



Working together to end poverty and injustice



ST-FRANK P.V.T

PARADISE HOUSE
HOME-BASED CARE

KUSIBALA TONALI NIA ENDA ONA MUKESI
KUSIBALA ENDA TUPITA KUDUKULA
KUSIBALA ENDA OKALAMBA AFU
KUSIBALA ENDA MUMENZI WA
KUSIBALA ENDA SONS AND
KUSIBALA ENDA





Oxfam
America

“ Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome. ”

Nelson Mandela at an event organized by Oxfam in London, 2005

Join us. We are Oxfam America.

Forty percent of the people on our planet—more than 2.5 billion—live in poverty, struggling to survive on less than \$2 a day. Oxfam America is working to change that. In a world rich in resources, we believe poverty can be overcome.

Who we are

Oxfam America is an international relief and development organization that creates lasting solutions to poverty, hunger, and injustice. Founded in 1970, we are part of Oxfam International, a confederation of 13 Oxfams working in more than 120 countries, including the US. Together with individuals and local groups in these countries, we save lives, help people overcome poverty, and fight for social justice.

How we work

To achieve lasting solutions to poverty, Oxfam relies on the knowledge and insight of those affected; we work with local people so they can address the causes of poverty themselves. We provide practical assistance to help them become self-sufficient, respond to humanitarian emergencies, and stand up for their rights. We combine this grassroots work with research, education, and global advocacy to change unjust laws and practices that keep people trapped in poverty.

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oxfam | saving lives

Inevitably, disasters strike poor people hardest. When a hurricane hits or a violent conflict erupts, these are the people least prepared to withstand the trauma, with the fewest resources for recovery. Oxfam is a world leader in disaster response; we specialize in swift action to prevent the spread of disease by supplying clean water and other life-saving necessities.

REBUILDING COMMUNITIES

After the short-term crisis, we tackle the more complex work of helping communities rebuild and come back stronger. Our aim is to strengthen vulnerable communities—before disaster strikes—by helping people put systems in place to deal with crises.

US Gulf Coast > The 2005 Atlantic hurricane season was the most active in recorded history, and more than 2,000 people died. Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma destroyed or caused major damage



to more than 300,000 homes on the Gulf Coast and exposed the depth of poverty in the US. Massive institutional failures in emergency response prompted Oxfam to launch its first US emergency relief effort. Where we saw need, we stepped in, bringing an entrepreneurial spirit to problem solving. In East Biloxi, MS, Oxfam helped start a relief center within days of the hurricane to meet the needs of devastated local residents.

Although Katrina, Rita, and Wilma are no longer front-page news, our work on the Gulf Coast is far from over. We are making efforts to ensure that the people whose lives have been most affected are getting the support they need to make lasting changes.

“It couldn’t have happened without Oxfam—any of this coordination effort. I love that we-can-do attitude.”

Bill Stallworth, a city councilor from Biloxi, MS, who worked with Oxfam to open a Katrina relief center

saving lives | a profile



Ravinthiran has clean drinking water and a job

Saving lives is a core part of Oxfam's work. In Ravinthiran's case, we have supported his efforts to restore wells in the wake of the 2004 tsunami. The result? Clean water, a healthier community, and much-needed income.

In December 2004, the second-largest earthquake on record triggered a tsunami in the Indian Ocean that left 230,000 people dead and displaced nearly two million. In some areas, 90 percent of the population died. Those who survived faced the risk of deadly epidemic outbreaks in the crowded tent camps that housed them.

Within hours of the quake, Oxfam launched the largest humanitarian response in our history—one that eventually reached 1.8 million people. It began with the basics: water, sanitation, and shelter.

Next we introduced innovative programs, such as a well-cleaning project in Sri Lanka, that provided not only clean water, but also jobs. We paid, trained, and outfitted local teams to remove salt water and

debris from thousands of wells. Ravinthiran, a team member, admits that it is difficult work, but “people are really thankful that we’re doing this, so it makes it worthwhile. And,” he adds with a smile, “this job is full-time, so it’s good for me, too.”

Rebuilding lives in the wake of a disaster requires more than relief. People’s sense of trust and well-being suffer. Ravinthiran explains, “When we have finished a well and we are sure it’s clean, we test it and...try drinking some ourselves. People have watched us...and if we drink it, they trust us. They know it’s safe.”

