

ENDING HUNGER ■ SAVING THE EARTH

WorldArk

Saving Our FUTURE

DAVID SUZUKI ON SUSTAINABILITY



YOU'VE GOT THE POWER
FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ
and JEFFREY PERKINS

MAY/JUNE 2004

MUSLIM
FARMERS
FIND A HOME

Dear Friends ...

By Jo Luck
President and CEO

These rural Kenyans chose not to dwell on their suffering, speaking instead of hope for their children.

Last fall I traveled to Kenya and glimpsed the future—or at least the future as it could be.

My journey took me to Kenya's Rachuonyo district to visit two families hit hard by the loss of loved ones in Africa's devastating AIDS pandemic. These families had every reason for bitterness and despair. Yet, through smiles, words and sometimes tears, they expressed gratitude, pride and hope for the future. They are part of the Future for AIDS Orphans project, a group of 200 families and 1,470 orphans given dairy cows, oxen and plows by Heifer International.

Albert Oyoo, a member of the group, lives with five other orphans on a six-acre farm left by their parents. The orphan farmers have tripled their maize harvest through the gift from Heifer of oxen, a plow, and training. But the farmers didn't stop there. Albert "passes on the gift" to other orphan families, sharing food and ploughing their land.

At another farm, I met Juma. He supports 21 members of his extended family. All of them are orphans who watched in agony as family members succumbed, one by one, to AIDS. Juma received two dairy cows from Heifer International. The cows have calved twice, and the family has already passed on

one heifer. Juma and his family now own two mature cows and two heifers.

Later, I met with the entire village of Oyugis, and a fuller picture of the families' heartbreak—and courage—came to light. With much of an entire generation dead or dying of AIDS, large households are often headed by teen-agers, or by grandmothers struggling to support as many as a dozen children.

Yet these rural Kenyans chose not to dwell on their suffering. Some farmers expressed deep gratitude to Heifer simply because they now know that when they die their children will have assets to help ensure their own livelihoods.

We at Heifer frequently talk about "Passing on the Gift," and we forget sometimes that not all our supporters know exactly what that means. Passing on the Gift is one of 12 principles that inform all that Heifer does to end hunger and protect the earth. When a Heifer family or community receives an animal, they must agree to pass on one of the animal's offspring to another in need. I like to think of this ripple effect as "sustainability through the ages." My inspiring visit to Kenya let me see Passing on the Gift as sustainability through generations, allowing children to achieve self-sufficiency even though their parents may not live to see it.

In this issue of *World Ark*, the highly respected scientist Dr. David Suzuki writes of what we must do to achieve "a sustainable and just future for humanity." If people who have endured so much, like the brave and hopeful people I met in Kenya, can still give to others, what can the rest of us give to save our shared future?



PREVIEW

WORLD ARK

MAY/JUNE 2004

// We are all ... God's children. Race, creed or color, we learn from each other. Heifer training and teaching has brought us all together in our community. // —project participant Irma Barnes



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Cover photo courtesy of the David Suzuki Foundation

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A Living Gift

My brother-in-law, Thomas H. Wedaman Jr. of Kansas City, Mo., passed away recently. While I was with him during his last hours, I had an opportunity to visit with the oncology nurses on call at the Cancer Institute at Research Medical Center in Kansas City. They asked where I lived. After I told them that I was from Little Rock, they asked if I knew anything of Heifer International.

It seems that my sister, Ann W. Wedaman, and Tom had made a gift of an Ark to the nurses in oncology at Christmas. The nurses were moved by this gift. I believe this was because that even though Tom was in the last stage of life on earth, he and Ann were thinking of ways to provide life for

others. ... And they thought of Heifer!

As a matter of fact, they sent "trees" to all my late brother-in-law's caregivers—including those from Research Medical Center, those at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, and each of his medical team members in Kansas City.

God blesses us all. Thank you all for Heifer and her gifts.

Alfred L. Williams
Little Rock
E-mail

Promises to Keep

I enjoy receiving *World Ark* magazine, but I found distressing the commentary by Rev. David Beckmann in the Winter 2003 issue ["A Time of Promise"]. What distressed me was Beckmann's omission of 1.2 billion "people of promise" from his discussion of hunger, poverty, justice and peace. I am speaking of the 1.2 billion

Muslims who look to Abraham and Sarah as their spiritual ancestors.

Beckmann did not entirely omit Muslims from his commentary—even though he never used the word. Beckmann did vaguely mention the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, that is etched into the national psyche as the work of Muslim terrorists. Beckmann's vague mention, however, left open the wide range of connotations, interpretations and responses that conflate "Muslim" and "terrorist" and thus results in violent attitudes and actions toward Muslim people.

Beckmann missed an opportunity of inclusive grace because he could have specifically countered the tendency toward prejudice and violence toward Muslims.

Beckmann's column had a very sincere tone, yet sincerity is insufficient to bring forth true justice and peace. We can scurry right and left to address hunger and poverty issues, yet if our underlying framework doesn't recognize and address the dynamics of injustice and violence, we will be left with a world full of well-fed and over-entitled people doing battle among themselves.

How can we work for justice and peace as we address the symptoms of hunger and poverty? I believe that we need a humble

thirst for knowledge about and respectful interaction with "others." We also need to thirst for and witness to the inclusion of all people as "heirs of God's promises"—even folks whom we think might not qualify as "people of promise."

Given our human history of bloody disagreement on who qualifies for God's grace, I think that 9/11 highlights more than ever our duty as "keepers of God's promise to all people for a just and peaceful world" to give others the benefit of the doubt as we call them brother and sister.

David Clanaugh
Duluth, Minn.
E-mail

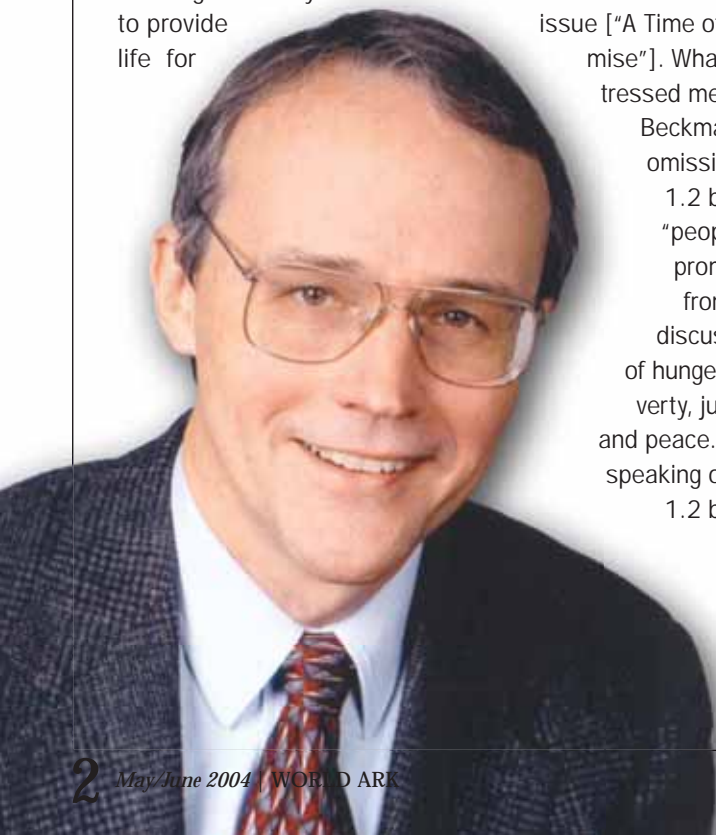
The Author Responds

Indeed, Muslims are people of the promise, and I should have included Muslims in my article. In fact, Bread for the World has worked hard to develop collaborative relationships with Muslim groups, notably the Islamic Society of North America.

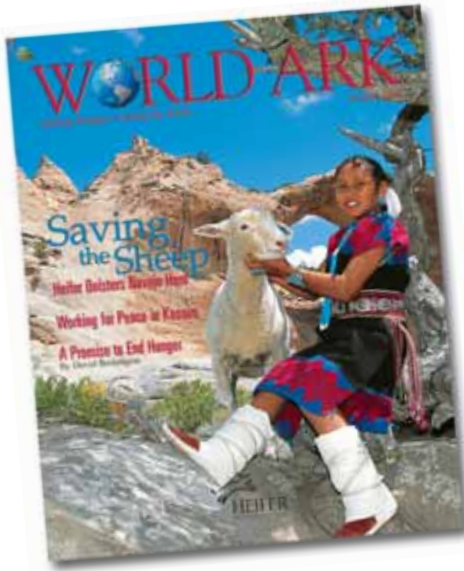
Rev. David Beckmann
President of Bread
for the World
E-mail

Survey Says ...

I just finished reading the story on Page 3 of the



Rev. David Beckmann



Winter 2003 *World Ark* ["Reader's Survey: Stories of Self-Reliance Top the Chart"] and felt an urgent need to support your view of the importance of the magazine as a vessel for helping people "Pass on the Gift."

If it were not for your magazine ... being left at my office building and me noticing it and picking it up a couple of years ago, I would never know of the work you do.

My family dearly appreciates my donations in their honor to Heifer, and I now buy nothing but Green Mountain Coffee because of [that company] helping you also.

Thank you for your magazine. I truly enjoy the uplifting stories I read in it and I always read it from cover to cover.

Peggie Storms
Portland, Ore.
E-mail

The money I give to your organization, and other organizations, is given because you (and they) don't take political positions. Since you are a charitable institution, I don't feel it is right for you to take positions. I feel it would detract from the wide stance you are now able to

take.

We use you to facilitate being able to give directly to a person or persons the gift of chicks, ducks, oxen or whatever animal we wish

to "purchase" and give. We wish to give these people an economic chance, not promulgate/proselytize any particular ideology, nor do we wish Heifer to do it on our behalf.

Richard and Karen Johnson
McPherson, Kan.
E-mail

World Ark welcomes comment from readers. Heifer International reserves the right to edit letters to the editor for clarity, grammatical errors, spelling and space. Please include a telephone number or e-mail address so we can confirm your identity. Our address is in the box at right.

Q&A

In each issue we pose a question or two related to Heifer's goals of ending hunger and saving the earth.

Do you think that you as an individual can have a meaningful impact on saving and preserving the earth's resources?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Send your answers, plus any additional comments you wish to make, to the address in the box at right.



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Heifer International publishes *World Ark* bimonthly for donors and friends. Heifer has helped millions of impoverished families worldwide become more self-reliant through the gift of livestock and training in their care. A nonprofit organization rooted in the Christian tradition, Heifer works for the dignity and well-being of all people.

Heifer is a member of InterAction. Federal employees may designate gifts to the Combined Federal Campaign by writing in #0315. Heifer International is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization and gifts to Heifer are tax deductible and are used as designated until current needs of those projects are met. Further gifts are applied to similar projects so that gifts begin helping people immediately.



Heifer Gets a *Star*

If you want to contribute to a charity that's among the nation's best in commitment, fundraising efficiency and donor dependency, *Forbes 2004 Investment Guide* says you'll be hard-pressed to find a worthier one than Heifer International.

This annual special edition of *Forbes* magazine surveys 200 nonprofits and rates them on how efficiently they collect and distribute charity. But a new feature this year, a Gold-Star List of 10 charities *Forbes* considers worthy of your attention, puts Heifer right at the top.

The survey calculates three key efficiency ratios, with higher numbers indicating "a better bang for the donor's buck."

Charitable commitment indicates how much of total expenses went for the stated charitable purpose, excluding management, overhead and fundraising. Fundraising efficiency measures the share of gifts after subtracting fundraising expenses. Donor dependency is the operating shortfall (outlays minus non-gift income) as a percentage of gifts. In all areas, Heifer surpassed the average numbers garnered by the 200 nonprofits surveyed.

By the Numbers

The 12 percent of the world's population that lives in North America and Western Europe accounts for 60 percent of private consumption spending, while the 33 percent that lives in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa accounts for only 3.2 percent.



The United States, with less than 5 percent of the world's population, uses about a quarter of its fossil fuel resources—25 percent of coal, 26 percent of oil and 27 percent of the world's natural gas.

Putting Down Roots



Jatropha curcas, widespread in Tanzania, is an unlikely hero. Save for a few splashy flowers, the woody shrub isn't much to look at, and it tastes bad. But *Jatropha* is hardy and long-lived, and since animals won't eat it, the plant has been useful for years as a natural barrier around crops.

Recently, thanks to the generous support of the McKnight Foundation, *Jatropha* has been able to do a bit more. With a four-year grant from the McKnight Foundation, hundreds of women in Arusha, Tanzania, have been cultivating *Jatropha* and exploring the commercial possibilities of its byproducts.

The seeds produce viscous oil that has antiseptic properties and can be used for soap, fuel and cosmetics. The residue left when the seeds are pressed also has potential as a fuel source. Companies have expressed interest in buying seed for oil processing on a large scale, and the women have begun producing samples of a milky, gentle soap for face and hands.

"The soap angle has generated the most interest," said Heifer's Africa Program Director Barry Colley, "but there are many other angles. The byproducts can be converted into electricity and gas for cooking. The oil can treat skin disease in cattle, and even be turned into diesel fuel."

The *Jatropha* initiative has provided income—and autonomy—for women in an area where opportunities are scarce.

Buoyed by the success, Colley is optimistic about the initiative's future. "The project has given these women a chance to begin thinking about micro-enterprises and other commercial ventures," he said. "I'll tell you, we could grow *Jatropha* all over southeastern Africa—probably all over Africa."



Briefing Congress

In May, Heifer staff and partners from around the world are meeting in Washington, D.C. With the help of outside experts, Heifer will brief members of Congress and their staff on the critical role that livestock plays in alleviating poverty and improving nutrition, sustainability and economic growth.

At the briefing May 13, Heifer plans to ask Congress to increase funding for livestock development for small farmers. Heifer has invited all U.S. senators and representatives to the briefing, informing them of the time and place, and the entire Arkansas congressional delegation supports the meeting, but Heifer also is asking our donors to encourage their members of Congress to attend.

Please consider calling, e-mailing or writing your senators and representatives and urging them to attend or send a staff member.



America's Second Harvest will call communities together June 3 to fight hunger in the United States. The third annual National Hunger Awareness Day will be observed by the organization's more than 200 food banks and affiliated programs. Some of the events will include potluck fund-raisers, said Susan Hofer, communications manager for Second Harvest.

For a list of local events, as well as for alternative methods of participating in the campaign to end hunger in America, go to www.hungerday.org.

National Hunger Awareness Day was created in early 2002, when a continuing downturn in the economy, massive layoffs and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks had contributed to a significant increase in the number of Americans unable to feed their families, according to Second Harvest's website.

