

**HEADQUARTERS**

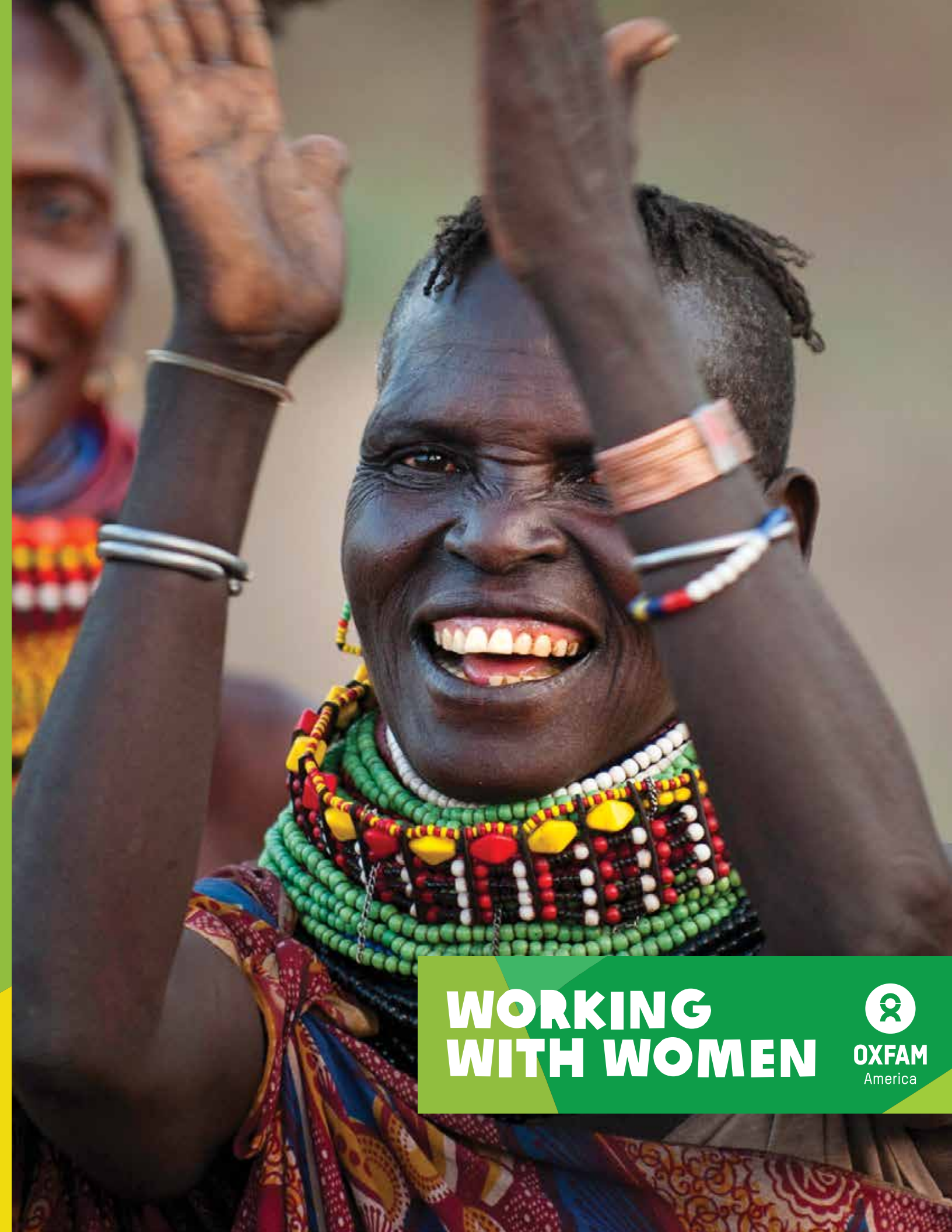
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OXFAM AMERICA IS A GLOBAL ORGANIZATION WORKING TO RIGHT THE WRONGS OF POVERTY, HUNGER, AND INJUSTICE. WE SAVE LIVES, DEVELOP LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO POVERTY, AND CAMPAIGN FOR SOCIAL CHANGE. AS ONE OF 17 MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL OXFAM CONFEDERATION, WE WORK WITH PEOPLE IN MORE THAN 90 COUNTRIES TO CREATE LASTING SOLUTIONS.



**WORKING
WITH WOMEN**



OXFAM
America

WOMEN IN THE WORLD: THE CASE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

EMPOWERED WOMEN CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.

At Oxfam America, that truth informs all our work, from our response to humanitarian emergencies to our campaigns for social justice and the long-term investments we make in some of the poorest communities on the planet.