Oxfam’s tsunami program continues, and we will work in the region for the long haul, helping communities reduce their vulnerability to future disasters.



oxfam | helping people overcome poverty

Oxfam is committed to the long-term work of helping people achieve their human rights. Poverty affects the most vulnerable—people whose rights have historically been overlooked, like women and children. One way to fight poverty is to focus on giving these individuals the support they need to make changes. We do this by tackling obstacles from a variety of angles, using innovative approaches.

PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES

Poor people are often pushed into areas where they must rely on scarce natural resources—a process that only depletes these resources further. And a damaged environment leads to greater poverty. But we can stop this cycle.



“ For me, it’s really important to come to school It means you can get a job. If someone asked me to marry him, I would say, ‘No,’ because I want to continue at school! ”

15-year-old student Sonia Fernando. Mozambique’s Family Law, which Oxfam helped to bring about, will help Sonia and other girls to stay in school.

Oxfam is helping indigenous communities defend their right to access crucial resources like water, forests, and farmland; participate in decisions that affect their ability to make a living; and understand their role in protecting the environment.

STRENGTHENING WOMEN AND FAMILIES

Seventy percent of the world’s poorest people are women and girls. In many societies, women still lack even the most basic rights to education, ownership, and lives free from violence—leaving them and their children vulnerable to disease, displacement,

famine, and brutality. Oxfam has played a key role in protecting women’s rights. This means changes in both law and practice. We’ve tackled this issue in many settings and using various approaches:

Mozambique > In December 2004, after four years, Oxfam won a landmark victory in Mozambique: passage of a Family Law that secured many rights previously denied to women and girls. Among the changes, the law increased the minimum marriage age for girls from 14 to 18 years, which has meant greater opportunity for girls to attend school. More education leads to greater economic freedom.



El Salvador > Hundreds of women are murdered every year in El Salvador. Oxfam supports a coalition that is pushing for laws to protect Salvadoran women from widespread violence and discrimination. We are simultaneously working to improve conditions for women in rural areas by offering them basic skills training so that they have a foundation from which to assert their rights.

Southern Africa > In sub-Saharan Africa, young women aged 15 to 24 are more than three times as likely to be HIV positive as young men. In many areas rape and other violence against women are leading factors in HIV infection. Unfortunately, legal systems and practices often do little to protect girls and women. Poverty and lack of economic freedom can make women even more vulnerable to HIV infection and AIDS. In southern Africa, Oxfam is promoting an aggressive new human-rights-based strategy to address the legal and social factors



that endanger the health of women and girls, and is challenging the systems that keep women from exercising their rights.

SAVING FOR CHANGE

Roughly 75 percent of people in the developing world, especially women, have no access to any kind of bank or legitimate lender. This deprives them of credit, a means of safely saving money and—ultimately—of gaining economic independence. Through an innovative program that we call Saving for Change,

Oxfam teaches poor women in rural areas how to save and borrow money by establishing small savings-and-lending circles. Most women take small loans, sometimes borrowing just a few dollars, to start or expand businesses.

Even this modest access to credit can turn a poor woman into an entrepreneur by allowing her to launch a business with a small investment. Among its other benefits, this program is low cost and self-replicating. In its first two years, Saving for Change attracted more than 72,000 participants in three countries.

helping people overcome poverty | a profile



Rosa was able to go to university

Helping people overcome poverty is a core part of Oxfam's work. In Rosa's case, our efforts to promote environmentally friendlier practices allowed Rosa's mother, a poor farmer, to increase her harvests and income.

On a clear day the blue waters of Ecuador's Lake Imbakucha reflect the sky and the green slopes of Mount Imbabura tower above nearby Andean villages.

Several years ago, this beautiful area and the lives of the 40,000 indigenous people who call it home were threatened. With no environmental regulations in place, poor farmers had come to rely on destructive chemicals and farming practices. Wastewater contaminated Lake Imbakucha, silt choked streams, water levels fell, and harvests grew lean. Poverty worsened.

Oxfam America funded an innovative project championed by a local organization—the Center for Multicultural Studies—known by its Spanish acronym CEPCU. Working to develop greener

growing methods and clean up the streams that fed the lake, Oxfam and CEPCU doubled available water and improved agricultural output.

Local farmer María Peralta's harvests improved dramatically. This not only fed her children, but also increased the family's income enough to allow her to send her eldest daughter Rosa to university—the first person in the family to attend. In a community where only two or three of every 100 women receive higher education, Rosa represents hope for the future. She was elected area president of the Union of Indigenous Communities and, after graduating, accepted a job with CEPCU helping to run the very program that had allowed her family to increase their harvests and pay for her education.



oxfam | fighting for social justice

The economic marketplace is not a level playing field. Often regulations favor the biggest players: wealthy countries and large agricultural producers. That means that some laws and policies actually keep poor people from overcoming poverty. Oxfam knows that real change requires that more people get involved, speak out, and ask decision makers to change unjust laws and practices.