Break It Down



Wild Oats Market Inc. has started putting food from the grocery chain's delicatessens into fully biodegradable containers made from corn.

The Boulder, Colo.-based Wild Oats says it's the first North American grocery store to use the corn-based resin called NatureWorks™ PLA.

Thrown into the compost pile, the containers "fully degrade into water, carbon dioxide and organic material," the company says. Wild Oats is using the containers, which look like plastic, in stores in the Northwest, Colorado and Tennessee and plans to introduce them into all 77 of its locations.

The containers carry some disadvantages. They can't be used to store hot foods because they'll melt and they may produce reactions in people allergic to corn.

Bake Sale Bonanza

Want to join the fight against hunger? Consider holding a bake sale. The Great American Bake Sale, underway now through July 25, raised more than \$1 million in 2003 to end child hunger in America. More than 375,000 people baked, sold or bought during last year's event, according to Share Our Strength (SOS), the coordinating organization.

You can register to take part this year at www.greatamericanbakesale.org or by calling (800) 761-4227. You'll receive a bake sale kit



with a poster, tips, recipes and stickers.

SOS also coordinates Taste of the Nation, a series of food and wine-tastings, seated dinners and brunches that take place in 70 cities across the nation. Since 1988, Taste of the Nation events have raised more than \$50 million, supporting 450 groups working to end hunger and poverty, including Heifer International.

All told, SOS has distributed more than \$74 million to anti-hunger groups in its 20 years.



Saving Our

Lonely trees stand guard before the Chimborazo volcano in Ecuador, a country hard hit by environmental degradation.



Future

By David Suzuki

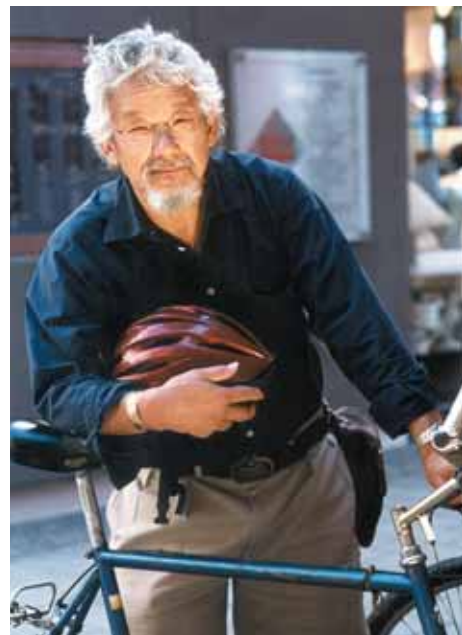


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

Humans have “pushed the resources and the natural services of the Earth to their limits,” writes world-renowned scientist David Suzuki. So is this the end? It doesn’t have to be. Suzuki says we have many of the solutions; we’re just not using them. “By becoming smarter and more efficient in the way we use resources, we will actually improve our quality of life. In other words, sustainability means doing things better, not doing without.”

PHOTO BY DARCY KIEFER/HEIFER INTERNATIONAL



The oil, coal and gas that heat our homes, power our vehicles and industries, and provide the electricity for our lights and appliances all come from nature. It took millions of years for these fossil fuels to form, and once we use them up, they are gone for good.

Recently, I was having a discussion with my neighbor about the proliferation of sport utility vehicles on the streets of our city, and I mentioned that the trend was totally unsustainable. He gave me a funny look and asked what I meant.

“Well,” I said. “We can’t just keep making larger and larger vehicles that burn more and more gasoline. There are only so many resources in the world. There’s only so much land we can pave over and so much air we can fill with our tailpipe emissions.”

He cocked his head to one side. “Is that really such a big deal?” he asked.

Yes it is, actually—although for people in the developed world, like my neighbor, it can be difficult to understand. Those of us who are lucky enough to live in North American cities often don’t think about the role that nature plays in our lives. We don’t have to. We live in built-up environments. We buy our food from grocery stores and restaurants. We flick a switch and the lights go on. We turn on the faucet and clean water comes out.

All these resources that we take for granted have to come from somewhere. Human ingenuity has helped harness them,

but they all still come from one place—the Earth. The oil, coal and gas that heat our homes, power our vehicles and industries, and provide the electricity for our lights all come from nature. It took millions of years for these fossil fuels to form, and once we use them up, they are gone for good.

Energy isn’t the only resource we depend on nature to provide. We also depend on nature’s services to clean our air and water, keep our soils fertile and our climate stable. We depend on nature to absorb our wastes and provide food, medicines, recreation and inspiration. We depend on nature for our health, well-being and quality of life.

In fact, humans are utterly dependent on nature, but we take it for granted. Many people, like my neighbor, love to do things outdoors and greatly value the aesthetic and recreational pleasures nature provides. At the same time, they still assume the world is a big place that has always, and will always, provide for us.

A Dangerous Assumption

That’s a dangerous, and incorrect, assumption. While the world may sometimes seem very big, it is actually quite small. Indeed, our planet is but a tiny oasis



PHOTOS BY DARCY KIEFEL/
HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

Far left: Deforestation has played havoc with the environment in Ecuador, where Heifer International works to encourage sustainable agriculture.

Above: In the Philippines, Heifer has trained project partners to monitor the water of the Manupali River watershed in Lantapan.

sition of our atmosphere (a notion that would have seemed laughable a century ago) with heat-trapping gases like carbon dioxide from our industries and vehicles. The global scientific consensus is that this increase of greenhouse gases is gradually changing the world's climate, which will have unknown and potentially devastating consequences.

We've also altered the water cycle by building huge dams and reservoirs, draining aquifers to irrigate our crops and siphoning water for our industries and homes. Some 60 percent of the world's major river basins have been dramatically altered, causing tremendous damage to

coastal ecosystems and fisheries. Three of the world's great rivers—the Yellow, the Amu Darya and the Colorado—no longer even reach the sea in dry seasons.

And we've added vast quantities of human-made chemicals to the environment that don't easily break down. As a result, some persistent pollutants like DDT, dioxin and PCBs can be found in even the most remote, seemingly pristine places on Earth.

of life in the cold desert of space.

And now that there are more than 6 billion of us, we cannot afford to simply

We've altered the water cycle by building huge dams and reservoirs, draining aquifers to irrigate our crops and siphoning water for our industries and homes. Some 60 percent of the world's major river basins have been dramatically altered, causing tremendous damage to coastal ecosystems and fisheries.

assume that the planet will continue to absorb everything we throw at it. Humans are by far the most ubiquitous large mammal on Earth and the most powerful species ever to evolve over 3 billion years. How we decide to use that power will dictate our future.

Right now, we are not using our power wisely. In 200 years of industrialization, we've completely changed the face of the Earth. We've actually altered the compo-



These chemicals build up in the food chain and threaten the safety of our food supply.

"The Price of Progress"

For a very long time, we tried our best to ignore these growing problems, assuming that the world could continue to provide an inexhaustible supply of resources

If we want future generations to have the opportunities that we have had, we have to change. We are consuming too much, too fast—especially in developed nations.

es and absorb ever-increasing amounts of our wastes. I grew up in the 1950s, and whenever fertile farmland was paved over with roads and subdivisions, or wetlands were filled in to build shopping malls, I was told "that's the price of progress," as though

improving our quality of life somehow required degrading the environment.

Today, we know that you can only push nature so far. In just the last few decades we've witnessed the collapse of fish stocks around the world, a "hole" in the Earth's protective ozone layer, global warming, water scarcity, desertification, the spread

of invasive species, the destruction of coral reefs, loss of tropical forests, and the continued extinction of species on a scale not seen since the last days of the dinosaurs. We've pushed the resources and the natural services of the Earth to their limits.

The Bottom Line

88% of those affected by natural disasters and two-thirds of the people killed by them over the past decade live in the world's least developed nations.

Only 20 percent of the world's population lives in developed countries, yet these countries consume 80 percent of the world's resources and produce 80 percent of the world's wastes and pollutants.

Today's atmosphere contains 32 percent more carbon dioxide than it did a century ago.

1.2 billion people struggle to survive on \$1 or less a day while nearly 3 billion people eke out an existence on \$2 or less a day.



If we want future generations to have the opportunities that we have had, we have to change. We are consuming too much, too fast—especially in developed nations. According to University of British Columbia professor Bill Rees, if everyone in the world used the same amount of resources as we do in North America, it would require the resources of four or five more Earths! The path we are currently on is clearly unsustainable. Our planet simply isn't big enough to provide the resources for, and absorb the wastes of, 6 billion people living as we do in North America.

Problem? Complacency

Does this mean that to become a sustainable society North Americans will have to accept a lower standard of living and reduced quality of life? No, not at all. Why? Well, the reason North Americans (and many others in the developed world) consume so many resources is not because it is necessary to do so to have a high quality of life, but because we have become complacent. We live in a land of plenty, so we assume “there's plenty more where that came from.” As a result, we have become very wasteful.

You can see our waste in the air on a sunny day in any big city—smog. Smog is waste. It is a byproduct of poorly designed, inefficient internal combustion engines. We may consider ourselves innovators, but the fuel efficiency of the 2004 fleet of new North American cars is actually the same as it was back in 1980—before cell phones, the

Internet, DVD players, powerful personal computers and many other things we take for granted today.

Another source of air pollution that many people don't even consider is electricity. Electricity seems clean, but much of it is generated using fossil fuels like coal and natural gas. These power plants greatly contribute to smog and global warming.

To reduce these problems, we should be reducing our use of electrical power. Yet many of our appliances and lighting sources are terribly wasteful. Rather than design better light bulbs and encourage consumers to switch, the standard North American answer to increasing electrical demand has been to build more power plants. This strategy puts strain on the electricity grid, which can cause blackouts like the one witnessed last summer in New York and Toronto.

To become a sustainable society, we must stop wasting our resources. That means letting innovation drive efficiency. It means encouraging the switch to renewable energy resources, like wind and solar power, that don't pollute our air or change our climate. It means encouraging public transportation and better fuel efficiency. It means designing our cities better and using the best possible agricultural practices. By becoming smarter and more efficient in the way we use resources, we will actually improve our quality of life. In other words, sustainability means doing things better, not doing without.

By learning to do things better, we can improve our economies and our health,

David Suzuki's
Nature Challenge

10

simple things you
can do to protect the
environment:

- 1 Reduce home energy use by 10 percent.
- 2 Choose an energy-efficient home and appliances.
- 3 Replace dangerous pesticides with alternatives.
- 4 Eat meat-free meals one day a week.
- 5 Buy locally grown and produced food.
- 6 Choose a fuel-efficient vehicle.
- 7 Walk, bike, carpool or use public transit.
- 8 Choose a home close to work or school.
- 9 Support car-free alternatives.
- 10 Learn more and share with others.



The standard incandescent light bulb turns just 10 percent of the electricity it uses into light; the other 90 percent is wasted as heat.

THE FUEL EFFICIENCY OF THE 2004 FLEET OF NEW NORTH AMERICAN CARS IS ACTUALLY THE SAME AS IT WAS BACK IN 1980.

Fuel efficiency has been going backwards in recent years, thanks largely to the proliferation of heavy, inefficient vehicles like SUVs.



but perhaps more important, we can also improve the lives of the world's poorest people. According to the World Bank and the United Nations, 1.2 billion people struggle to survive on \$1 or less a day while nearly 3 billion people eke out an existence on \$2 or less a day. These people are living on the edge. They need our help, now more than ever.

Overuse Comes at a Cost

Those of us lucky enough to be living in developed countries have benefited greatly from unchecked industrial growth and fossil fuel consumption.

We've used more than our fair share of the world's resources to build a high standard of living and extensive government and public infrastructures. But our overuse of the world's resources has not come without a price. Our actions are changing our climate, and this poses a very real threat, perhaps the biggest threat humanity will face this century.

Unfortunately, developing nations will be least able to adapt to this changing world. Already, these nations bear the brunt of natural disasters. Such disasters are already on the increase, and scientists tell us that extreme weather events are expected to become much worse as climate change progresses.

For humanity to chart a course to a sustainable future, we must address these inequities. To ignore them will condemn a good portion of the world's people to a continued cycle of poverty, which breeds unrest, contempt and violence. This will further degrade local ecosystems and cause political instability. No single country can achieve sustainability in such a world. Rather, a sustainable and just future for humanity requires countries to work together to alleviate poverty, improve sanitation, medical care and education, and promote the transfer of locally appropriate, efficient technologies that will benefit developing nations.

With an estimated population of 9 billion on Earth by 2050, time is running out for humanity to develop sustainable practices that will enable society to thrive, while protecting the natural systems on which we ultimately depend. It is not an impossible task, but it will take a new vision of the future and a concerted global effort from our leaders, our neighbors and ourselves. ✨

Dr. David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and chair of the David Suzuki Foundation. He is professor emeritus of Sustainable Development Research at the University of British Columbia, an officer of the Order of Canada and a recipient of UNESCO's Kalinga Prize for science. For more information, visit the David Suzuki Foundation at www.davidsuzuki.org.



Sustainability: The Heart of Heifer

By Scott Morris
WORLD ARK
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Heifer owes its existence to the concept of sustainability. As a relief worker in the Spanish Civil War, Indiana farmer Dan West was forced to decide who would receive limited milk rations and who wouldn't—who would live and who would die. Relief aid would never be enough.

When he returned to the United States, West established the organization that would eventually become Heifer International—a global nonprofit dedicated to ending hunger permanently by provid-



Left: Heifer teaches farmers in the Philippines how to terrace their land to prevent soil erosion.

Top: In Uganda, the gift of goats helps provide villagers with a sustainable livelihood.

ing families with livestock and training that would allow them to feed themselves.

Sustainability and Self-reliance, one of Heifer's 12 Cornerstones (the principles that guide our work), is essential to the organization's success. Heifer can fund a project only for a limited time, so the families Heifer works with must plan to support themselves. To do so, they need to protect their land, water and other natural resources as well as their livestock.

"Heifer understands that if we are going to have a lasting impact on world hunger, everything we do must be sustainable," says Jo Luck, Heifer's president and CEO. "That is, the means for producing food and income must renew the environment and not deplete it."

To achieve this critical goal, Heifer teaches a variety of environmentally friendly agriculture tech-

niques, including terracing, composting and zero grazing (enclosing livestock in a shaded area and carrying fodder and water to the animals instead of letting them wander in the open where they are more likely to catch diseases or damage the environment).

Sustainable practices are indispensable to Heifer's work because project partners typically own little except a patch of land, says Noel Mace, program assistant for agroecology and animal well-being.

"People who exhaust their land often end up living in extreme poverty in large cities," Mace says. These people frequently settle in squatter camps where they can't grow food and are subject to violence, inadequate sanitation and disease.

"All Heifer projects are designed so that they are environmentally and financially sustainable," he says.