Far too many people—nearly one billion—still go to bed hungry each night. And there are even more people who may not yet be facing hunger, but live on the verge of poverty. Their well-being is at risk as they grapple with increasingly erratic weather, rising food costs, and growing pressure on natural resources. But we can't begin to tackle those problems without considering the vast inequities that exist between women and men—the access each gender has to education, to resources, and to political engagement. Women, on every score, fall far behind. Worldwide, they bear the brunt of poverty. This is wrong.

// Equality for women and girls is not only a basic human right, it is a social and economic imperative. //

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

The systemic discrimination against women and girls is the most pervasive cause and consequence of the power inequality that drives poverty. When women can exercise their rights and gain the knowledge, skills, and information they need to feed their aspirations, they can become powerful agents of change. This process can be transformative; it can unlock the power of people against poverty.

“Equality for women and girls is not only a basic human right, it is a social and economic imperative,” says UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Investments made in women and girls pay handsome returns—for everyone.

Although men and women have similar needs and ambitions, women do not have the same access to resources that men have. Built into our strategies is an understanding of that grave disparity and it shapes the way we design and evaluate our programs, aiming—always—to support women's participation and leadership. But in the end, our objective is the same for both women and men: equality. From that foundation we can work together to improve the lives of the poorest among us.

SOME FACTS

- Worldwide in 2008, nearly 800 million people over the age of 15 could neither read nor write—and two-thirds of them were women.
- In most countries, women earn between 10 and 30 percent less than men.
- As of July 2013, women worldwide made up fewer than 21 percent of national legislators.
- During peace talks, women make up just 10 percent of negotiators at the table.
- An estimated 150 million people in 34 developing countries could escape hunger if women had the same access as men to the assets they need for farming.
- Of all credit offered in developing countries, only 10 percent of it is available to women.
- Among Fortune 500 companies, those with the most women in management jobs produced a total return for shareholders that was 34 percent higher than firms with the fewest women in management positions.

// Before, I would never stand in front of a group of people and talk. Now, I teach people. I know how to talk to people, even though I am sure I'm not perfect at it. This is new for me ... but my teaching comes from my personal experience growing rice. //

MEAS SOPHEAP, RICE FARMER
AND DEPUTY CHIEF OF HER VILLAGE,
KRANG LAHONG, CAMBODIA



Simon Rawles / Oxfam

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is power. When women have the opportunity to learn how to read and write, that knowledge changes their lives. When women know how to manage money, their small businesses can thrive. When they learn a new planting technique, that knowledge can ensure an abundant harvest. Sharing knowledge—one of the surest ways to fight poverty—is at the heart of many Oxfam initiatives.

VILLAGERS LEARN TO GROW MORE WITH LESS

With some training and a bit of technology, farmers—many of them women—in developing countries like Cambodia and Vietnam are learning an innovative way to grow rice that promises big returns. It's called the System of Rice Intensification, or SRI—and it uses fewer seeds, chemicals, and water to get yields that can be double the size possible with traditional methods.

Volunteers like Cambodian farmer Yem Neang are spreading the word. Empowered by her own success with SRI, she serves as a group leader to promote the method among other farmers in her village. Her husband was among the harder ones to convince of SRI's benefits. But now, about a third of the farmers in her village have embraced the approach. And for those who have given it a try, SRI has made big changes in their lives.

"Daily life is better than before," said Sorn Ton, a Cambodian farmer. "When we used to farm, there wasn't enough rice to support the family for the whole year. Now, my family has enough to eat."

FARMING—AND CLAIMING RIGHTS—AT HIGH ALTITUDES

Three years after participating in an Oxfam-funded project designed to help Andean farmers adapt to climate change, Peru's Virginia Ñuñoncca has expanded her irrigation system, tripled her pastureland, and purchased dairy cows. By selling their milk and cheese, she is earning a steady income for the first time. Ñuñoncca also took part in workshops organized by the project on leadership, self-esteem, and gender equality. "Before [the workshops], I was afraid of men. I felt that men had more rights than I did," she said. "But learning

about gender, I learned we're all equal—men and women both. ... Now I'm not afraid. Now I respect the rights of others."

Ñuñoncca has passed on these teachings about leadership and gender equality to both women and men. "Sometimes I go to other communities, and when I get there I share what I learned," she said. "There are some that listen. ... They say, 'What you told me helped me.'"

Recently, Ñuñoncca was elected as a representative of three communities for a district project on livestock, where she spoke about her experience raising dairy cows. As she becomes more well-known, her role as a leader and spokesperson continues to evolve.

To read more about farmer-led innovation in Cambodia, go to oxfamamerica.org/weeder.

// Before, we had no way to help ourselves, but now, with just 100 francs a week, we solve a lot of problems. //

ASTEL DIALLO, PRESIDENT OF SAVING FOR CHANGE GROUP IN SENEGAL



Rebecca Blackwell / Oxfam America

BUILDING RESOURCES

In many poor communities, the burden of care for families rests with women. But often, they lack the resources they need to meet the many demands they face. Oxfam is working with women to help them gain access to new financial opportunities and to build their resources.

