



Oxfam
America

OXFAMExchange
Fall 2007

MOVING TOWARD LASTING SOLUTIONS IN GAMBIA

ALSO INSIDE:

- > STARBUCKS VICTORY
- > A WIN FOR INDIGENOUS BOLIVIANS
- > UNIQUE NEW GIFTS FROM OXFAM AMERICA UNWRAPPED

Can you guess which one's a family farmer?



It's a trick question.

But then, the Farm Bill before Congress right now is full of tricks like these.

The fact is, this bill continues the unfair practice of putting millionaire farmers ahead of America's family farms.

It will continue to give millionaire farmers another handout while America's family farmers could use a helping hand.

It will continue to subsidize a narrow list of commodities like cotton. That's more than three billion dollars a year in cotton subsidies alone.

Meanwhile, three quarters of all American farmers don't get subsidies. Of those that do, 10 percent reap about 75 percent of all payments.

Simply put, it's unfair.

The system is broken, and desperately in need of reform. And the time to tell Congress that we demand change is right now.

Tell them that subsidies hurt family farmers and cheat taxpayers. Tell them to make the Farm Bill fair for America's family farmers.

Make the Farm Bill fair for America's family farmers.

A helping hand for family farmers, not a handout to millionaires.



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Dear Friends,

It is rare that an issue of OXFAMExchange captures the nature of Oxfam's work so accurately. In our cover feature, "Like Leaning on the Baobabs," we report on recent projects in Gambia. It is a story that suggests the range of issues we face and the increments in which change is measured. Lasting solutions take time, and part of our challenge is to help find answers that anticipate future hardships—a broken pump, a refugee crisis—and allow people to prepare for them. Showing up with water or food addresses immediate problems but does nothing to improve things long-term. A water pump that can easily be repaired or a cereal bank that holds grain against future shortages is a different approach to meeting needs. It's an Oxfam approach—one that empowers local people by giving them control.

Regrettably, it is not a seductive message for a sound-bite culture.

The pace at which lasting solutions are implemented often fails to satisfy the human desire for quick fixes and fast results. This is an impulse I share. The work to reduce human suffering demands patience that is hard to muster. That's why it is satisfying to present our cover story alongside reports on two recent major victories: the groundbreaking Starbucks case and a landmark win for indigenous Bolivians.

Both of these stories fulfill our desire for change. In reality, both were long-term efforts. In Bolivia, for example, Oxfam provided funding to support a decade of legal work. In the end, such investments seem thoroughly justified; it is always a great pleasure to be able to show you how your support produces tangible, life-changing results. But it rarely happens overnight. It involves faith on your part and ongoing work on ours. We may not be able to report on a Starbucks or Bolivia win every day, but we will report back on our progress toward such victories, and you can rest assured that we'll stay focused on the endgame.

Sincerely,



Raymond C. Offenheiser
President, Oxfam America

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COVER: In Dasilami, a Gambian village periodically hit with food shortages, a store of grain and seeds tides people over during the hungry season before their crops come in. Oxfam America helped to fund this new cereal bank.

CREDIT: REBECCA BLACKWELL/OXFAM AMERICA

ABOVE (clockwise from the top): A girl passes by the new cereal bank Oxfam America helped to build in the Gambian village of Dasilami. | Pablo Solis Chuviru lives in Turuxnapez, part of a vast territory newly restored to the indigenous people of eastern Bolivia. | A woman from the Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union enjoys a local brew during a traditional coffee ceremony in Addis Ababa earlier this year.

We welcome your feedback on this or other issues. Please direct letters to editor@oxfamamerica.org or Editor, OXFAMExchange, 226 Causeway Street, 5th Floor, Boston MA 02114-2206.

field notes

DARFUR For many people, the crisis in Darfur is a blur of statistics: 4.5 million people reliant on humanitarian aid; 2.5 million forced from their homes; 250,000 refugees in Chad.