When Heifer enters a community, it first helps residents assess their assets as well as their needs.

"Heifer, working with our project partners, chooses

the appropriate gift animal," Mace says. "Maybe the group can't support cows, so we start with chickens or goats, which generate food and income. Later, once the group has had some success, it might be ready for a cow."

Project partners must show that they can care for the gift animal before it is delivered. That means they must demonstrate access to adequate fodder, water and veterinary care. Because veterinarians may be unavailable in remote areas, Heifer gives animals that are adapted to local conditions and resistant to local diseases.

Project partners also are required to attend training sessions in livestock management and sustainable agriculture, says Jim Hoey, Heifer's environmental strategies director. Crop rotation and using manure to restore nutrients to the soil often are central to that training.

A second Heifer Cornerstone—Gender and Family Focus—ensures that women and children receive training alongside men, Hoey says. That allows the project to continue even if the men have to leave home to find other work.

Another advantage of inclusive training, Hoey says, is that it enables a wider group to "buy into" the changes Heifer recommends.

"Buy-in is vital, especially when we're asking project partners to change age-old, traditional practices,"

Hoey says. "In communities where they survive crop to crop, farmers are reluctant to change traditional approaches, including slash-and-burn practices that damage the environment."

When Heifer project partners begin to succeed, however, other farmers notice. Interest in the new techniques spreads from village to village, Hoey says, allowing Heifer's work to continue long after funding for the original project has ended.

As partners develop stable sources of food and income, they are more likely to be able to send their children to school, which means subsequent generations will live better lives—another benefit of sustainability.

A third Cornerstone—Passing on the Gift—also promotes sustainability by requiring Heifer recipients to donate their animals' first offspring. An added benefit of this requirement is that it gives group members a vested interest in their neighbors' success, because the second round of gift animals depends on the well-being of the first.

Sustainability, then, depends on considering the needs of future generations while choosing the best solutions to today's problems. "Gender equity, animal well-being, environmental and economic viability—all of these things are tied together in the field," Hoey says. "This holistic approach is what makes Heifer work." 🐾

Patricia Heaton Loves Heifer

By Ray White and Chris Talbott

HEIFER PUBLIC INFORMATION

OK, some people do love Raymond—but everybody loves Patricia Heaton. She is famous for her comedic role as “Everybody Loves” Raymond’s long-suffering spouse and for the fact that she combines stardom and motherhood in such a terrific way.

She and husband David Hunt are parents of four sons—Sam, John, Joe and Dan. She wrote a bestseller, “Motherhood & Holly-

wood,” that is an autobiographical account of her climb from Cleveland sportswriter’s daughter to combining motherhood and sitcom stardom.

And Patricia Heaton loves Heifer. She posed for Heifer’s holiday catalog with four baby goats and a cow to show her support. “Entertainment Tonight” spotlighted Heaton—and the baby goats—in a segment before the holidays, giving Heifer national media exposure.

During the photo shoot in Santa Monica, Calif., she spoke about why she was drawn to Heifer the first time she heard about the organization while visiting a Christmas market at All Saints Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills.

“It had a Christmas market,” she said, “where you could buy all kinds of different hand-crafted things to give as gifts that were made through some charity organizations. They also had a table where you could sign up for Heifer gifts, and I thought it was so unusual.

“During the holidays I have a lot of people to buy for—agents, managers, accountants. We all get so many gifts in this industry, we have everything, and I thought this would be something they would appreciate.”

It feels good to make a contribution in someone’s name instead of conventional gift-giving, she said. “When you give a contribution as a gift to someone, they also have a sense of having a good feeling that something in a faraway land is being done in their name.”

The reaction from friends and co-workers when she has given Heifer gifts has been positive. Everybody loves Heifer gifts.

“I think people are surprised and delighted. ‘Oh my gosh, you bought a cow in my name!’ Or ‘You bought a flock of geese in my name!’ It’s just so unusual, and it puts a picture in people’s heads. They can almost see that.”

That is in contrast with the way we normally experience the world’s problems, she said. “When we read the news we feel so powerless about what’s going on in the world. But an organization like Heifer helps you do something in the world that really is making a change in an individual’s life. It’s a great way to alleviate that sense of powerlessness, and not just as a placebo. It’s not just to assuage some guilt—it really does have an effect.”

PHOTO BY HILLEVI LOVEN



Patricia Heaton, who stars in the popular CBS sitcom “Everybody Loves Raymond,” supports Heifer’s work.



Melvin Burgos, Heifer's coordinator for the LaVoz project in Guatemala, shows off healthy coffee plants.

Partnership Bears Fruit

By Scott Morris WORLD ARK ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Adrian Joj Socop, a Guatemalan coffee farmer, looks at a blue barrel containing 200 pounds of California red worms and sees both a blessing and a business opportunity.

What do worms have to do with growing coffee?

A great deal, it turns out—especially if the goal is to achieve self-reliance by producing superior coffee that sells for a far better price than commodity coffee. And, thanks to Heifer International, Socop and his neighbors will grow that coffee in a way that is both less expensive and more sustainable than traditional methods.

The worms arrived at the LaVoz Cooperative in Guatemala's Lake Atitlan watershed on Nov. 9, 2003. Their delivery marked the start of

the first project resulting from a partnership between Heifer and Green Mountain Coffee Roasters of Waterbury, Vt.—a leading specialty coffee company.

"God has blessed us today," said Socop, president of the cooperative. "We are very pleased to begin our work with Heifer, to have a useful new resource."

The worms serve two purposes: They turn partially decomposed coffee pulp into fertilizer and act as a food source for the chickens that Heifer delivered to the cooperative in December. Along with the decomposed coffee pulp, chicken manure will give the farmers an inexpensive and sustainable source of organic fertilizer, eliminating the need to buy costly chemical alternatives.

"The farmers lower their costs, and we get a better, more sustainable product," said Steve Sabol, Green Mountain Coffee Roaster's vice president of development. "Everybody, including the ultimate consumer, benefits."

Heifer's partnership with Green Mountain, announced in 2002, has produced other benefits: ■ Green Mountain has agreed to fund Heifer's development of an educational curriculum for middle and high school students. The students will learn how their consumption choices affect the global community. ■ Green Mountain is donating a percentage of its proceeds from certain coffee sales to Heifer. The donations to Heifer are in addition to the publicly traded company's commitment to give 5 percent of its pre-tax earnings to a variety of social and environmental initiatives.

In addition to worms and chickens, LaVoz cooperative members received training from Heifer in sustainable agriculture practices that help ensure their coffee is

(Continued on page 16)



Members of the LaVoz Cooperative in Guatemala divide California red worms supplied by Heifer.

An Artist's Gift

By Sherri White HEIFER STAFF WRITER



DREAMING COWS BY BETTY LADUKE

Volunteers support Heifer's mission in different ways. Some give money, others time, and many help by raising awareness. The artist, activist and college professor Betty LaDuke furthers Heifer's cause by doing what she loves—illustrating through her art the connection between all living things and the earth.

"So often we don't have a way to contribute to things we believe in," LaDuke said in a recent telephone interview. "We feel helpless. For me, I have a lot of pride as an artist that my skills can contribute to Heifer, especially after seeing firsthand Heifer's projects in action."

A professor emeritus of art at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, Ore., LaDuke taught college courses for 32 years and initiated "Women in Art" and "Art in the Third World" classes. Her paintings, drawings and exhibits are displayed in museums and universities throughout the United States, and she has many circulating exhibits, published books and video productions. She has traveled extensively to do research.

(Continued from page 15)

certified as organic. This designation improves the price the LaVoz farmers get for their coffee.

Green Mountain, meanwhile, has pledged to pay the LaVoz growers a price that exceeds their costs of production for coffee that has Fair Trade certification. That's especially significant now because a market glut of lower quality coffee has depressed prices to the point where many growers worldwide have been forced to abandon their fields.

When growers leave their farms, Sabol said, they and their families often move to urban areas where they fall into intractable poverty. Such migrations increase social instability and human misery while depriving companies like Green Mountain of a stable source of high-quality coffee, Sabol said.

Green Mountain was already buying coffee from the LaVoz Cooperative before it joined forces with Heifer. "Our purchasing hasn't

changed," Sabol said. "What we're changing, together with Heifer, is the quality of life for members of the community."

The sustainable practices Heifer teaches will help the LaVoz farmers protect their environment while eggs from the Heifer chickens will improve their diets. After the project matures, cooperative families will be able to generate additional income by selling extra worms, chickens and eggs.

Presbyterian Program Celebrates 35 Years

"My work has always been an outreach to learn the life cycle and rights of passage of women as artists," she said. "My focus was to broaden my students' awareness of women's creativity in Asia, Africa and Latin America."

LaDuke learned about Heifer while she was working with another non-governmental organization. She said she reached out to Heifer after researching its humanitarian work. When she heard about a Heifer Study Tour to Uganda and Rwanda, she signed up immediately.

"When I found out Heifer Study Tours went to Rwanda and Uganda, I made a very deliberate choice to learn how a program could help people put their lives on track in the aftermath of genocide and war."

LaDuke has given Heifer permission to use her artwork to promote its message. Four of her paintings are featured on new note cards available through *World Ark's* Market pages.

To learn more about Betty LaDuke, her travels or her art, visit www.bettyladuke.com.

The Presbyterian Hunger Program, one of Heifer International's partners in the fight to end hunger, has reached a remarkable milestone.

During the program's 35 years in operation, Presbyterians have contributed more than \$75 million, through the national church, to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes. Millions more have been raised and contributed by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations and presbyteries.

Jo Luck, Heifer's president and CEO, congratulated the Presbyterian Hunger Program for its success.

"The Presbyterian Hunger Program has made a significant difference in the lives of hungry families around the world, and Heifer is proud to be in partnership with you," she said in a letter to the program's coordinator.

"We consider the Hunger Program to be an important partner in our work to bring sustainable solutions to families around the world, to raise awareness of these issues in the general public, and to provide opportunities to act on this critical knowledge."

The Hunger Program is a ministry of the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Presbyterians support direct food relief, development assistance, public policy advocacy, education and lifestyle integrity.

For more information, visit the website pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/hunger.

The curriculum that Green Mountain is underwriting, an addition to Heifer's successful community education program, will use real-life examples to teach middle and high school students how their consumption choices affect the world. When consumers pay a slightly higher price to purchase double-certified Fair Trade, organic coffee, Sabol noted, they help farmers in the developing world feed their families and care for the earth.

In its cause-marketing campaign, Green Mountain has donated ducks, geese and chickens to Heifer in the name of customers who sign up for the six-month "Better World Coffee Tour," which entitles them to two bags of coffee per month. Green Mountain contributes a share of a heifer in the name of customers who sign up for a 12-month tour.

"Our customers are sustaining Heifer's work, which stabilizes the communities where we buy coffee

and allows us to grow our company in a way that is in accord with our values," Sabol said.

Because the joint venture between Heifer and Green Mountain has worked so well, plans are under way to establish two other coffee projects in Guatemala, according to Sabol. Ultimately, he said, Heifer and Green Mountain would like to expand the program to every country where both organizations have operations.



CERES CENTER

May 22

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

June-August

SERVICE LEARNING

Weeklong "mission trips" for youth groups that include both service to the Ceres Center and learning opportunities for the youths.

June 7-11, 21-25

DAY CAMP

Hands-on program for youth ages 6-12 will include farm-type service as well as cottage industries such as candle-making.

July 12-16

DAY CAMP

Final session of program listed above.

Oct. 1-2

YOUTH FOR HEIFER

An ecumenical event including hands-on experiences with animals and gardening for junior and senior high youth to learn about Heifer's program to overcome world hunger and poverty.

Year-Round

FIELD TRIPS: Learn about Heifer International and Ceres Education Center with a video, cart ride, walking tour and hands-on activities in the barn.

GLOBAL VILLAGE: Get a taste of the real world with this overnight experience.

MEETING FACILITY: Have your meeting or gathering "down on the farm" and learn about Heifer International's mission to overcome world hunger and poverty.

HEIFER RANCH

Sept. 23-26

HEIFER UNIVERSITY AT THE RANCH

This unique experience focuses on helping you help Heifer International

in your community and region. Get the tools you need to promote Heifer.

Oct. 16

ANNUAL GLOBAL VILLAGE DAY

Take a "world tour" at a free daylong celebration of the Global Village. Entertainment, hayrides, hands-on activities and more.

Summer

"GVR" PROGRAM: Combine two popular programs in this multi-day event that includes Global Village, Challenge Course, Cottage Industry and more.

SERVICE LEARNING: Weeklong "mission trips" for youth that include both service to the Ranch and learning opportunities for the group.

Fall

"GVR" PROGRAM: Combine two popular programs (see above).

ADULT WORK GROUPS: Fight hunger through service with these opportunities for adult groups.

GLOBAL EXPLORERS: Become a Global Citizen in this two-day residential program designed to help teachers meet Social Studies Standards for grades 5-8.

E.A.R.T.H. LEARNING: Learn how to help save our planet in this new standards-based daylong or overnight environmental education program.

Year-Round

FIELD TRIPS: Learn about Heifer International and the Ranch with a video, hayride and walking tour.

GLOBAL VILLAGE: Get a taste of the real world with this overnight experience.

CHALLENGE COURSE: Learn the ropes about teamwork and problem-solving skills.

COTTAGE INDUSTRY: Workshops that turn animal products into marketable items.

CONFERENCE AND RETREAT

FACILITIES: Leave the busy world behind and relax in the beauty of the Ouachita Mountains.

OVERLOOK FARM

May 23-28

PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT HOME SCHOOL CAMP

A residential camp for home-schooled youth, ages 12-18.

June 26-27

INTERNATIONAL FAIR

Featuring the Global Village with international sites, ongoing entertainment and fresh farm-grown food.

July 5-Aug. 27

SUMMER DAY CAMP

Eight week-long sessions (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.) for kids ages 7-12.

Sept. 12-17

FARM ANIMAL HOME SCHOOL CAMP

A residential camp for home-schooled youth, ages 12-18.

Oct. 2 and 3

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Horse-drawn hayrides to "pick-your-own" pumpkins. Food and children's activities.

Oct. 10-15

"HARVEST YEARS" SERVICE LEARNING

A program for people ages 55 and older. Help construct baskets of farm products, do farm chores and attend hunger education sessions.

Year-Round

DAY EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT

OVERLOOK FARM: Full- and half-day education programs for groups include a video and tour and may include a Peasant Meal in the Global Village, a hunger education session and a horse-drawn hayride.

MULTI-DAY SERVICE LEARNING

Two- to five-day stays during which groups enjoy farm work and hunger/sustainable agriculture education. Global Village overnight included.

FIELD TRIPS: Learn about Heifer International and Overlook Farm with a video, guided tour and hayride.

