



Children International: Speeding Delivery of Global Care to Children in Need

Partner Name:

Children International

Location:

Kansas City, MO
headquarters with local
program agencies on 3
continents

Partner Since:

2009

Industry:

Health and Education
Programs and Emergency
Relief

Aidmatrix Applications:

- SCM: Needs Management
Module
- SCM: In-Kind Donations
Management Module

Programs:

- Children International Product
Donations Program

Critical Humanitarian Challenge

Household incomes for the poor in developing countries typically amount to less than \$150 per month. For many impoverished children, surviving into adulthood is considered a success. Children International is a nonprofit humanitarian organization that serves over 330,000 children through 84 community centers in 11 countries. Aidmatrix partnered with Children International in 2009 to help them manage their global in-kind donations through humanitarian relief supply-chain management tools.

Program Benefits

- Improved inventory management
- Increased visibility and reporting of in-kind donations
- Enhanced tracking on shipments en route to their destination
- Ability to aggregate needs from all international programs
- Increase Children International's donor network
- *Bottom Line: Enterprise visibility of products and needs, available 24/7*

Children International, through its local community centers, offer care to children ages 2-19, providing them with basic health and dental care, nutritional aid, educational support and other programs to help children grow to become self-reliant adults. They are headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, but they rely on their field offices and partner agencies to carry out their mission around the globe. Children International partners with Blusource, a warehousing and logistics provider, to manage the delivery of urgently needed items. To manage these processes, the team had been using a 1998 Microsoft Access® database software system. Children International approached Aidmatrix about updating their technology with a new, more robust tool to help them more efficiently deliver aid.

Business Case

Children International manages a product donations program in which they ship approximately \$52 Million worth of products to their field offices and partner agencies. 40 foot container shipments are loaded with supplies comprised mostly of used textbooks from American schools. These books are replaced by newer textbooks in the schools and then shipped to Children International.

Managing a humanitarian relief supply chain of this magnitude requires an incredible amount of coordination as the products flow through different logistics channels. The products are first shipped from the donor's warehouse or school, and then they are processed and stored in the Blusource warehouse, eventually selected and shipped internationally to the sponsorship operative agency, and then finally distributed to schools and relief workers in the field. The Children International Product Donations Manager and the Blusource Warehouse Manager must maintain close communications to coordinate the process and document the shipped products.

Children International and Blusource saw many limitations in their current system that inspired them to look for up-graded software that best fit their program requirements and the advancing technology of the time.

- This database required the maintenance of an old hosting server because the new operating systems would not support the program.
 - The old server was deteriorating and slow – requiring costly maintenance and worrying CI staff of potential failure.
- The database was rigid and inflexible, not able to be adapted as the program progressed
- The database was only accessible through a special VPN from the CI Headquarters



Children International Partner Success Story — Continued

- Field offices could not connect to the system and all communications were done outside of the system through email.
- There was not a functionality to collect donation needs and perform forecasting, which was seen as a new requirement to improve CI program efficiencies.

In the fall of 2008, Children International began the search to find a new platform to manage the inventory and logistics of their Product Donations Program, replacing their Access Database system. As they searched the internet for a new solution, they found Aidmatrix and began the conversation that resulted in their adoption of the Aidmatrix In-Kind Donations Management module.

Implementation Process

Phase I of the implementation involved Children International, Blusource and Aidmatrix working together to map the entire donations process. Children International has an interesting process in that Blusource receives and catalogs the in-kind donations. Donations range from small to very large, at times consisting of multiple container loads.

Phase II of the program was a pilot that involved training HQ administrators, identifying regional participants, training them, identifying additional requirements, and building key reports. In Phase III, updates were incorporated and CI began using their Aidmatrix technology to support the day to day donations management process. In Phase IV, Children International disabled their Access database and moved 100% of their operations on the Aidmatrix platform. In addition, in this phase, Children International was able to do something they had never done before. Their international partners, from Guatemala to Zambia, from India to the Philippines, were able to enter their 2011 needs in the Aidmatrix network.

“At Children International, we always look for ways to make our programs run as efficiently and effectively as possible. The key to a successful donations program is moving items to where they are most needed as quickly as possible – to get them in the hands of a poor child. It’s about getting the right pair of shoes, or the right book, to the right child at the right time. Aidmatrix is helping us do that, and we are very excited about the partnership,” stated James Cook, President and CEO of Children International.

Global Impact

Using the Aidmatrix system, Children International has shipped out more than \$45 million worth of textbooks, school supplies, clothing, shoes, hygiene items and medical supplies to their partner agencies around the world. Children International has collected over 1,100 product needs from their international offices to provide accurate information for their donation solicitation and procurement efforts, saving at least 25% of their time and money. This technology partnership has improved the gift-in-kind program’s international logistics, data reporting, and communications with their donor and partner communities. Children International has increased its prospect donor base by 80%. Additionally, the Network membership is expected to grow at a rate of 40% per year providing Children International a growing procurement channel. Children International has communicated that this partnership will enable them to realize a savings of approximately \$3 million in budget costs associated with procurement from using Aidmatrix solutions.

About Children International

Children International, a non-profit, humanitarian organization, was founded in 1936. Its mission is to bring real and lasting change to children living in poverty, made possible through its Child Sponsorship programs. Individual sponsors are united with a single child in need to give them an opportunity to succeed, primarily through educational and medical care. Children International augments this assistance with gift-in-kind donations. During the last year alone, Children International delivered more than \$52,000,000 of needed supplies to their partner agencies around the world.

If you are interested in how your organization can partner with Aidmatrix for humanitarian relief, please contact us at info@aidmatrix.org