But for Nick Anderson, a high school senior, the numbers now have a face and a feel. It's the face of Ahmed Yousif, a young man whom Nick came to know and deeply admire. And it's the feel of wind-whipped sand on skin, the smothering heat, the fear—the realities people in this remote region of Sudan live with daily.

Nick spent this summer as Oxfam's youth ambassador to Darfur. The goal was to find a way to help young Americans identify with teenagers in Darfur and feel moved to help them. Nick's mission was to create that link. He came well-prepared for the task.

Last year, Nick cofounded Dollars for Darfur, an online initiative. Using Facebook, a social networking site, the drive raised more than \$300,000. But he wasn't content to stop there. He wanted to see—and help others to see—just what it means to have your life interrupted by violence.

It was Ahmed who accompanied Nick on his first tour of a camp: Abu Shouk, a sprawling expanse of plastic-roofed shelters, mud-brick walls, and the occasional Oxfam water tank glimmering in the sun. The camp is home to more than 55,000 people—Ahmed and his family among them. Driven from his home and now living in the camp, Ahmed nevertheless graduated from the university in El Fasher.

"I was a bit overwhelmed by his strength and was stunned at the capacity of the human spirit to endure," said Nick.

Through Ahmed, Nick learned about the hopes and needs of young people in Darfur. Some go to school, but many have little to do. They long for simple sports equipment like soccer balls, for better education, for vocational training, for places to convene. And most of all, they long for security.

"Growing up in a quiet hill town in western Massachusetts, I was not prepared for the violence that clouds the lives of people in Darfur," said Nick. "After speaking to youths in camps and villages, it was clear to me that the first priority for the region must be a cease-fire."

For Nick and now countless other teens in the US, calling for an end to the violence in Darfur is their top priority.



CHEAP MEDS In August, an Indian court rejected pharmaceutical giant Novartis AG's efforts to change Indian law in order to ease drug patenting. India's vast drug production industry supplies most of the world's affordable generics to developing countries. A global campaign by civil society—including Oxfam, Doctors Without Borders, and CARE—was launched against Novartis to drop its case. When the case was rejected, The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, and International Herald Tribune publicized the win.

“Several months after Novartis filed suit...relief organization Oxfam International asked its supporters to email Novartis Chief Executive Daniel Vasella to complain. Novartis says it received more than 50,000 emails.” —The Wall Street Journal, March 5, 2007

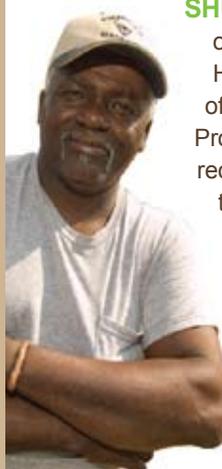
media hits



FROM ABC TO SATs Nick Anderson's work to reach out to young people and keep Darfur in the news has already attracted considerable media coverage in the weeks since his return home, including a "Here and Now" piece on NPR, pieces on KCBS Radio in San Francisco and Chicago Public Radio, and features on ABC and CBC TV. Media interest has kept him busy, but other things also demand time; this month, Nick is taking his SATs.

To read more about Nick's efforts to publicize the crisis in Darfur or to view a video of his trip, go to www.oxfamamerica.org/darfur.

SINK OR SWIM When the worst flooding in memory hit South Asia earlier this year, it affected an estimated 20 million people in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal—a scale of suffering that demanded radical rethinking of disaster response. That was the central point of an Oxfam report issued in August and widely picked up by the Associated Press, Reuters, and the BBC. In "Sink or Swim: Why Disaster Risk Reduction is Central to Surviving Floods in South Asia," Oxfam called on South Asian governments to put new policies in place that would reduce the risk of floods and help people prepare for them.



SHUT OUT This summer, Oxfam released two influential reports on the shortcomings of the US farm subsidies: "Shut Out: How US Farm Programs Fail Minority Farmers" and "Impacts of Reductions in US Cotton Subsidies on West African Cotton Producers." The reports revealed that minority farmers in the US receive a fraction of the aid given to their white counterparts, and that subsidy reform could substantially improve the welfare of more than one million West African households by increasing their incomes from cotton. Publicizing such little-known facts about US farm policy, garnered coverage in The New York Times, International Herald Tribune, the Associated Press, and Reuters.