HEIFER UNIVERSITY

Heifer International is offering a number of Heifer University programs this year. Program cost is \$195 per person (includes all meals, lodging, program fees and transportation to and from the airport when necessary). For more information, contact Rex Enoch at rex.enocho@heifer.org or call (501) 889-5124. The 2004 schedule follows:

June 11-13

SHIKINEH RETREAT CENTRE SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA

Sept. 23-26

HEIFER RANCH PERRYVILLE, ARK.

Nov. 11-14

HOWELL NATURE CENTER HOWELL, MICH.

Heifer University also offers a program at Overlook Farm in Rutland, Mass., on Nov. 19-20. For information, contact Pat Stanley at pat.stanley@heifer.org or call (508) 886-7900.

INFORMATION

CERES CENTER

Ceres, California
Sandy Groll
(877) 841-7182 or
cerescenter@heifer.org

HEIFER RANCH

Perryville, Arkansas
Ranch Events Office
(501) 889-5124 or
ranch@heifer.org

OVERLOOK FARM

Rutland, Massachusetts
(501) 886-2221 or
overlook.farm@heifer.org

All locations are open year-round for drop-in visitors, or schedule a field trip for your group.

Travel

WITH A PURPOSE

Travel with Heifer International breaks the mold of traditional escorted group tours by exposing participants to the essence of the countries they visit and the lives of the people who live there.

Study tours convey life-changing information that will encourage you to return home with a new commitment to join in Heifer's mission to work with communities to end hunger and poverty while caring for the earth.

If you would like to receive information on specific trips and a tour leader is not listed, please send your request to studytours@heifer.org or call (501) 907-2957.



2004 STUDY TOURS

UKRAINE, July

Leader: Ann Owen

Community Relations Coordinator Ark,
ann.owen@heifer.org
(501) 907-2675

The second largest country in Europe, the Ukraine declared its independence from Russia in 1991. Heifer has been working with the people of Ukraine since 1994. Heifer is facing the challenge of improving the cattle breeds and lifting the people out of poverty.

OREGON—SMALL FARMS, Late July

Leader: Catherine Knott

Heifer North America Program Director
studytours@heifer.org

As an advocate of food security and local foods movements, Heifer invites you to see how one area is networking locally. These are not Heifer projects, but you'll hear more about Heifer and our North America Program, including the Immigrant Farmer Initiative.

PERU, Sept. 6-18

Leader: Diomaris Gonzalez

Heifer Program Assistant
diomaris.gonzalez@heifer.org
(501) 907-4934

The tour, which begins in Lima, will take you to northern Peru, Piura, where you'll see Heifer's work with the fragile Dry Forest Region. You'll visit projects in Lambayeque, Cusco and Puno. You'll also visit Machu Picchu.

ROMANIA, Sept. 7-23

Leaders: Drs. Jim and Barb Geistfeld
emg23@frontiernet.net
(845) 758-1783

Special Animal Management Trip

Suggested for veterinarians and other animal scientists who want to learn about Heifer's Improved Animal Management Program. Companions are welcome.

ECUADOR, Nov. 4-13

Leader: Jan Schrock

Heifer Senior Adviser
jan.schrock@heifer.org
(207) 878-6846

Women to Women

Jan Schrock, the daughter of Heifer founder Dan West, returns to Ecuador to explore gender equity. You'll see new projects and learn more about participants' crafts and their desire to merchandise items.

THAILAND/LAOS, Nov. 19-Dec. 3

Leader: Michael Haddigan

Heifer Communications Director
michael.haddigan@heifer.org
(501) 907-2954

Travel to the remote area of the Hill Tribes of northern Thailand and see how Heifer is working within their cultures. In northern Laos, you'll hike through forests, rice fields and to an Akha tribe village. After two days of hiking, you'll take a flight to Luang Prabang with time to visit the Pak Ou caves as well as temples and markets. This Study Tour will be more strenuous than most.

Costs and Lengths of Stay

Prices include airfare (except where noted), accommodations, meals and local transportation.

Latin America and the Caribbean

10-14 days, \$1,800-\$3,500

Central and Eastern Europe

10-14 days, \$2,800-\$3,500

Africa

17-24 days, \$4,000-\$5,000

Asia and the South Pacific

14-21 days, \$3,200-\$4,500

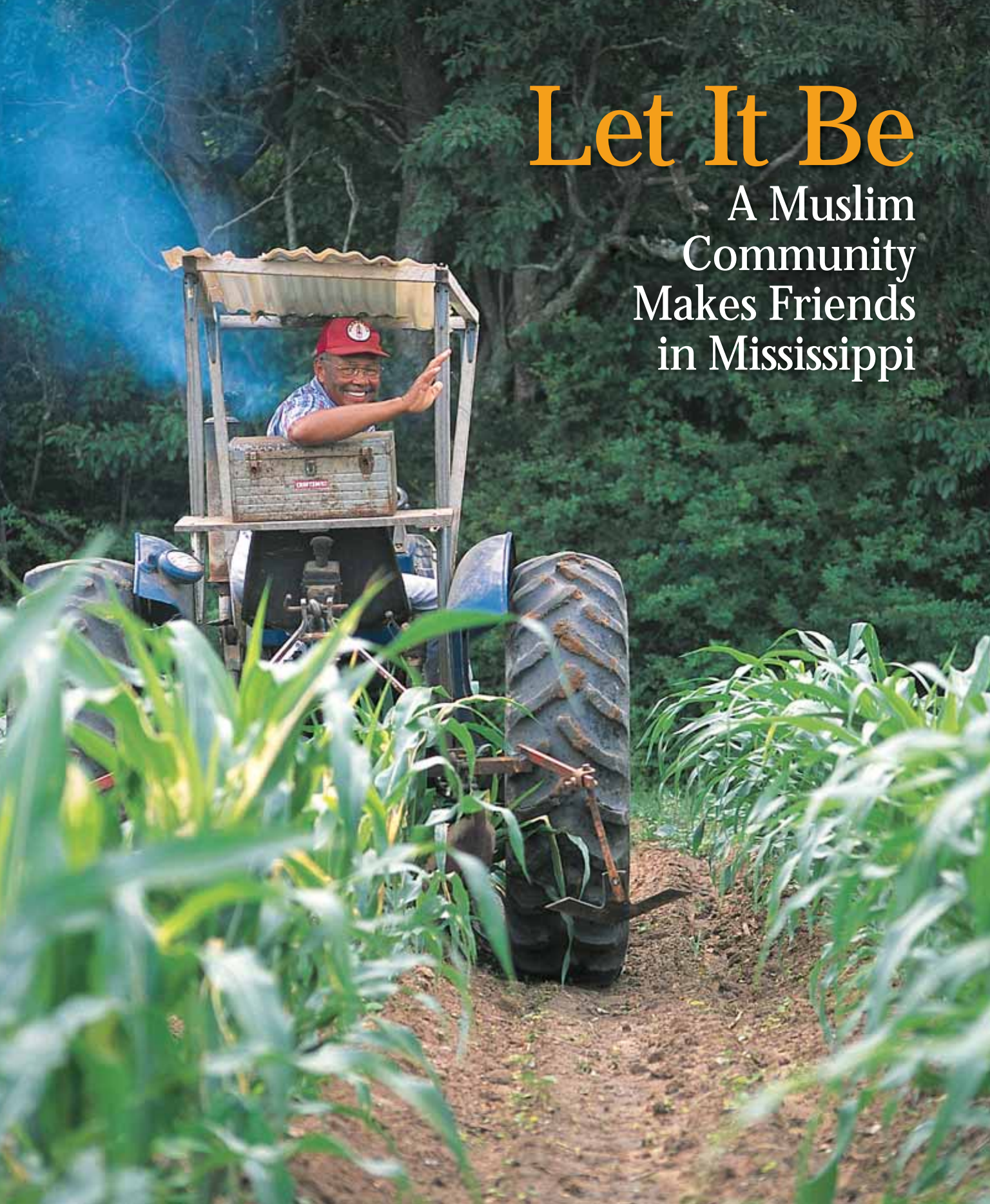
North America (airfare not included)

5-10 days, \$800-\$1,500

Please check our website, www.heifer.org, and click on "Get Involved" for the most current information.

Let It Be

A Muslim Community Makes Friends in Mississippi



Farmer Jesse Barnes (above) says the New Medina community and Heifer International have served as sources of inspiration. Rosa Shareef (right) is one of the founders of the Marion County Self-Help Organization.

Story and photographs by **Darcy Kiefel**

COLUMBIA, Miss.—When a small group of Muslims decided to build a new life for themselves deep in south Mississippi, some of the area's residents were alarmed.

"When we first came to this community, neighboring families petitioned against Muslims purchasing community property," recalls Rosa Shareef, one of the group's founders.

More than a decade later, the group, the Marion County Self-Help Organization, includes several non-Muslim members and enjoys warm relations with the people in the Columbia area who once distrusted them. "Two years ago," Shareef says, "those families came to apologize. They appreciated our progress and understood our reasons for being here."

After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, neighbors as well as local and federal law enforcement officials stopped by to offer comfort to the New Medina (New City) community. The visitors assured Shareef and other community members that help was just a phone call away should New Medina be threatened.

"South Mississippi could teach the whole world how to behave," Shareef says. "Based on Sept. 11, we were reassured by our neighbors and even strangers who calmed us with the simple words, 'We know you are not like this and we hope you are OK.' Those few words became our words of comfort and peace."

Solving Common Problems

Heifer International has been working with members of the Marion County Self-Help Organization since 1998 to help them maintain

their small farms and increase their incomes through sustainable livestock development and agricultural training. Some but not all members of the Marion County Self-Help Organization live in New Medina. Over the years, group members have strengthened relationships with their neighbors by solving common agricultural and environmental concerns, increasing income and improving family nutrition.

In addition, they have worked with local youth to build their self-esteem and instill a meaningful work ethic as an alternative to drugs, alcohol, pregnancy and gang activity. Training has been provided by the county Extension agent, the local office of the U.S. Agriculture Department's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Mississippi State University, Southern University and local veterinarians.

Other support for the group has come from the Presbyterian Committee for the Self-Development of People, which provided for the purchase of a tractor, haying equipment, bush hog and trailer. The NRCS has installed a fencing and pasture renovation demonstration site at one member's farm.

New Medina residents have exercised initiative and resourcefulness to secure support from such diverse institutions. They faced substantial economic challenges when they set out in 1991 to purchase 60 acres and build an Islamic school for their children.

Mississippi is the poorest state in the nation and most of its 82 counties are rural. Agriculture



is the state's largest business, and most farms in the Mississippi Delta are large row crop operations where farmers raise thousands of acres of cotton, soybeans and, more recently, corn. Minority farmers working relatively small plots of land have struggled to compete.

Many minority farmers have lost their farms through foreclosure. African-American farmers have lost their farms at a rate 10 times higher than that of other farmers.

Heifer International is working to help these families hold onto their land and boost their income.

A Return to the Land

Jesse Barnes, president of the Marion County Livestock Project, lives on 12 acres that have been in his family for over 100 years.

"I was raised here but lived in New Jersey for the past 39 years," he says. "When my wife, Irma, and I retired in 1998, we decided to return to our land and just sit still. Then I went to a workshop and got sparked up again. It was conducted by New Medina, and the training was provided by Heifer International.

"I attended the first meetings with apprehension because I had always felt Muslims were peculiar people, but during the workshop I real-

ized they respected not only me but everyone else in the community.”

Barnes had been smoking for 44 years but in 1998, after joining the group, he was forced to kick the habit, not only out of respect for his new Muslim friends, but because he was suffering from lung cancer. Before his illness was diagnosed, he and his wife had spent months trying to understand why his health continued to deteriorate.

“When Mr. Barnes got ill,” Irma Barnes remembers, “it was such a shock to see my husband in so much pain. ... We spent months visiting doctors and hospitals, ending with chemotherapy.

“I just wanted to get rid of the pigs and the goats,” she says. “I was so scared and didn’t know who would take care of the animals. But we didn’t have to sell them because our group came through.”

“Mississippi people show so much love,” Jesse Barnes adds. “They are so friendly, and our group is no exception. I would rather be here than anywhere else in the world.

“Before,” he says, “I would never have become involved in a group like this, but because of Heifer International, my involvement with this extraordinary group is as strong as my involvement in the church.”

“I cannot tell you how kind my community was to me when I was sick with cancer. Everyone went out of their way to help me with fruit baskets, feeding my animals, offering to take me to the doctor,” he says.

“Most families in the project are Muslim, with the exception of four or five, but [this religious diversity] has just made us all stronger,” Barnes says. “I did not realize how kind Muslim people were until this project was formed. I was sick with cancer and made it through with God’s

help and the help of our project recipients.”

“Neighbors may be black or white; it makes no difference. They just want to help,” Barnes says. “There may be apprehension at first, but then everyone realizes that we are all the same and just want a simple life.” Irma Barnes adds, “We are all together and God’s children. Race, creed or color, we learn from each other.”

“Feed From the Farm”

Six families have received Spanish goats and one buck, and one family has received three Black Angus heifers and a bull. In addition, two families have received 100 chickens and participated in Heifer’s pastured poultry initiative. This includes the successful marketing of their poultry and supplementary funds used to purchase small equipment and pen material for additional pastured poultry.

Participant families have received training in livestock production, and today a special committee monitors livestock conditions and reproduction. Recipients and other members of the group have also been trained in integrated animal agriculture and farm management including a “feed from the farm” approach. Under this program, all feed for livestock will be provided on the farm from adequate pasture grasses. Such an approach reduces the dependency on purchased feed.

Trees have been planted to provide shade for livestock and to act as windbreaks. Project partners have been trained to care for their livestock and are sparking the interest of community youth in animal science skills. The hope is that they’ll go on to seek higher education in the areas of veterinary medicine and agriculture.

Each recipient of a small herd of goats will pass on to another project partner the same number of equal or better quality. Beef cattle recipients will pass on three Black Angus heifers and a bull between the ages of 18 and 24 months. Those receiving chicks will pass on cash to cover the purchase of 100 additional chicks.

Sales Expanding

Marketing has become an important part of the project, and group members have continued to develop and expand their sales throughout Mississippi.

“Our vision in New Medina,” Rosa Shareef says, “was to be a part of the outer communities but also establish a religious community where Muslims could live and observe their faith while practicing organic farming.

“In 1991, we opened the Islamic school,” she says. “We had the school, a place of worship, but no food. That is when Heifer International became more involved and understood what we were trying to accomplish.

“We were trained by Heifer and began to integrate what we were learning into our daily lives. Heifer International then opened the doors to other local farmers who accepted and welcomed our Muslim community. Today there is peace, understanding and mutual respect from farmer to farmer,” she says.