The Mouvement d'Aide des Femmes Liancourt-Payen de la Commune de Verrettes (MAFLPV) is a key partner for Oxfam in Haiti's rice-growing Artibonite Valley. It's a women's organization that provides its members with access to low-interest loans so that they can successfully market rice and whatever other goods they want to sell. "Whatever Haitian women decide to do, we succeed at," said Marie Luisna Pierre, a rice farmer and member of MAFLPV who sells sandals at the market.

"We used to go to loan sharks when we needed money," said Marie Melisma Robert, the founder and president of MAFLPV. She explained that the local moneylenders charge monthly interest of 25 percent. "When we couldn't pay back the loans, we were arrested." Now the women have access to credit at 3 percent—which can spell the difference between a successful business and spiraling debt.

The women report that with a source of fair credit, they can now make strategic business decisions, like when and where to sell a rice crop to earn the most income. They are serious bread-winners now, and this fact has altered the landscape of their lives—they no longer put up with abuse from moneylenders, difficult husbands, or anyone else who once had the financial upper hand. Now they are free to make more of the choices that matter most to them.

"Before, we didn't have any value in the eyes of men. We used to have to depend on men to send our kids to school," said one member. "Now, we don't have to wait on our husbands. Without this business, there was no way we could send the kids to school; with this business, we can."

SAVING FOR CHANGE

Three-quarters of the world's poorest people do not have a formal bank account. But just having a secure place to save, or access to a small loan, can help

a family work its way out of poverty. Providing those opportunities is one of the goals of Oxfam's Saving for Change initiative. At the close of 2013, the program had nearly 720,000 members in 13 countries.

In small groups, members save together and borrow from the group fund, repaying their loan with interest. Profits are shared annually. Villagers can use the loans from their group to start small businesses, buy household necessities, or meet other urgent needs.

Membership in the savings groups can change the way women view their personal capabilities and their place within their families and communities. In response to women's requests, Oxfam is expanding Saving for Change with programs to help members increase their food security, improve management of their income-generating activities, and build their advocacy skills.

To read stories about women participating in Oxfam's Saving for Change program, go to oxfamamerica.org/community-finance.

// We have the same rights as men have. Anything that goes against our rights, we can file a complaint. We don't have to remain silent. //

DELFINA COT, WHO RECEIVED TRAINING ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION FROM AN OXFAM PARTNER IN GUATEMALA



Ilene Perlman / Oxfam America

SPEAKING OUT

Together with individuals and local groups, we are helping women and girls to realize their potential—and men and boys to become allies in the quest to create political and social change that will give poor people the chance to improve their lives. Through advocacy at local, state, and national levels women are raising their voices. And they are being heard.

A CAMPAIGN TACKLES GENDER VIOLENCE IN EL SALVADOR AND GUATEMALA

In 2005, a coalition of organizations, including Oxfam America, launched a public campaign to reduce gender violence in El Salvador. Called *Entre Vos y Yo: Una Vida Diferente* (Between You and Me: A Different Life), the broad-based initiative focuses on education, advocacy, and monitoring, and it encourages men and women to re-examine how they think and act.

Since its launch, the campaign has trained hundreds of government officials—judges, police officers, elected representatives—to apply current laws, improve public safety, and devote parts of their budgets to violence prevention. The leadership and diversity courses in which 45 women legislators participated resulted in the drafting and approval of the Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Eradication bill in 2010.

Through an initiative called Citizen Window, organized by local groups, the campaign is working with women to monitor abuses, assist victims, and put together reports that point out deficiencies in the justice system. In El Salvador and Guatemala, the initiative has brought together more than 50 activists from 100 communities, and together they have reached 13,000 women.

Together with El Salvador's Ministry of Education and UNICEF, the campaign has developed a method for teaching students about the rights of women and girls to live free from violence. That program has now reached 100,000 students and thousands of teachers in more than 100 schools.

SISTERS ON THE PLANET® ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

Inspired by women in the US and abroad who are battling climate change, hunger, and other crises, a diverse group of women have joined Oxfam America as Sisters on the Planet ambassadors.

Corporate executives, actors, legislators, writers, faith leaders—they are using their influence to change the unfair rules that keep women trapped in poverty.

Since 2008, hundreds of notable women leaders have become ambassadors of the program. Today, they remain united by a common goal: to use their influence to right the wrongs of poverty and injustice.

"It's important to talk about the cost-effective nature of investing in the world's most vulnerable populations, both for their stability and for global security," said Barbara Lawton, a former lieutenant governor of Wisconsin and a Sisters on the Planet ambassador. "Whether it's women and families in the US, in Sudan, or in the Arctic Circle ... our destinies are linked."