GULF COAST RECOVERY

LEARN > In 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita swept through the Gulf Coast, killing more than 1,300 people, destroying hundreds of thousands of homes, and leaving many poor communities struggling to rebuild. Two years have passed since the storms, and the recovery process has been a slow one. Billions of federal dollars allocated for recovery are not reaching the people for whom they were intended.

- Federal requirements that a portion of recovery dollars be spent on low- and moderate-income households have been cut in Louisiana and gutted entirely in Mississippi.
- Nearly 100,000 families are still living in temporary housing—including more than 65,000 households in FEMA trailers—with no assistance in sight.
- Much of the housing damaged in the storms was rental housing. State recovery plans in Mississippi and Louisiana call for replacing only a fraction of destroyed or damaged rental units.

NATHAN CAMPBELL/OXFAM AMERICA



MAKE A DIFFERENCE: GET INVOLVED

What can you do to help support the recovery and equitable rebuilding of the US Gulf Coast?

In addition, countless workers—on whose shoulders much of the reconstruction rests—face abuse and neglect in a system that has failed to provide oversight of basic working conditions. For example, thousands of Latino immigrants who have moved to the Gulf Coast region since the storms are playing a critical role in the recovery of a region desperate to have its housing stock restored. Yet these workers face a range of injustices daily, including wage theft and the absence of safety precautions.

TAKE ACTION > CONTACT YOUR SENATORS Urge your senators in Washington to support the passage of the Gulf Coast Housing Recovery Act of 2007 (S1668). This important bill would assist the tens of thousands of families who want to return to their homes on the Gulf Coast and would help ensure that federal money is well spent. If you want to act and need to identify your elected officials, just go to Oxfam's website: www.oxfamamerica.org/lookup.

SIGN OXFAM AMERICA'S PETITION Urge presidential candidates to make rebuilding the Gulf Coast a campaign priority. Contact candidates directly or simply join Oxfam America's online petition at www.oxfamamerica.org/gulfcoastpetition.

JOIN OXFAM'S ONLINE COMMUNITY Receive monthly eNewsletters and action alerts on key issues, including any developments on the Gulf Coast. Go to www.oxfamamerica.org/join.

Writer: Andrew Blejwas



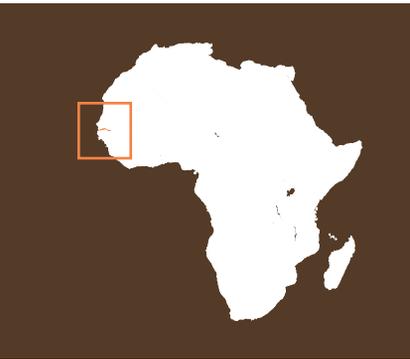
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To learn more about the situation on the US Gulf Coast, go to www.oxfamamerica.org/gulfcoast.



To watch the audio slideshow: "A House for Miss Betty," go to www.oxfamamerica.org/missbetty

Amie Badji—a Senegalese refugee—has been forced to rely on the good will of Gambians in the village of Gifanga since fleeing a long-simmering conflict in the Casamance region of Senegal. Despite finding themselves slipping deeper into poverty, Gambians living near the border have been quick to share their food and homes with refugees like Badji.



Like leaning on the baobabs

Gambians seek solutions that last

Coco McCabe explores how Gambians are working with Oxfam to create solutions that will help them to withstand future hardships and reduce pressure on the environment.

Not far from where the Nyantang Dundula River slips by the village of Dasilami in Gambia, there rises a stand of giant baobab trees. Branches bristle from the tops of their stout trunks, and beneath the canopy, pools of shade cool the air and ground. The houses of one of the largest clans in Dasilami once stood here in the stillness of this glade. But now, they cluster near a sun-scorched road, their owners having traded the comforts of the baobabs for the convenience of being close to a major transportation route.