The networking that was established has brought distant neighbors closer as well as provided an alternative source of income to the families.

“Hard work, high ideals, faith in God, simple living—with this, you can accomplish a lot,” Shareef says. “Heifer International has given us the opportunity to be.” 🌱

Darcy Kiefel is a Heifer International photojournalist based in Boulder, Colo.

W O R L D ON THE WEB



New Features, Same Message

You asked, we listened and now it's here—Heifer's updated website, where you'll find that it's easier than ever to learn about our unique approach to ending hunger, the global impact we make and how you can join us in our work.

Click on the interactive map, and you'll discover exactly where we are and what we do there—project by project. Review the calendar for an up-to-date schedule of events happening in your region of the country. And check out the educational activities going on at our learning centers. You can also get assistance planning your next Heifer Study Tour trip, fill out a volunteer application and even download past issues of *World Ark*.

But not everything is new. You'll still be able to meet Heifer's project partners and be inspired by their stories of newfound hope and dignity through our gifts of livestock and training. And when you're ready to make a gift yourself, perhaps in honor of a friend or loved one, our online Most Important Gift Catalog in the World™ is just as handy as ever.

Check it out at www.heifer.org and let us know what you think.

OUR WORK

GET INVOLVED

GIVE

LEARN

INSIDE HEIFER

Rhinos and Pandas and Books, Oh My!

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In *Jubela*, an orphaned baby rhino finds a new mother in this touching, true story from Swaziland. Expressively realistic pastel paintings bring this moving story to life.

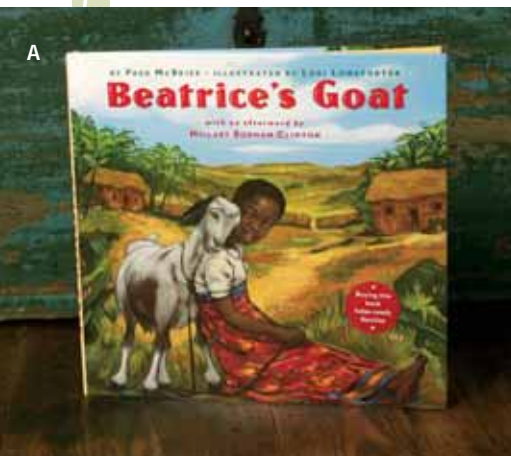
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WORLD ARK MARKET



NEW HEIFER NOTE CARDS

In the summer of 2003, artist Betty LaDuke participated in a Heifer Study Tour to Uganda and Rwanda. She was so inspired by the places she went and the people she met that she painted these portrayals of Heifer's project participants, now reproduced on colorful notecards. Each set contains 12 notecards, 6 each of 2 designs, packaged in an attractive pocket folder.

Heifer Notecards, Uganda:
#NNU004, \$8.00

Heifer Notecards, Rwanda:
#NNR004, \$8.00



A **BEATRICE'S GOAT** by Page McBrier

Illustrated by Lori Lohstoeter, The New York Times Bestselling children's picture book (Simon & Schuster 2000). Read to your children the amazing story of how young Beatrice's life was changed when her family received a goat from Heifer International.
#NB0700, Hardback, \$16.00 #NB0700S, Softback, \$10.00

B **THE COW THAT SAVED THE EARTH**

Show your support for the mission of Heifer International by wearing this attractive shirt featuring an African batik cow proclaiming "The Cow That Saved the Earth," along with the Heifer logo on the sleeve. Black, 100% cotton.
Adult sizes: S-XXL #NS4800, \$12.00

C **BEATRICE'S GOAT TOTE BAG**

Perfect for carrying books or items for work. *Beatrice's Goat* imprinted on canvas tote bag; designed to promote Heifer's Read to Feed® program in conjunction with Simon & Schuster. Illustration by Lori Lohstoeter. #N00401, \$7.50



ARK T-SHIRT

This beautiful, vibrant shirt was designed by artist Stephanie Carter and its message signifies animals bringing happiness around the world. White, 100% cotton.

Adult: #NS4700;
Sizes: S-XXXL, \$12.00
Child: #NS4700;
Sizes: XS-L, \$10.00



HEIFER 2004 WALL CALENDAR

Beautiful photographs taken around the world show Heifer's project partners in their communities. 12-month calendar.

#NV2004, \$6.50

HEIFER MUG

A coffee mug with Heifer's logo on it makes a great gift for almost anyone, even yourself.

#NM0411, \$8.00



HEIFER DENIM SHIRT

This classic denim button-down shirt is perfect for any casual occasion. Heifer's embroidered logo can clearly be seen above the left breast pocket. Available in **long sleeve** or **short sleeve**.

Adult sizes: S-XXXL
Long sleeve: #NS4100, \$30.00
Short sleeve: #NS4200, \$28.00



ARK T-SHIRT AND SWEATSHIRT

This colorful T-shirt, designed by Roxanna Villa, shows Heifer animals on parade. Available in a **T-shirt** or **sweatshirt**. White, 100% cotton.

T-SHIRT

Adult: #NS4400; Sizes: S-XXXL, \$12.00
Child: #NS4400; Sizes: XS-L, \$10.00

SWEATSHIRT

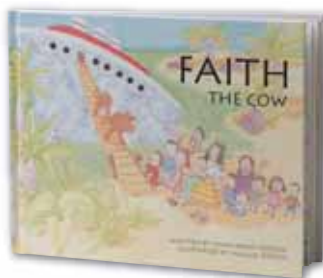
Adult: #NS4500; Sizes: S-XXXL, \$20.00
Child: #NS4500; Sizes: S-L, \$15.00



HEIFER GOLF SHIRT

Perfect for that hard-to-shop-for man in your life. However, women also like the classic look of this golf shirt. Available in **white** or **natural colors**.

Adult sizes: S-XXXL
#NS4300, \$20.00



FAITH THE COW

by Susan Bame Hoover

Illustrated by Maggie Sykora.

Read the story about how the idea for Heifer International came to life and how Faith the cow helped families in Puerto Rico.

#NB0705, Hardback, \$16.00



HEIFER CAPS

Sporting this ball cap will indicate your support of Heifer International. 100% cotton with a relaxed front; easily adjustable. Available in **stone** or **khaki**.

One size fits all.
#NS4000, \$10.00

WORLD ARK VIDEOS

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\$20.01 – \$30.00	\$6.00
\$30.01 – \$50.00	\$7.00
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WE4490000



How do children in India and Uganda live? Award-winning children's video illustrates how the animals Heifer provides give hope and the promise of a brighter future. 10 minutes
#NV0213. \$10.00

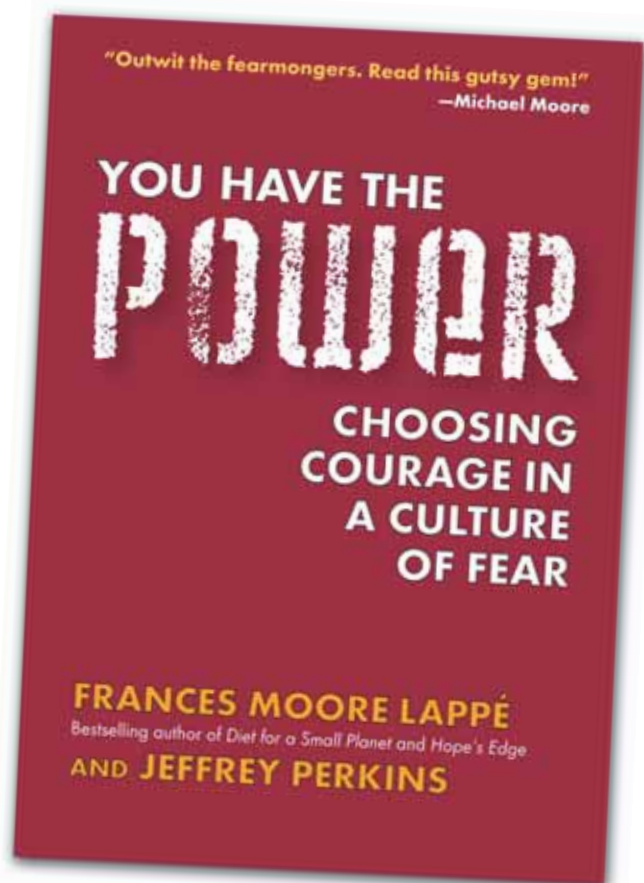
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WOMEN in the Rain

By Frances Moore Lappé
and Jeffrey Perkins

The following is an excerpt from *You Have the Power: Choosing Courage in a Culture of Fear* by Frances Moore Lappé and Jeffrey Perkins. In her latest book, Lappé, the bestselling author of *Diet for a Small Planet* and *Hope's Edge*, and her co-author, Jeffrey Perkins, show how to create both personal and social change in a world full of fear.

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Thirty years ago Women Strike for Peace helped achieve a remarkable victory: an end to above-ground nuclear testing that rained radioactive fallout worldwide, even showing up at dangerous levels in mothers' milk. Journalist Rebecca Solnit recalls hearing of a middle-aged member of the group talking about feeling utterly "foolish and futile" as she stood in the rain one morning, sign in hand, protesting at the Kennedy White House.

Futile? Many years later she would hear Dr. Benjamin Spock—then one of the country's highest-profile opponents of nuclear testing—say that the turning-to-action point for him was seeing a small group of women standing in the rain protesting at the White House. According to Solnit, Spock concluded: "If they were so passionately committed, he should give the issue more consideration himself."

"It's always too early to calculate effect," Solnit warns us, yet that's exactly what we grasp for: We want to know we're making a difference. We fear our own insignificance.

Looking back, I know that was the fear that pushed me out of grad school to seek my path. Yet too often this kind of fear isn't motivating; it's debilitating. How often do we hear friends and acquaintances lament their "drop in the bucket" status, their feeling of powerlessness.

The consequences of such internal messages are momentous. But we don't realize just how momentous ... until we think of what's possible when people believe the opposite. Call up in your mind one of those dramatic scenes we've all heard about when someone marshals the strength of Hercules to lift a 3,000-pound car off a trapped child, or rushes, without a moment's hesitation, into a burning building to save a stranger. Where do they find the strength and courage? we wonder.

In part, these qualities appear because in such moments people know their actions matter—*really* matter. Imagine, then, if you and I could see that our actions can matter just that much, if we were to carry within us the understanding that our small planet, down to our own community, *is* that

The depth,
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"regular" people
acting on common
sense and assuming
responsibility.

burning building. And, like the people in those life-and-death encounters, we know it's up to us and no one else to save the day: Raw energy could burst forth to carry us through our fear.

I recall my first inkling of this energy shift. I was 31 years old, flying back from Rome where I'd attended the first United Nations conference to end hunger. I'd gone mainly to learn. But to my astonishment, the "expert" corporate and government heads gathered were trapped in the myths that I'd discovered were actually blinding us to the solutions at hand. I still recall the flight home, reclining in my airplane seat, thinking, "Oh my God, this means it is up to me. For, if not me, who?"

An Awakening

This didn't feel like an ego-centered thought but more like an awakening to an essential truth: The depth, pervasiveness and complexity of today's problems mean that answers can't come from the top down; they have to come from the bottom up, from "regular" people acting on common sense and assuming responsibility. Suddenly my energy soared; I knew exactly what I had to do when I got home. In record time I rewrote my first book *Diet for a Small Planet*, making its message even clearer, and ultimately reaching millions of readers.

The opposite, an energy sink, is what happens when a tiny dribble into a lousy bucket is all we imagine ourselves to be.

In order to stop disempowering ourselves it might help to dissect the thoughts wrapped up inside the deadly drop-in-the-bucket refrain. One is the notion that we are oddballs if we care about others and the larger world; that we are misfits because we want more from our lives than survival and material ease.

We can let go of this "thought trap" pretty easily once we acknowledge the obvious: that if human beings didn't have the twin needs for connection with each other and effectiveness in the outer world

we just wouldn't have made it this far. ... We're hard wired ... to enjoy cooperating with each other. In fact, we're hard wired to care. ...

A "Helper's High"

A survey of more than 3,000 Americans found—as many of us have discovered on our own—what researchers call a "helper's high." Ninety-five percent of volunteers reported that after helping others they themselves feel better physically and emotionally. They reported heightened energy and feelings of greater serenity.

... Since caring about something beyond ourselves is "natural," it follows that the real oddballs are those who aren't in touch with such feelings. How much more empowering is that thought! And it follows, then, that witnessing another's pain but *not* acting — as we do, for example, in walking with eyes diverted past a destitute, hungry person—violates not just some abstract, unheeded "you should," but something much deeper inside us.

Evolving in close-knit tribes, utterly dependent on each other, it makes perfect sense that values fostering the group's welfare became part of what we call human nature. But with the so-called culture wars at home and tumult over an apparent chasm between an Islamic worldview and the West's, any notion of common values among all of us seems easily tossed out as a pipe dream. And, if there are no common values, where's the basis for common problem solving?

Rushmore Kidder, founder of the Institute for Global Ethics in Maine, begs to differ. His "Shared Values for a Troubled World" reviews his conversations with diverse people from widely differing world cultures and identifies many underlying values they all share. Among them are truthfulness, fairness, responsibility and respect for life. Adam Smith himself, supposedly the godfather of dog-eat-dog (aka valueless) economics, actually believed that all

humanity shares a number of deeply rooted moral sentiments. He singled out justice, noting a “remarkable distinction” between it and other “social virtues.” Other virtues are somewhat optional, he wrote, but “we feel ourselves to be in a peculiar manner tied, bound, and obliged to the observation of justice.”

... Perhaps we humans ... feel so deeply about justice or fairness because we evolved knowing that infractions against it weaken the community on which our lives depend. As Smith himself noted, it is injustice that “will utterly destroy” society.

Everywhere people are coming to understand that the more participants themselves are involved in decisions affecting their futures, the better the outcomes for all.

But the drop-in-the-bucket mindset, leading so many to despair of ever making real change in the world, is even more debilitating than we might think. For, actually, we may *say* we feel like a drop in the bucket but, egad, we actually feel more like drops in the Sahara—evaporating even before hitting the sand! We feel this way—totally insignificant—because we can’t see the bucket.

To flip our fear of insignificance into surging power, we must be able to perceive that bucket, that wider pattern of positive change that our efforts help bring to life. The fact is, buckets fill up pretty fast, as anyone knows who’s ever had a leaky roof on a rainy night.

What Is Ecology?

Intriguingly, the last few decades have seen revolutions in our perceptions of reality that make this trick much more possible. Many born since the 1960s, for example, may not realize that the very word “ecology” is brand new to popular language. And what is ecology, anyway? It’s the science of relationships—of the intricate webs linking all of life—that is gradually infusing our consciousness. Advances not just in natural

history, but in math, computers and physics allow us to see interconnections we literally could not before see.

