



*\*Whatever it takes to save a child.*



**NOT ON OUR WATCH GRANT TO UNICEF TO SUPPORT CRITICAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS FOR ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEE CHILDREN**  
*Immediate Funds to Improve Care and Protection of Migrant Children in South Africa*

**New York, NY (June 2, 2009)** – Not On Our Watch, the international advocacy and aid organization founded by actors **George Clooney, Don Cheadle, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt**, producer **Jerry Weintraub**, and human rights lawyer **David Pressman**, has awarded the U.S. Fund for UNICEF a grant of \$438,000 to assist at-risk Zimbabwean refugee children living on the South Africa-Zimbabwe border. The grant will provide critical support for child protection and welfare services for 1,500 unaccompanied and vulnerable children in the border town of Musina, South Africa.

“I’ve seen first-hand how dire the situation is for Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa. Women are being raped, orphaned children have no protection, and thousands of people are without even the most basic supplies. Every-day survival has become a harrowing task,” said Not On Our Watch board member **Matt Damon**. “As the situation in Zimbabwe remains unresolved, the international community must stop sitting on the sidelines and instead take action to help those who need it most. Not On Our Watch is proud to support UNICEF’s work in this critical time.”

While the formation of a new coalition government in Zimbabwe signals hope for the Zimbabwean people, the situation for women and children in-country remains at crisis levels. In the last six months, unstable economic conditions, coupled with a severe cholera outbreak have contributed to a dramatic increase in the number of Zimbabweans undertaking the dangerous journey of fleeing to neighboring South Africa, particularly children.

Once in South Africa, refugee children live in extreme situations of risk, including physical and sexual abuse, child labor, and psychosocial trauma, with only limited access to basic necessities such as health services, shelter, education, food, and clothing. In addition, their lack of documentation and poorly understood legal status in South Africa places many children in danger of detention and deportation, and forces them to lead “underground” lives.

UNICEF and its partners are supporting the South African government’s efforts to improve the care and protection of migrant children. The support from Not On Our Watch will allow UNICEF to provide emergency assistance, prevent and respond to exploitation and gender-based violence, and strengthen the capacity of the South African Department of Social Development to respond to children’s complex needs.

“UNICEF gratefully acknowledges the vital support of Not On Our Watch which will contribute to the survival needs of Zimbabwean children in Musina,” said Caryl Stern, President and CEO of the U.S. Fund for UNICEF. “This charitable donation will impact the lives of 1,500

Zimbabwean children, by providing them with the emergency care they desperately need. Services also help us to achieve our ultimate goal of reducing the number of children around the world who die each day of preventable causes from 25,000 to zero.”

**About UNICEF**

For more than 60 years, UNICEF has been the world’s leading international children’s organization, working in over 150 countries to address the ongoing problems that contribute to child mortality. UNICEF provides lifesaving nutrition, clean water, education, protection and emergency response saving more young lives than any other humanitarian organization in the world. While millions of children die every year of preventable causes like dehydration, upper respiratory infections and measles, UNICEF, with the support of partnering organizations and donors alike, has the global experience, resources and reach to give children the best hope of survival. For more information about UNICEF, please visit [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org).

**About Not On Our Watch**

Not On Our Watch was founded by George Clooney, Don Cheadle, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt, Jerry Weintraub, and David Pressman to focus global attention and resources to stop and prevent mass atrocities. Drawing upon the voices of cultural leaders, its mission is to protect and assist the vulnerable, marginalized, and displaced. Web site: [www.notonourwatchproject.org](http://www.notonourwatchproject.org).

**For further information, please contact:**

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