Learn more about Sisters on the Planet Ambassadors at oxfamamerica.org/sisters.

Learn how Oxfam's campaign in Guatemala inspired one woman to help many others break free of violence at oxfamamerica.org/prevent-gender-violence.

// When someone gets knowledge, they become empowered. And when you become empowered, you can stand up and fight for your rights. //

JOANNA MANU, A FARMER IN GHANA
AND A LOCAL LEGISLATOR



Jane Hahn / Oxfam America

DEFENDING RIGHTS

Increasingly, poor women and men are asserting their right to decide if or how they want oil, gas, and mining development to take place in their communities—and their right to know about the impacts and benefits of these projects. Oxfam America has a long history of supporting these community rights in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW—AND A RIGHT TO DECIDE

As the world's hunger for fuel and precious minerals grows, so does the pressure on remote communities to give up their valuable land for development of oil, gas, or mining exploration and extraction. Working with local partners, Oxfam arms poor villagers with the information they need to weigh the costs versus the benefits, to decide whether to provide consent for the projects to move forward, and, if they do, to track where the revenues from those projects go.

The Social Enterprise Development Foundation-Ghana, known as SEND-Ghana, is one of those partners. It trains local Ghanaians to watch how their elected officials use money from the government's Mineral Development Fund for public works. Companies pay a royalty of 5 percent of the value of the gold they mine, and the government dedicates 10 percent of that to the fund. Locals trained to watch where the money goes are advocating for projects, like schools and roads, that benefit their communities.

Joanna Manu, a Ghanaian farmer in Dumasi, knows how powerful knowledge about rights can be. Trained by another Oxfam partner, she knew that a gold mining company could not kick her off her farm if it hadn't paid her for the land, even as it had her arrested one morning while she was preparing her fields. She stood up for her rights—and a few months later was back on her farm working the earth.

"It's thanks to this new knowledge that I could do this," said Manu, who has become a key organizer in her community and recently won election to a local legislative body.

Join Oxfam's campaign to defend the rights of communities affected by oil, gas, and mining projects at oxfamamerica.org/rights-resources.

// Because I can cook my family's breakfast more quickly, I leave home earlier each morning in search of work, and I have more success finding a job for the day. //

HAWA ABAKAR, A MOTHER OF SEVEN WHO EXPECTS HER NEW STOVE WILL ALSO SAVE HER MORE THAN \$200 A YEAR IN FIREWOOD EXPENSES IN A REGION WHERE THE AVERAGE DISPLACED PERSON LIVES ON LESS THAN \$1 A DAY.



Elizabeth Stevens / Oxfam America

ENSURING WOMEN'S SAFETY AND HEALTH

In every emergency—when disaster throws strangers together into crowded camps, depriving them of the safety and familiarity of their own homes—women and girls are often most at risk for further suffering. In all its humanitarian work, Oxfam strives to pay particular attention to their needs.

FINDING SAFETY IN FUEL-EFFICIENT STOVES

For countless women trapped by the ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, managing meager household resources is a constant challenge. And compounding that is the danger they face when they must leave the safety of the camps in search of wood for their cooking fires. With two partners, Oxfam has found a way to ease some of that financial strain and lessen the danger of long treks: we are providing families with fuel-efficient stoves, assembled by camp residents, that burn less wood.

For women who purchase their firewood in the market, the stoves reduce the cost of fuel and the heavy economic pressure on their families. And for those who must trek to the countryside to gather firewood, facing the risk of

assault from armed bandits and militia, the fuel-efficient stoves are even more critical. The stoves spare them from making as many dangerous trips.

A KEY TO SAFETY: PUBLIC HEALTH LED BY WOMEN

Every month in camps for displaced people near El Fasher in the Darfur region of Sudan, a women-led team of health workers fans out to bring messages about good hygiene to thousands of residents. Elected by the community and trained by Oxfam, the team members go house to house teaching newcomers about disease vectors, handwashing, and the use of latrines. They also organize community-wide campaigns to clean everything from streets to latrines to household water containers. Their mission is

to prevent the outbreak of deadly diseases—a mission health workers like Halima Nasur take to heart.

"I believe that all people in the camp are my sisters and brothers," she said. "We are never going to let our people down."

Once learned, it's hard to forget the life-and-death importance of good hygiene practices. For Maryam Gado, the lessons have changed her life forever.

"Previously, my children didn't wash their hands before they ate. They were often weak and not healthy. Now, they wash their hands before eating. They don't suffer from diarrhea, and if they happen to get sick, it isn't something serious," said Gado. "I learned these values, and I'm going to apply them throughout my life."

To learn more about Oxfam's work in Darfur, go to oxfamamerica.org/conflict-in-darfur.