In his book “Linked,” Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, a physics professor at Notre Dame, writes: “We have come to see that we live in a small world where everything is linked to everything else.” If we really let this simple fact sink in, we realize how much power we have. Networks are key to understanding the world, Barabasi adds. “Small changes ... affecting only a few of the nodes or links can open up hidden doors, allowing new possibilities to emerge.” We despair over our

individual powerlessness only if we remain trapped in our own skins and blind to the intricate networks sewing us all together. In networks every one of us is a “node” whose actions can ripple through all the links.

Only Entry Points

... **O**nce seeing the world as a closely woven net, not a bunch of discrete boxes, our perception of our own actions in the world shifts. The old notion, for example, that positive outcomes result from citizens and do-good groups tackling discrete “issues” can seem overwhelming. There are just too many, and more seem to be cropping up every day. The problem is that an “issue” we imagine as something we can separate out, with a beginning and ending: issues like child care, water pollution, gay rights, money’s influence in politics and so on. But, actually, there are no issues, distinct and finite. There are only entry points into the network of life. If we think of our actions as “entry points,” each affecting a node in the pattern, then we see we are actually shifting the whole pattern when we act with clear intention. The ripples through the network are potentially infinite. What a sense of power!



Evolving in close-knit tribes, utterly dependent on each other, it makes perfect sense that values fostering the group’s welfare became part of what we call human nature.



If we think of our actions as “entry points,” each affecting a node in the pattern, then we see we are actually shifting the whole pattern when we act with clear intention. The ripples through the network are potentially infinite. What a sense of power!

... Earlier we said that being able to perceive “the bucket” is key to seeing our power. Knowing that our drops don’t just evaporate in the desert is to gain hope, transmuting fear to positive energy.

And what is that “bucket” we’re filling? The vessel that “holds” our conscious choices and allows them to collect is not, we’re convinced, a particular *issue*—such as a campaign to save the environment—nor is it a new political “ism” defining a better society. The bucket is an awakening, a set of new, complementary perceptions of reality that themselves make movement toward a more life-serving planet conceivable. One is the networked-as-opposed-to-isolated-boxes view of life we just mentioned.

At the end of our lives few of us want to meet an unchanged self. Don’t we hope instead to discover that who we are has changed many times throughout our lives, as we learned to listen and to respond in new ways to the unknown?

Another is a new understanding of power—what it is and who has it. We’ve lived for so long under the spell of hierarchy—from god-kings to feudal lords to party bosses—that only perhaps in the last few hundred years has the mist begun to clear. In this country it’s because certain among us have been willing to walk with their fear to dump tea into a certain harbor, to stand up against slavery, to march down the street claiming that even females could be trusted with the vote, and to sit in at lunch counters in Mississippi.

Citizen Groups Surge

... This radical shift in perception is so pervasive ... that it’s hard to identify it for the revolution that it is. Some measure it in the explosive growth of citizen organizations, now totaling 2 million in the U.S. alone and growing worldwide, too. ... More national governments, as well as the U.N., are inviting citizen representatives to the table. This growing appreciation of the power of regular people

also means some students gaining a role in school governance. Work teams spreading in factories. Citizen assemblies in major municipalities now making significant budget choices. And patients increasingly enlisted in their own healing practice.

Everywhere people are coming to understand that the more participants themselves are involved in decisions affecting their futures, the better the outcomes for all.

Here again, we humans are more like our animal friends than we might have guessed. While animal-behavior experts long assumed that, say, the head-honcho buffalo decides when the herd moves, they’re discovering it just doesn’t work that

way. Now they know such actions reflect the preference of the majority. Red deer, native to Britain, for instance, move only when 60 percent of the adults stand up. Whooper swans of northern Europe “vote” by moving their heads; African buffalo, by the direction of the females’ gaze. Scientists also conclude that this sort of animal “democracy” carries a tangible survival edge over top-down direction.

An Interconnected World

Putting all this together we see that rather than a top-down, command-and-control world where those at the bottom have virtually no power, we are living in a highly interconnected world with changes rippling up and through billions of “nodes” —ourselves and our communities.

If this is true, how do we come to feel it in our bones? If “mirror neurons” exist, as the previous chapter celebrated, then we can become aware moment to moment that our daily actions actually help create what goes on around us. The existence of mirror

neurons means that we influence each other in ways mysterious and invisible: When I'm watching your actions, my brain is firing as if I were taking those actions myself. We are forever sending signals. In "The Feeling of Being Stared At," the Cambridge University biologist Rupert Sheldrake offers intriguing evidence that such exchange goes on beneath conscious awareness.

And we must not forget that our actions send signals to ourselves, too. To transform our fear of insignificance we must ride herd on those messages as well.

For, while we may *want* to believe "the world can change," how can we possibly believe that others more oppressed—some pushed to the very edge of survival—can find their voices if we don't experience ourselves changing? Or, stated positively: We can believe the world can change only as we experience *ourselves* changing. Ultimately, it's our own direct experience that's the most convincing.

At the end of our lives few of us want to meet an unchanged self. Don't we hope instead to discover that who we are has changed many times throughout our lives, as we learned to listen and to respond in new ways to the unknown?

And there may be only one sure way to realize that hope. It is, as we've noted, by being willing to risk. Risk is anything that brings up fear. And what feels like a risk to one of us may feel like a breeze to you. Yet, as we see ourselves doing what we thought we could not do, we become what we all secretly want—we become heroes to ourselves. We feel more powerful. And we are.

... As we proceed on our walk with fear, we become more convincing to ourselves, and we can look out to the rest of the world able to see possibilities once hidden from view. Others see our courage growing, too; and we can never guess the impact. So as you begin to embrace new, liberating thoughts about fear, one thing is certain: Your change does not stop with you.

Seven Old Thoughts, Seven New Thoughts

Old Thoughts		New Thoughts
Fear means I'm in danger. Something's wrong. I must escape and seek safety.		Fear is pure energy. It's a signal. It might mean stop, it could mean go!
If I stop what I'm doing, I'll be lost. I'll never start again.		Sometimes we have to stop in order to find our path.
I have to figure it all out before I can do anything.		We don't have to believe we can do it to do it; the very act of showing up, even with our fear, has power.
If I act on what I believe, conflict will break out. I'll be humiliated and ineffective.		Conflict means engagement. Something real is in motion. It's an opening, not a closing.
Our greatest fears are our worst enemies; they drag us down and hold us back.		Our worst fears can be our greatest teachers.
If I'm really myself, I'll be excluded. If I break connection, I'll be alone forever.		To find genuine connection, we must risk disconnection. The new light we shine draws others toward us, and we become conscious choosers.
I'm just a drop in the bucket. My effort might make me feel better, but it can't do much.		Every time we act, even with our fear, we make room for others to do the same. Courage is contagious.

From *You Have the Power: Choosing Courage in a Culture of Fear* by Frances Moore Lappé and Jeffrey Perkins. Copyright © 2004 Frances Moore Lappé and Jeffrey Perkins. Reprinted by permission of Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin of Penguin Group (USA), New York.



Butters is an organic farmer from Moscow, Idaho.

Mary Jane Butters

Serves Up Good, *Wholesome Living*

By Eileen Dolbeare HEIFER INTERNATIONAL NEW MEDIA DIRECTOR

Food is one of our most basic human needs and pleasures. We should be nourished and fulfilled by what we eat—not confused and scared.

But in a time of mad cow disease, genetically modified organisms and widespread uncertainty about the validity of our food pyramid—are you low carb or low fat?—we're often left wondering how to make the best and safest food choices.

That's why Mary Jane Butters' solution to all of the confusion is so compelling. Butters, an organic farmer from Moscow, Idaho, with a passion for feeding people well, runs an organic farm with a name as appealing as her own—"Paradise Farm," where she produces a line of instant or quick-prep organic meals.

Dubbed by some as a possible successor to Martha Stewart for her natural domestic creativity, Butters wants to reconnect rural food producers with consumers. Today, her website, magazine and product line offer "Simple Solutions for Everyday Organic" that help people access wholesome, organic

food "from farm house to your house." Her first book, "Mary Jane's Gathering Place," is scheduled to be published in spring 2005.

Her "elegant and easy" products, featured at <http://www.maryjanesfarm.org>, include an array of exclusively organic foods including such appetizing options as sweet corn salsa, garlic pesto fry bread and Sicilian polenta. Her website includes an online catalog where users can purchase organic food at a reasonable price and read recipes for easy-to-cook one-skillet meals. It's a solution to eat organically even on a tight budget.

Butters' products are just the beginning of the "everyday organic" lifestyle she espouses. In a 144-page, full-color magazine that Butters calls "one part catalog and two parts magazine," she has created a "women's magazine where we can share solutions and show off our talents and really just a place where we can talk."

Mary Jane Butters is a charismatic figure because she brings us back to the basics of good, wholesome food in a way that's doable and satisfying. And that's truly sustainable.

Smart Communities Network

<http://www.sustainable.doe.gov>

It's not hard to agree that sustainable development is one of the best ways to invest in our future and the health of our world. But it can be an intimidating concept to apply to your own life and community.

First, you might ask, "What exactly is it?"

According to the United Nations,

sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

It's a noble goal. But how do you start in your own backyard? Recycling? Solar energy? Local shopping? Civic planning?

All of the above and more. And the U.S. Energy Department has amassed a valuable

How to Eat Well

MARY JANE BUTTERS OFFERS SOME SIMPLE TIPS ON HOW TO BUY AND MAKE HEALTHY, ORGANIC FOOD.

1 Find food with a face on it.

Put a face to food. Know the farmer; know who handled the food and where it came from. There is all this faceless food in the grocery stores, and we have faceless corporations who feed us.

2 Support a local farmer.

Go to your farmers market religiously. Even in your grocery store, if you see they're trying to support a local person, really make an effort not only to buy what they're producing, but communicate with them and thank them. Think of them as national heroes because we don't have enough.

3 Throw out your salad forks.

What do you do with a rutabaga or beets? I've created a solution for how to eat vegetables—eat salad with a spoon. Put all your greens and vegetables on a cutting board in a big mound and chop it up. It's a great way to eat more diverse food. Throw out your salad forks!

4 Focus and do little things.

The world needs so much that it gets overwhelming. Do smaller things that make you feel good, and go on to the next thing. Change grows organically.

web resource of all things sustainable known as "Smart Communities Network—Topics on Sustainability" to help guide you. The site offers overview articles, slideshows, web links, recommended books and videos, and educational materials and programs that can develop and promote sustainability in local communities.

If you're interested in learning about alternatives to traditional planning and development, which are creating, rather than solving, social and environmental problems such as urban sprawl, congestion, overcrowding, pollution and resource over-consumption, you will find the site worthy of a bookmark.

—Reviewed by
Eileen Dolbeare,
Heifer International
New Media Director

Living Simply

www.simpleliving.net

For many people, including those with plenty of cash, living better doesn't mean having *more*, it means enjoying what they do have more or doing more with less.

If you're among those who've come to feel enslaved rather than liberated by material possessions, if you just want to learn something new, or if you'd like to chat with people with similar interests, you'll enjoy www.simpleliving.net.

The folks at the Simple Living Network call themselves "an international network of like-minded individuals who enjoy sharing their ideas and insights about 'simple living' (a.k.a. "voluntary simplicity").

"Simplicity is not about poverty or deprivation," the website tells us. "It is about discovering what is 'enough' in your life—based upon thoughtful analysis of your lifestyle and values—and discarding the rest."

Visitors will find a database of local simplicity study groups, tools "for earth-friendly, sustainable living" and discussion forums, among many other resources.

The Simple Living Network offers suggestions that don't just save cents; they make sense.

—Reviewed by
Jan Cottingham,
World Ark Editor



"I Have a Name" Women in Nepal Find Their Voice

Freedom
from the
fear of
poverty
empowers
people.

By James De Vries

HEIFER SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF PROGRAMS

My first impression on entering Imadol, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, is that it's just like thousands of other villages. The dwellings are simple one- or two-story brick houses, built by the families many years ago. Some are covered by thatch, others by tile. All are surrounded by rice paddies and small gardens.

Chickens run to avoid our vehicle. Children run to the road to observe the visitors. Down in the valley, stacks of red bricks indicate a cottage industry of brick making.

We come to a stop at a junction in the dirt road, which serves as the center of the village, and a group of smiling women immediately surrounds us. The palms of their hands join in a prayer-like gesture: "*Namaste*," which means "Welcome."

As we emerge from our four-wheel-drive vehicle, the women place leis of flowers around our necks and apply a "tika," bright red-colored rice and oil, to our foreheads.

The women, members of Parijat Women's Group, a "women's awareness group," can hardly contain themselves while telling us about their group and the impact of Heifer's assistance.

Literacy Training Included

In 2000, 13 women received either two sheep or two goats and either one ram or one buck after training in the Heifer Cornerstones of Just and Sustainable Development and Improved Animal Management. Much effort also went into helping the group learn how to manage its own activities. And in a unique feature for the Heifer program in Nepal, the women also have the opportunity to participate in literacy training.

PHOTO BY DARCY KIEFEL/HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

With Heifer's help the women of Imadol have changed their lives.

Sarada Bista, the chairwoman of the group, tells me, "Before Heifer, I could not speak." This is hard for me to believe as I listen to her proudly discussing the group's achievements.

Income Triples

Because of the sheep and goats, the women's income has more than tripled, rising to the equivalent of \$200 annually. This disposable income has enabled families to pay fees for all their children, not just boys, to attend school. They have improved their homes, bought clothes, invested in land and developed businesses, such as broiler chicken production.

One of the group's members won what's called the Golden Talent Award. Of the \$1,000 award, the winner kept \$200 and the rest went to her group.

One woman in Imadol had approached a moneylender for a loan to get medical attention for her very ill husband. "He refused because I am a woman," she tells me. "They don't trust women, even though I offered my tilahi as security." (A tilahi, a gold ornament worn on strands of beads around the neck, is given to a woman by her husband when they are married. It's equivalent to a wedding band.)

Desperate, she had approached the group, again offering her tilahi as security. The women told her, "We could never take your tilahi. It is your pride, your dignity." But they agreed to give her the loan.

The woman's husband recovered completely and helped to repay the loan. The men of Imadol took note that "women are able to help their husbands and not just men helping women."

Radhika Khadka explains, "As a result of Heifer, we have found our voice. We can use our own name. We get mail in our own name; before we could only get it through our husbands. Even though we are poor and did not have any dowry, we can help our husbands."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JAMES DE VRIES/HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

Confidence and Hope

While the Heifer animals served as a wonderful catalyst, the formation of the group—and the confidence and hope it has inspired—has been the biggest gift to the women.