Gambians have a saying about their baobab trees: "If you want to lean, make sure you lean on something strong to avoid being pushed down." It's a bit of wisdom that informs their approach to hard times, too, even as they leave the baobabs

behind. And in a way what it means is that with some support—a storehouse for grain in one place, a new pump in another—people can help themselves overcome hardships.

In Gambia, that's the idea behind the support Oxfam and its local partners are offering to people in Dasilami and other villages through a series of emergency programs. By helping Gambians in the North Bank and the Western Division plan for bouts of destructive weather or the consequences of conflict, villagers can better withstand the difficulties triggered by these events. And planning can also help relieve some of the pressure on the natural resources—the land, the water, the forests—on which so many people depend.

Poverty exhausts the environment

A hundred years ago, dense forest stretched across most of Gambia. But by 1993, that blanket had shrunk to 41 percent of its former size. The rise in population and increased demand for firewood are among the primary reasons why: forests provide up to 85 percent of household fuel for about 90 percent of Gambians.

The wood from baobabs makes a poor cooking fire—it is too porous—and that may be one reason the stand on the edge of Dasilami has survived. But other trees are being felled at an alarming rate—acacias, figs, cottons, molinas—even across the Gambia River in the Western Division, which, until recently, held some of the densest forests in the country.

It's there, near the border with southern Senegal, that Abdulie Camara is struggling to make a living. In a dusty yard under the shade of a mango tree, Camara holds out his hands for a visitor to feel. His palms are tough. He has been cutting trees—countless numbers of them—to sell their wood for cash so he can help feed some of the dozens of people with whom he now shares his mud-brick house.



◀ A child hides behind a tree in a village near the Gambian border with Senegal, where residents try to earn a little money by cutting and selling firewood. Trees are the source of fuel and income for a great many Gambians. But some local environmentalists worry about the rate at which the trees are now being felled and fear that Gambia will someday become a desert.

A close-up portrait of a woman with dark skin, wearing a brown headwrap and large, ornate earrings. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a serious expression. The background is blurred, showing hints of other people and a warm, indoor setting.

“ It’s part of the culture. You assist people who need your help. And these people are in need. ”

Marcel Badji, director of St. Joseph’s Family Farms Center, an Oxfam partner

In this village of Janack, Camara is by no means alone. His neighbors are chopping down the forest, too, in an effort to provide not only for their families, but for the Senegalese refugees who have settled among them. An estimated 7,000 of them have streamed across the border to seek safety on Gambian soil, heightening the pressure on an already strained land.

"In 10 to 20 years, all of Gambia will be a desert," Marcel Badji says, marveling at the wood, split and piled, in the yards around Janack. "People are cutting trees for survival. Huge trees are going down."

Badji is the director of St. Joseph's Family Farms Center, a local Gambian organization and Oxfam America partner. His words give voice to a grave reality: Poverty is putting intense pressure on the environment here.

A house for 46

For Camara, the woodcutter, a conflict in the Casamance region of Senegal is the source of the difficulties he and all of Janack endure. A push to gain

independence for the region, which has pitted the separatist group known as the Movement of the Democratic Forces of the Casamance against the government of Senegal, has fueled more than 20 years of fighting. The violence has forced at least 60,000 people from their homes and sent another 15,000 across the borders into Guinea-Bissau and Gambia.

In Janack, local residents have felt the crush of that refugee flow.

Camara leads a visitor into his small mud-brick house. Forty-six people sleep here, sharing beds and straw mats unfurled on the dirt floor. Many of the refugees who have sought safety in Gambia are related to their hosts. Cousins and nephews are among the people Camara is sheltering.

"It's very difficult to handle such a large number of people," Camara says. "Food is number one." As he speaks, a ruckus breaks out in a kitchen hut at one end of the hard-packed yard. A pair of sheep have nudged their way in and are rooting around for something to eat. Alert family members shoo them out and fasten the door.

