

Dr. Peggy Bentley (right) has conducted research on infant and young child nutrition in several countries in which ChildFund's programs improve children's growth and development. In July 2010, Bentley visited a sustainable agriculture site in Malawi, Africa. With her is UNC alumna Kari Riggie (center), daughter of nutrition professor Linda Adair, PhD.



# UNC-ChildFund Commissioned Innovation Lab *to improve lives of vulnerable infants*

ChildFund International, a 72-year-old charity based in Virginia, has forged a partnership with UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health to improve the lives and health of vulnerable, excluded and deprived children from birth to age two.

The Commissioned Innovation Lab will develop and test an evidence-based program in two countries, which can be scaled up globally across ChildFund's projects in 31 countries, where the organization reaches more than 15 million children.

Peggy Bentley, PhD, nutrition professor and associate dean for global health at the School, will lead the program, and Cyril Engmann, MD, neonatologist in UNC School of Medicine's Department of Pediatrics and adjunct assistant professor of maternal and child health at the public health school, is co-principal investigator. A number of other faculty with expertise in safe water and sanitation, child development, injury and violence prevention, implementation science, curriculum development, breastfeeding and weaning, and

monitoring and evaluation will contribute as the work develops.

"We are tremendously

excited about this opportunity to build a partnership and a program that makes a huge impact on children's lives during their most critical period of growth and development," Bentley says.

"The partnership provides a unique opportunity for Carolina faculty members and students to partner with ChildFund to transform the lives of millions of mothers and children, utilizing rigorous, evidence-based methods," Engmann added.

Anne Goddard, president and chief executive officer of ChildFund and alumna of the School (health behavior and health education, 1983), believes the UNC-ChildFund partnership will add tremendous value to both organizations.

"Our collaboration with Carolina links ChildFund's unique assets and approaches with cutting-edge practice, helping us achieve our core intent to improve the lives of children worldwide," Goddard says. "Our work together will advance the state of the art in child development, addressing gaps in knowledge and practice for global impact beyond the reach of either institution. This supports our goal of promoting societies that value, protect and advance the rights of children."

– Bobbi Wallace

**ChildFund**  
International