The members of the Parijat Women's Group have power. They have worked together to improve the village road. They helped a family whose house burned down, buying clothes, food, pots and pans and other necessities.

The group takes particular pride in showing me their small temple, which they built with donated money and

Top: The women have organized a day care center for children while their parents work making bricks.

Left: The author visits a Heifer project member in Imadol.



Because of the sheep and goats, the women's income has more than tripled, rising to the equivalent of \$200 annually. This disposable income has enabled families to pay fees for all their children, not just boys, to attend school.

labor. "Now we have our own place to worship each day."

While I am with the group, the members hold their monthly saving and credit meeting. Each month, every member of the group is required to save the same amount.

During the meeting, all 24 members deposit their savings, and even though some couldn't be present, their savings are duly recorded. With 1,200 rupees available, the group then hears oral applications for loans.

One member asks for 600 rupees to buy a goat, a second requests 600 rupees to buy cloth to make dresses for her daughters for the coming festival, another woman needs 1,000 rupees for school fees for her son, and a fourth wants 1,000 rupees for school fees for her daughter.

A discussion on the merit of these requests follows. After about 10 minutes of debate, Laxmi Shrestha stops the conversation and says, "We all agree these are good requests, but we only have 1,200 rupees available and the total needed is 3,200."

As an honored guest and leader in Heifer International, I fear they'll turn to me and ask me to decide. I say a silent prayer for wisdom. The group quickly agrees, however, to use the Heifer Cornerstones to help make the decision.

Every month, the group takes one Cornerstone as the theme for that month. They use the Cornerstones regularly to assess the group's activities.

After further lively discussion, Laxmi Shrestha explains their decision. Using the Cornerstones of Genuine Need and Justice and Income and Nutrition, the group will provide 500 rupees for the goat because that will generate income for a member who doesn't already own a goat. They also award 200 rupees for cloth, as this family is "very poor" and their small daughter would be very sad not to receive a new dress for the festival. "The older one will understand, so we only give her 200 rupees."

Next, based on the Cornerstone of Gender and Family Focus, they grant 500

rupees to help with the girl's school fees. "Our group gives preference to the girl child because they are often neglected," the members explain.

The group also pledges to help the boy next month, and the mother indicates she's sure the headmaster will accept this promise from the group and allow her son to attend school meanwhile. Everyone then claps approval and the loans are recorded.

Everyone Repays

The group charges five rupees per month on a loan of 500 rupees. That's about one-tenth of what is charged by the local moneylenders. Asked if anyone has defaulted on a loan, they respond, "Never. They can't fail to repay." During the past five years repayments have sometimes been delayed because of bad weather or other problems. But, eventually, everyone repays.

As the meeting wraps up, I'm introduced to four girls who have received sponsorships to attend school; two were sponsored by Heifer Nepal through its scholarship program, and two by the local group.

Ranjita, a pretty little girl of about 12, thanks Heifer for helping her. "I was afraid because of poverty that I could never go to school," she says.

Looking at Ranjita, I think of my granddaughter Lauren who is also 12 and an eager learner. How many girls and boys are "afraid because of poverty"? How many take their opportunity to go to school for granted?

As we leave the village, the women tell me that their group "has become famous." They are receiving many requests from others in the area to help them start groups and have already passed on the gift to two new groups.

The image of people—of little girls, of women and men—living in fear because of poverty has stayed with me since leaving Imadol. Such fear imprisons people. Free of it, they live empowered and proud. First impressions are deceiving. Imadol is no ordinary village. It's a wellspring of hope. 🌱

A Golden Anniversary in the Philippines

Celebrating 50 Years of Sustainable Success



J. Rex Enoch, Heifer adult education manager (in blue shirt), stands with members of the Study Tour group that visited the Philippines.

Story and Photographs by J. Rex Enoch
HEIFER ADULT EDUCATION MANAGER

When Study Tour participants planted rice and trees in the Philippines earlier this year, they helped extend the legacy of one of Heifer International's oldest and most successful country programs.

For 50 years, Heifer Philippines has been addressing challenges of poverty, environmental degradation, and significant political and social turmoil through innovative programs. Outstanding leadership on the part

of Heifer International country staff members, local leaders, various partner organizations and, now, key political figures has ensured that this effort will be sustainable.

At all levels, Filipinos are "Passing on the Gift" of knowledge, training and hope for a better future.

During our Study Tour (Jan. 24-Feb. 8), we had the privilege of participating in activities celebrating the Philippines program's Golden Anniversary. We took part in five Passing on the Gift cer-

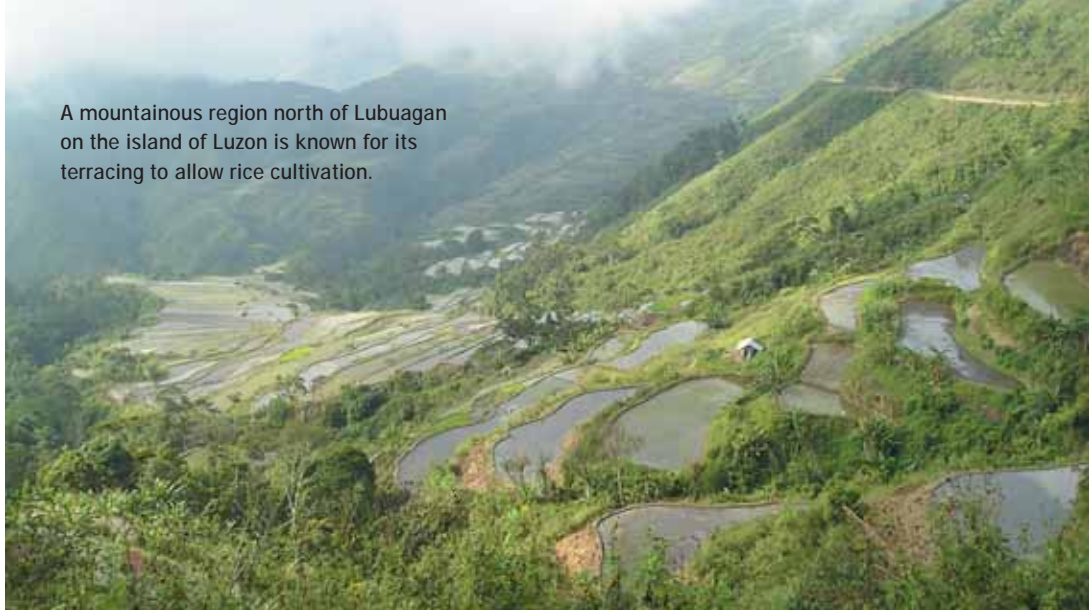
emonies involving water buffalo, goats, cows and chickens. We visited projects in all three regions where Heifer works (Mindanao, the Visayas and Northern Luzon), meeting project participants and learning about the cultural heritage of their beautiful country.

And we planted rice and trees—which will help current and future families move toward greater self-reliance.

But best of all, we met many wonderfully hospitable people everywhere we went.

For 50 years, Heifer Philippines has worked to overcome widespread poverty, environmental degradation and persistent political and social turmoil.

A mountainous region north of Lubuagan on the island of Luzon is known for its terracing to allow rice cultivation.



The Early Years

Like almost any organization that has persevered for 50 years, Heifer Philippines has a remarkable history.

Heifer's work in the Philippines began in the early 1950s, when animals (primarily goats) were being shipped to South Korea by boat. On their return trip, the boats stopped in the Philippine Islands to pick up monkeys to take back to the United States for sale to zoos. In 1954, they started bringing additional goats, which they exchanged for monkeys.

The goats were given to local YMCAs, which distributed them to area farmers. These first projects, on the island of Leyte, usually involved no formal training programs for recipients.

Later, the program was administered by United Church of Christ and United Methodist missionaries who worked together through the Philippines Global Life Center. This partnership lasted until the UCC missionary who had been coordinating the programs retired in 1983. The resulting leadership vacuum, coupled with a political situation that made work in the countryside unsafe, led to a cessation of the program for three years.

After former dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his family went into exile, a Heifer employee, Jerry Aaker, traveled to the Philippines in February 1986 to

explore the possibility of reopening the program.

Jim Orprecio, who was working with the United Missions Office that coordinated six religious groups' programs in the Philippines, accompanied Aaker around the country. Because of continued political unrest, the Philippines office was not officially opened until September of that year with Kate Geiger being named country director.

Orprecio was hired in October 1986 to work with Geiger, and they administered a program with an annual budget of \$50,000.

When Geiger left in 1991 (to work with Heifer Indonesia), Orprecio became country director, a position he held until this year. The primary goal of the program's leaders was to institute better training procedures to insure the success of the projects. This continues to be a chief focus, along with a strong emphasis on ecological awareness.

Heifer Philippines' Priorities

Consistent with Heifer's standard practices, Heifer Philippines uses livestock, training and technical services to alleviate hunger and poverty and care for the earth. Passing on the Gift is an integral part of the program's partnership with local community organizations. In addition to insuring the sustainability of the program, this

practice provides project partners with the opportunity to help others as they have been helped. This fits well with the cultural norm of *utang na loob*, or debt of gratitude, a significant Filipino value. Heifer Philippines has identified four priority issues. They are:

- Sustainable Natural Resource Management, a livestock-based community development approach that focuses on the livelihood of farm families, and the ecological sustainability of the production system and watershed.

- Program Sustainability, which involves increasing the program's resources and diversifying its funding base in order to serve more families and communities.

- Project Sustainability and Self-Reliance, in which every effort is made to maximize the productivity and impact of all projects for long-term benefits to both partner organizations and member families.

- Gender, Equality and Justice, which enhances the significance of equal involvement and full participation of all family and community members to insure the success of development undertakings.

Years of unsustainable farming practices have resulted in many problems. Soil erosion and soil infertility have led to malnutrition, high infant mortality and food insecurity.



Children selected for participation in the ChiLD (Children in Livestock Development) program receive their chickens at the Lantapan Field Office on the island of Mindanao.

Every effort is made in all aspects of Heifer Philippines' work to provide opportunities for families to produce and share food and income from their own resources in ways that are economically and ecologically sound, and thus truly sustainable.

Innovative Programs

As Heifer Philippines celebrates its 50th Anniversary, many innovative programs demonstrate that staff and project participants have learned a great deal from their experiences.

Some of the exciting and sustainable program activities that our Study Tour's participants witnessed included:

- **Community Animal Health Volunteers (CAHV).** Farmers are trained to provide basic animal health care to others in their community. They support local veterinarians by providing routine care and maintenance at considerably less cost in time and money. At least 34 CAHV training programs have produced more than 700 leaders who serve at least 32,000 farm families and operate 14 village animal drugstores. In the next five years, it's expected that these programs will grow to serve at least 330,000 families with more than 5,000 CAHV trained volunteers. A total of 220 local CAHV chapters and three regional federations will be established to facilitate exchanges of knowledge and experiences.

- **Children in Livestock Development Program (ChiLD).** Since only 4

percent of children in upland communities complete high school, literacy levels are declining. Low incomes because of environmental degradation, population pressure and decreased landholdings make it difficult for families to afford basic education for their children. Children quit school, take low-paying jobs, marry early and have more children, perpetuating the cycle.

In the ChiLD program, children learn entrepreneurial skills as well as poultry management. They are given 24 chickens and trained (along with their families) in their care. They are required to pass on 48 chickens (24 to another child or family and 24 back to the project), and the rest become income-generating resources to help pay for their schooling. The goal is to help at least 690 children in 13 communities in the next five years.

- **The Southeast Asia Water Monitoring Program.** Described in the Fall 2003 World Ark, this program involves farmers in research to maintain the quality and quantity of their water.

- **Let's Help Bohol.** This partnership among Heifer, the provincial government of Bohol (in the Visayas), 19 municipal local government units and many farmers groups is helping increase family income, reduce poverty and malnutrition and establish sustainable farm practices.

More than 80 percent of the population is below the poverty level, and more than 60 percent fall into

Only 4 percent of children in upland communities complete high school.

a dependency category (below 17 or over 60 years of age). Literacy rates are low and too many workers are employed in low-skill occupations. The distribution of animals and the accompanying training in sustainable agricultural practices and natural resource management, along with the Passing on the Gift requirements, can help improve all areas of community life. At least 20 farmers groups have been approved for assistance so far, and noticeable improvements in various sustainable practices are evident.

A Tour to Remember

Those of us who were privileged to participate in the Philippines Study Tour were moved to tears many times by the warm hospitality and gentle nature of the Filipino people. We were greeted everywhere we went by smiling and beautiful people, especially in the projects, where they showered us with gifts and "fed us" in more ways than one.

The generous and kind nature of the Filipino people is evident in their Passing on the Gift programs where they, based on their own initiative, pass on two (not one) animals for every one they receive. They are resourceful people, and with Heifer's help, they will work out their own salvation. ✨



PHOTO BY WESLEY HITT

North Little Rock Mayor Patrick Hays (from left), Little Rock Mayor Jim Dailey, Heifer Board of Directors Vice Chairman Steve Mondora, Heifer Board of Directors Chairman Charles Stewart, Arkansas Lt. Gov. Win Rockefeller, Heifer President and CEO Jo Luck, former President Bill Clinton, Gertrude Butler and former U.S. Sen. David Pryor break ground with implements from around the world.

Heifer Breaks Ground

On a beautiful morning last fall, a magnificent pair of Belgian draft horses swept a plow through a patch of Arkansas dirt while a crowd of Heifer International supporters looked on.

Moments later, Heifer President and CEO Jo Luck, former United States President Bill Clinton and other guests dug in using implements sent to Little Rock by project participants from around the world. Applause greeted the formal groundbreaking for Heifer's new headquarters.

The Heifer International Center will be built on a 26-acre tract near the Arkansas River and the Clinton Presidential Library and Park, which is under construction.

Special guests at the ceremony included Thurl Metzger of Little Rock, Heifer's former executive director; Bishop John Rucyahana of Rwanda; Pateka Sonjani, consul general for the minister of foreign affairs, Republic of South Africa; and Gertrude Butler, a Little Rock philanthropist who has supported Heifer for more than 30 years.

Former U.S. Sen. David Pryor of Arkansas, a member of the

Heifer board, served as master of ceremonies, and Arkansas Lt. Gov. Win Rockefeller spoke.

Clinton noted that his new neighbor shared his own foundation's goal of building friendships across the globe. "Heifer helps people in that half of the world's population that is living on less than \$2 a day," he said. "The most important thing we can do is to give them the ability to help themselves. And to help their family members, their neighbors and their communities—and that's what Heifer does."

Heifer's new headquarters will be a model of environmentally sound design. Both preparation of the site and construction of the building will become unique examples of sustainable design and development in Arkansas, demonstrating Heifer's commitment to using its resources wisely and responsibly.