CAMPAIGNING FOR TRADE JUSTICE

Trade can serve as a ladder out of poverty. Through our Make Trade Fair campaign, we've emerged as a world leader in our efforts to overturn unfair trade practices so small farmers can earn a better living.

Agricultural subsidy reform > Working together with other local and international organizations, Oxfam is calling for changes that will lead to better prices for small farmers in West and Central Africa.



US government subsidies encourage large producers of cotton, rice, wheat, and corn to grow more than the market can absorb. When these products flood global markets, prices drop. Small farmers can't compete and are unable to feed their families, send their kids to school, or pay for life-saving medicine. If US subsidies were reduced, millions of farmers could lift themselves out of poverty.

Market access > Oxfam's coffee campaign targets poverty among small coffee farmers around the world. We build demand for Fair Trade Certified™ coffee among consumers and retailers, and in places like

“ Just because I'm a farmer, don't think that I don't understand what's happening in the global market. I do listen to the radio, and I know how much my coffee retails for overseas. The money I earn for my hard work does not come close. ”

Tadesse Terro, a coffee farmer from Yirgacheffe, Ethiopia



“You used to get something out of cotton. Now, there is nothing. You plant, you wait, you harvest, and spend days and days harvesting...and in the end you still have nothing and you can't feed your children.”

Gnagna Traoré, a cotton farmer and widow in Mali

Ethiopia, we provide support to coffee cooperatives growing Fair Trade beans. We also make sure that the policy makers who set the rules for global coffee trade hear the voices of small farmers.

CAMPAIGNING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The actions of global corporations can shape the lives of poor people—for better and for worse. Oxfam works to encourage ethical business practices



that protect human rights in three ways: by encouraging consumers to demand higher business standards, by supporting shareholder resolutions, and by helping people in local communities get involved in discussions with corporations about the issues that affect their lives and families. For example, we recognize that natural resources, like oil and minerals, can be a wonderful source of income in poor areas. But we believe that local people must be consulted in decisions that affect them.

Peru > When a company wanted to mine for gold directly beneath a Peruvian farming community, thousands of Oxfam's online supporters called on the company to honor the community's referendum, in which locals had voted overwhelmingly against the proposed mine. In the end, this expression of solidarity helped push the Peruvian government to withdraw the company's mining permit.

fighting for social justice | a profile



Medesir Kedit's students have a classroom

Fighting for social justice is a core part of Oxfam's work. In Medesir Kedit's case, our efforts to promote fair trade helped coffee farmers to increase their profits and improve the school that Kedit oversees.

In a sunny classroom with canary-colored walls, children greet a visitor, casting shy sidelong glances. Just months earlier these students from Negele Gurbitu were among 550 crammed into only two classrooms. The school's director, Medesir Kedit, admits that it was difficult to learn under those conditions.

Southern Ethiopia, where coffee is grown, is lush; verdant greens stand in sharp contrast to stereotypes of sun-baked African dirt. Despite growing some of the world's finest coffees, farmers here struggle to survive because they see only a fraction of the money that their crops command. Reliant on coffee for income, whole communities like Negele Gurbitu suffer.

In 2001, global coffee prices plummeted, creating a crisis for 25 million coffee-growing families around

the world. In response, Oxfam launched a global coffee campaign in 2002 urging consumers and major players in the coffee industry to address the crisis. With Oxfam's support, Ethiopian farmers convinced their government to allow them to sell coffee through cooperatives like the one to which Negele Gurbitu's growers belong, exempt them from export taxes, and negotiate fair prices in international markets.

Within several years, Ethiopian co-op sales more than tripled. The price co-ops were getting for coffee jumped from 45 cents per pound in 2002 to \$1.60 in 2006. For local families, that meant dramatic increases in income. In Negele Gurbitu, large-scale changes in trade came down to this: a better school where Kedit can expand both the minds and the opportunities of the next generation.

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Whatever you can afford, your gift can change lives. Please call (800) 77-OXFAM today or make an online donation at www.oxfamamerica.org/donate.

Learn more

For more information or to learn more about what you can do to help, go to www.oxfamamerica.org.



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