estimated total of 46,572 direct beneficiaries over four years time.

In September 2009, MTI was awarded the prestigious USAID four-year grant for Child Survival. As a subcontractor of MTI, HHI will have the opportunity to develop the ECD modules with increased support for implementation and evaluation. This also expands HHI’s services to a new country, on a new continent, making HHI’s entry into Africa. Another benefit of the esteemed USAID award is the potential for expanded collaboration and recognition amongst sister organizations. HHI recognizes this as a momentous occasion and a milestone of success for HHI and all of our generous contributors.

Summary Operating Report for Fiscal Years 2006 – 2009

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of women trained	247	562	1,243	1,875
Number of children benefitting	1,180	6,089	9,479	10,846
Cash donations	\$82,000	\$136,000	\$118,000	\$115,861
Cash expenditures	\$74,500	\$82,400	\$141,000	\$108,939
Percent Increase Per Year:				
Women	-	128%	121%	51%
Children	-	416%	56%	14%
Donations	-	66%	-13%	-2%
Expenditures	-	11%	71%	-23%
Cost per woman *including ALL HHI costs	\$301.62	\$146.62	\$113.44	\$58.10
Cost per child *including ALL HHI costs	\$63.14	\$13.53	\$14.87	\$10.04

Explanation of operating funds

Over the last four years HHI has shown steady growth in operations, all while maintaining very modest spending. The above summary illustrates that in 2008 HHI made investments, and at the same time significantly increased our reach to women by 121% and children by 56%. HHI's investments in materials and infrastructure allowed HHI to weather the financial crisis and a dip in donations and earned revenue in 2009. While HHI had a slight decrease in donations in 2009, our services reached 51% more women, and our expenditures decreased by 23%. This spending decrease occurred without any staffing cuts and during the year we trained and supported nine new HHI Certified Trainers to begin giving HHI trainings away in Orissa, India.

Personal Note from the Executive Director

Thank you for your continued support and engagement in HHI. We are so proud to have new project sites and partnerships that display a united belief in the hard work of our staff, trainers, and caregivers in India and Uganda. To all of those who have given generous gifts of time, talents, or resources— your investments have reaped beautiful returns around the globe in ways that directly impact children, women, and communities. We hope that you recognize how invaluable you have been to bringing about change for the ever-growing number of HHI recipients. We hope that HHI continues to be your *social profit* of choice while we build for our sustainable future of global greatness!

In gratitude,



Laura Peterson, Founder & Executive Director
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*donations made during Fiscal Year 10/08 – 9/09