The new building, expected to be completed in spring 2005, will enable Heifer to regroup its staff and save money while creating a focal point for hunger education in America.

Program Director Named



Heifer has hired a new director for its Mexico country program.

Alejandro Lopez Musalem comes to Heifer from Gueta AC, a Mexican non-governmental organization that he and his wife founded in Oaxaca in collaboration with the International Society for Ecology and Culture. Gueta AC was aimed at raising awareness of the importance of local food systems for the environment and the economy of the Isthmus region of Oaxaca.

He previously worked for the International Society for Ecology and Culture in the United Kingdom, where he helped coordinate efforts by non-governmental organizations concerned with local knowledge and permaculture.

He received his master's degree from the Center for Tropical Agricultural Research and Teaching.



Lohani Honored

King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal presented Heifer's Mahendra Lohani with the Prabal Gorkha Dakshin Bahu (fourth) medal late last year.

Lohani, director of Heifer's Asia-South Pacific Programs, was recognized for his contribution to Nepal's livestock and poultry sector. The medal was awarded on Nov. 21, 2003, the king's birthday, at Narayanhiti Royal Palace in Kathmandu.

Lohani was Heifer's country director for Nepal from 1977 to 2003.

Mark Your Calendars

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of Heifer International, and we have several events planned.

The Conference on Ending Hunger: Heifer at 60 will be held in Little Rock Oct. 21-23. As part of the conference, the organization is sponsoring a symposium, "Small Farmers in a Global Economy," scheduled for Oct. 21. And on Oct. 23 a gala event will conclude the conference activities.

More details on these and other events celebrating 60 years of the work of Heifer International are scheduled to be available on the website (www.heifer.org) in early April, and also will be included in future issues of *World Ark*.

Midwest Region Celebrates 60th

The Midwest Region will celebrate Heifer's 60th anniversary in Goshen, Ind., June 25-27. Kicking off the weekend on Friday afternoon will be a series of educational forums to help people understand the social, economic and political context in which Heifer works.

Friday evening will feature a concert by Ken Medema at the new Goshen College Concert Hall. Saturday's events at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds include speakers from Heifer projects around the world, displays, craft items, children's programs, a "cowboy" display room, global village exercises and a quilt auction.

A banquet Saturday evening at Greencroft Senior Center will honor cowboys who accompanied animal shipments following World War II. Invitations have been sent to nearly 800 former cowboys. Jo Luck, Heifer's president and CEO, will be the featured speaker.

Local churches have been encouraged to celebrate Heifer's work in their worship services Sunday, June 27. Some church services will feature Heifer International speakers.

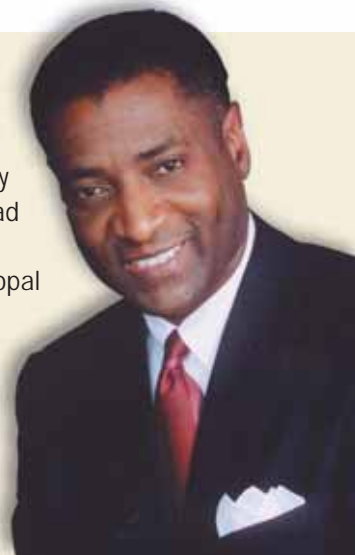
For more information and reservations for the concert or banquet, call (877) 841-7184 or send an e-mail to www.mw@heifer.org.

Stewart Elected Chairman

Charles Stewart, senior vice president and corporate director of community development for Regions Financial Corp. in Little Rock, has been elected to lead the board of Heifer International.

Stewart has represented a Heifer covenant agency, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and served as vice chair of the board before being elected to his new post.

At Regions, Stewart coordinates, at the corporate level, management of community development and community investment activities in an eight-state region. He has been appointed to many state and federal boards, including the Arkansas State Police Commission, the Federal Small Business Advisory Council and the Advisory Board of the National Institutes of Health in Washington, D.C.



Endless Giving

BUILDING AN ENDOWMENT FOR THE FUTURE

By Janet K. Ginn, President

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Wouldn't it be great to know that you could provide support for those most in need now and continue to support them after your lifetime? Heifer Foundation endowment gifts allow you to do just that. By establishing an endowment, you can insure that your life and values are preserved for generations.

Some endowments honor the memory of loved ones who have passed away, while some are created as a permanent statement of values by designating how the gifts are used by Heifer to ensure that

not only one family but generations share the benefit. Yet another kind of endowment can be designated for use in the place closest to your heart. Each year, 100 percent of the income from the endowments

is available for the purpose you designate. Following are some examples.

MEMORIAL ENDOWMENTS

You can create an ongoing legacy for a loved one by establishing a Memorial Endowment with Heifer International Foundation. For a gift of \$1,000 or more, an endowment named in memory of your loved one will be both a continuing source of income to the mission of Heifer International and a reminder of the values by which your loved one lived.

COUNTRY ENDOWMENTS

Individuals or families can establish Endowments to honor loved ones or set up a family fund. Country Endowments can be designated for a particular area of Heifer's work or go directly into the general endowment that supports Heifer's overall mission.

BIRTHDAY ENDOWMENTS

A Birthday Endowment made in the name of a person special to you can be established for a gift of \$1,000. The Foundation will invest your endowment gift, and the annual income will be used to send a farm animal to a different family in need each year. Your special person will receive a birthday card each year stating that in his or her honor a needy family will receive Heifer's help.

HOLIDAY ENDOWMENTS

With a \$1,000 Heifer Foundation Holiday Gift Endowment, your friend or loved one will receive a card annually for the rest of his or her life. More importantly, your endowment will mean the gift of an animal to a different family each year. You will receive a charitable income-tax deduction for a sizable portion of your gift.

If you would like more information, just return the attached form, or go to www.heiferfoundation.org to download a form to establish your own endowment today. 🐾



"In my mind's eye, I see a village somewhere where women are treated better because of Heifer's gender equity work, and I can think of no greater honor to my mother than to have helped to make that happen. I think of some woman I will never meet who gains economic independence: This is a tribute to my mother's life."
—Marcia Hinz-Hill, shown with her mother



"Throughout my life, I have carried the dream of providing opportunities for young people. The life income plans that I have with Heifer Foundation allow me to know that the good things with which God has blessed my life will go to provide for others in need, regardless of race, religion or color."
—Ethel Hawkins (1911-2004)

2004 DAN WEST FELLOW NAMED



Marvel Lund

Throughout his life, Heifer founder Dan West maintained a deep commitment to helping the poor, hungry and those on the world's margins. His vision still guides the organization and speaks to the simplest and most basic principle of charity—helping people to help themselves. In his honor, Heifer International Foundation established

the Dan West Fellow Award to honor those who have given of themselves to help the less fortunate of the world.

Each year, the Foundation's Trustee Emeriti choose one outstanding leader to be recognized as a Dan West Fellow. The Foundation is honored to announce that the 2004 Dan West Fellow Award winner is Marvel Lund. At a ceremony earlier this year near her home in Sacramento, Calif., she graciously accepted the award and spoke eloquently of her passion for Heifer's work around the world.

Lund and her late husband, Harold "Hal" Lund, began their support of Heifer in 1961. Since then, she has served on the Foundation's Board of Trustees and helped start California's Sacramento-area Heifer Project Committee, was instrumental in starting a Christmas giving program in Sacramento-area church congregations, and, most recently, Heifer Foundation's \$100 Million Club.

After the Foundation's Board of Trustees set a goal of raising the Foundation's assets to \$100 million by 2010, she and the staff of Heifer Foundation established the club to allow donors to become involved at every level of giving to reach the goal. At the time, proceeds from the Foundation's endowment contributed approximately \$500,000 annually to the work of Heifer International. By achieving \$100 million in total Foundation assets, the contribution will amount to roughly \$2 million annually.

Heifer International and Heifer Foundation are fortunate to have so many dedicated supporters who give their time and talents to providing a helping hand to those in need.

(Please complete and return this reply form.)

Dear Friends at Heifer International Foundation:

- ☐ Please send me a country endowment catalog.
- ☐ Please accept my gift to the \$100 Million Club.
- ☐ I have already provided for Heifer in my will.
- ☐ Please send me a complimentary will kit.
- ☐ Please accept my gift to the _____ Endowment.

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www.heiferfoundation.org
(888) 422-1161



Mail this form to:
Heifer International Foundation
P. O. Box 727
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203



Our Children, Ourselves

By Elissa Ely

Elissa Ely is a psychiatrist and essayist who lives in Massachusetts. She is a frequent contributor to National Public Radio's "All Things Considered." This essay first appeared in the *Boston Globe*.

Because the kindergarten hoedown started promptly at 9 a.m. and because the school bell rings at 8:35, parents had 25 minutes between dropping off their kids and seeing them again at the big event.

Because 25 minutes is not long enough to check e-mail or make calls with any degree of concentration, we wandered over to the gym and sat on bleachers moist from yesterday's basketball game. Hoops and ropes hung from the ceiling. Most of us had climbed something like them years ago in similar gyms. Back then we were doing chin-ups for President Kennedy to save the nation when it needed us. We were fit for our country. Now, whether an improvement or not, we are fit for ourselves.

The first half of the first year of school was over. Along the way, a wooden cow had been milked; pumpkin seeds had been planted and forgotten. The hoedown was the finale. It was a kind of graduation and the first public appearance of the class as a single kindergarten organism.

Kids emerged from the gym doors, full of aerobic song. Film came out. Camcorders.

Here is my kindergartner—who only wears dresses—in overalls. There is yours pulling at his cute neckerchief, looking just as uncomfortable. A ridiculous quantity of emotion is rising in this moist place.

War is going to break out, recession is prominent, but none of that matters for the next few minutes. The child you love infinitely (and the child beside him that your neighbor beside you loves exactly as much) is about to burst into "Oh! Susannah."

Their singing is out of key and out of kilter. It worsens during "Bingo," when the farmers begin to lose their concentration.

But we are mesmerized. The father with his professional recording equipment turns it away from the kids and onto the parents. He pans across our faces when the head teacher asks us to join our children for the "Circle Dance." We're all loopy with love, clunking heavily down from the rafters.

Sixty kids and 120 parents join hands in the middle of the gym. Good-natured adults are holding the hands of other adults they don't know. The teacher turns up a boom box—something tinny about Farmer Brown who steps to the left, steps to the right, steps into the center.

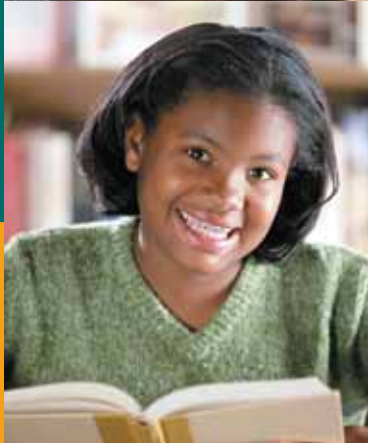
"Yours is so musical," says my neighbor. "Yours is so cute," I say. We don't know each other's names and are talking about children we've never seen before. The amount of good will around here is hard to believe.

In parenthood, the first shock is the physical cost we pay without blinking. The bill comes around almost at once. Everything we do, through long, feverish nights, is to sustain these children who are ours, to prevent their pain when possible and absorb transferable heartache when it is not. Social scientists say it is self-promotion—we care for our own in order to guarantee our genes will persevere. Some of us might prefer a more tender explanation, though it is bad form to argue with academics.

Then the second shock comes, maybe in the middle of a hoedown. It is more generalized. The glow of goodwill begins to spill over; interest extends beyond our own genes. I find myself admiring the child next to mine, socially at first, but then genuinely. It is the stupidest, most remarkable realization: Your farmer is as excellent and exceptional as mine. That's surprising, since I love mine more than anything in the universe, and you feel exactly the same way—and yours does not belong to me or mine to you.

But it makes social sense. The world outside this room full of sweaty adoration is large and dangerous. After they have finished milking their wooden cows and planting pumpkin seeds in paper cups, these farmers will find ways of salvaging the nation. When they do, yours will save mine, and mine will save yours, too.

In the name of self-preservation, we'd better love them all.



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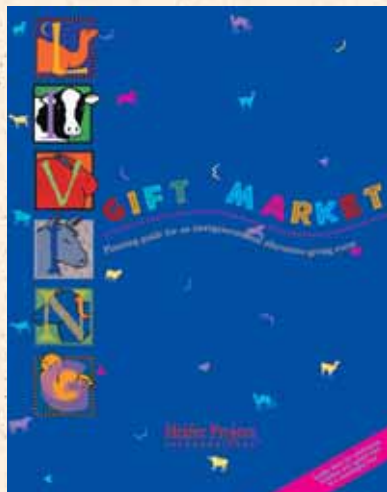
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To learn more about Read to Feed, visit www.readtofeed.org.

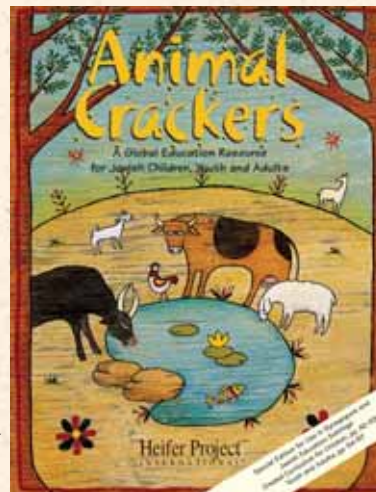
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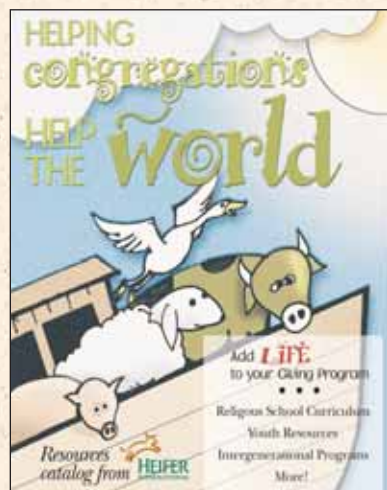


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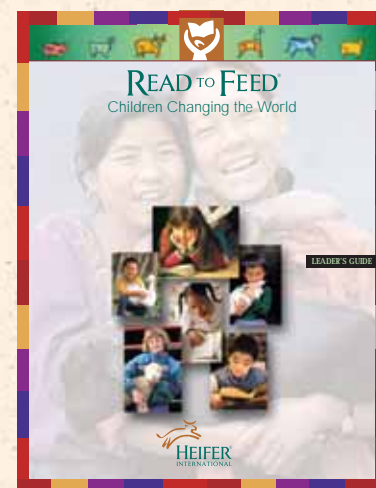


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Describes Heifer International resources available to congregations and other groups
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