A farmer, Camara grows millet, rice, peanuts, and corn. But because of increased pressure on the land, it has lost some of its fertility and his harvests have shrunk. The money he would have used for fertilizer to enrich the soil has been spent helping to support the Casamance refugees.

"It's part of the culture. You assist people who need your help," explains Badji. "And these people are in need."

Looking for solutions that last

In searching for answers to these problems of poverty, Oxfam and its partners are focusing on ideas that will help people exert control over their circumstances. When villagers have the means—training, resources, know-how—to solve their own troubles, those tools become the basis for lasting solutions.

That's the hope behind four bright blue hand pumps that now cap wells in some of the Gambian border villages. They are part of a \$45,000 grant Oxfam provided to Concern Universal, an international part-



ner that has been addressing the needs of refugees and their hosts.

One recent afternoon in the village of Oupat, a short distance from Janack and a stone's throw from the Casamance line, Bakary Sonko and Gibril Sonko work together to spin the handle on one of the pumps. After 40 seconds of cranking, they have filled a four-gallon bucket with fresh water. Bees buzz about the stream as the water sputters out of the faucet. Next to

Working with other local groups, Concern Universal has built about 150 of these wells using manually operated equipment—simpler technology means fewer breakdowns—to bore the holes. And it has experimented with a variety of materials that are available locally, such as wood and aluminum, in constructing parts for the pumps.

Niall O'Connor, director of Concern Universal, explains that a similar pump

“We'll have food. Therefore, our families will not cry. Our stomachs will no longer go empty.”

the pump sits a large metal barrel hooked to a hose—key components of Oupat's brickmaking enterprise. With water readily available, new mud-brick houses—homes for the refugees—are on the rise nearby.

“The pumps can be easily maintained by the communities without big fees,” explains Zanira Paralta, an Oxfam humanitarian response officer. “It's a technology Concern Universal has been implementing for five or six years. We realized it could be a good way to provide water at low cost.”

Inside the blue casings, the pump mechanism is simple: it looks like a bicycle wheel that spins with the help of a rope affixed with tiny washers that pull up the water. The rope, made from nylon, can be replaced easily when it breaks. To show how simple it is to reach the parts that need fixing, Ousman Jammeh, a technician for Concern Universal, untwists a plastic cap at the top of the pump and removes the plastic tubing through which the rope runs.

Nearby, another well signals the importance of Oupat's new hand pumps. This well, dug in 1983, is dry. A tangle of skinny branches covers its opening. Before Concern Universal installed the new wells and pumps, people had to trek to a neighboring village for their water.

is used in Nicaragua and that Concern Universal made modifications so that it could be used here.

“The whole idea is to be affordable and sustainable,” he says.

Banking on grain

On the North Bank, where food shortages are a constant threat, planning for the future is the goal of another Oxfam grant—this one for \$65,000 intended to help many of the 58,000 people scattered through 51 villages, including Dasilami. Although people here don't face the intense pressure of providing for refugees, they, too, are struggling to manage the delicate balance between their needs and what the environment can provide. Will there be enough rain to allow crops to grow? Will locusts devour whatever villagers manage to coax from their fields?

A simple idea promoted by Oxfam's local partner, Agency for the Development of Women and Children, or ADWAC, took the edge off those questions: If villagers had a way to save some of their food and seeds at the end of each harvest, they could have a reserve to fall back on during times of shortage. The trick was to get started.

ADWAC's plan called for building and stocking four cereal “banks”—tidy white structures the size of small houses that can hold up to 33 tons of cereals—located at strategic points



Country Profile > Gambia

Capital > Banjul

Population > About 1.7 million

Languages > English (official), Mandinka, Wolof, Fula

Economy > While tourism is an important industry—fed by a stream of European visitors flocking to coastal resorts—farmers make up the backbone of the Gambian economy. About 75 percent of the population relies on subsistence agriculture, with some dependence on peanuts as an export crop. Manufacturing is limited mostly to processing agricultural products, including peanuts and hides. Nearly 83 percent of Gambians live on less than \$2 a day, and 59 percent survive on less than \$1 a day. Only 53 percent of Gambians have access to improved sanitation. On average, people can expect to live to the age of 56.

History > About twice the size of Delaware with a population that is more than 90 percent Muslim, Gambia is the smallest country in Africa and was once included in the Empire of Ghana. Its first appearance in written history dates to the ninth century A.D. in the accounts of Arab traders. By the 17th and 18th centuries, France and England were vying for control of the Gambia River, and in 1783 Britain took possession of the country. The transatlantic slave trade marred the region's shore for three centuries, and it wasn't until 1906 that slavery was abolished. Gambia gained independence from the UK in 1965 and became a republic in 1970. A military coup in 1994 deposed the country's five-time president, Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, and installed Lt. Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh as head of state. He became president in 1996 in an election whose fairness was questioned by foreign observers. Jammeh continues to hold the post following a third round of elections in September 2006—half a year after a failed coup. Though observers deemed the recent elections fair, the coup attempt has pushed Jammeh to find new ways to maintain power.

◀ Two pairs of hands cranking away make for lighter work when it comes to fetching water in the Gambian village of Oupat. These boys are using one of the new pumps Oxfam helped to install.



REBECCA BLACKWELL/OXFAM AMERICA

▲ At the end of a long day, Nyima Filly Fofana rests briefly in her home in Dasilami, Gambia, as an evening breeze lifts the curtain. A mother of nine children, Fofana's day included digging for salt in the mud flats near her home and tending to her duties as an organizer for a committee that manages Dasilami's new cereal bank.

around the communities. Villagers then formed committees to manage the stored supplies. Those who borrow from the storehouse during a food shortage are obliged to repay the loan and tack on a little extra, too, so that the project can grow.

Now, if drought should shrivel their crops or pests consume them, villagers can turn to that bank of grain, avoiding the need to eke what they can—as the woodcutters in Janack do—from an overstrained environment. The bank will help them weather tough times.

Inside the Dasilami storehouse, the sweetness of harvested grains fills the hot, dry air. Heavy sacks—they weigh

just under 200 pounds each—stuffed with corn and millet are stacked nearly to the ceiling. Outside, in the shade of a tree laden with mangoes, Nyima Filly Fofana, a mother of nine children and an organizer for one of the cereal bank management committees, talks about what it was like one year recently when both locusts and drought hit the area.

“We experienced a very bitter time,” she says. “The family was hungry.” In times of food shortages, Fofana's family manages by selling the salt she harvests from mud

flats near her home and by eating whatever vegetables they can grow in their garden. But if such trouble should strike again, this time Dasilami has the seeds of a solution—one that can now spread to other villages, too.

“Our worries will be temporarily solved,” says Fofana, clapping her hands at the thought of the white building gleaming there in the sun, stocked with grain. “We'll have food. Therefore, our families will not cry. Our stomachs will no longer go empty.”



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To learn more about Oxfam America's programs in West Africa, go to www.oxfamamerica.org/westafrica.



Peru Earthquake

It was nearing dinnertime on August 15 when it hit: a massive, magnitude 7.9 earthquake. The temblor shook the city of Lima and knocked out phones and electricity for some time, but it was in the southern coastal areas of Pisco and Ica that it dealt the most devastating blow—more than 500 dead, 1,300 injured, and a quarter of a million without shelter.

Writer: Chris Hufstader

An inkling of the devastation in Lima

Celia Aldana, Oxfam America's communications officer in Lima, was just entering a store to buy supplies for a class she teaches at the university when the shopkeeper shouted, "Earthquake!"

"I went out and watched—stupidly—the fence of a house moving from one side to the other," Aldana reports. "It was true: it was an earthquake. It seemed to go on an extraordinarily long time. ... Then something strange happened: The sky turned completely white and the blackout started."

Like everyone else in Lima, Aldana frantically tried to reach her family. All were safe. Her boyfriend, Luis, however, came from Pisco—a city 60 miles south of Lima. Together they learned the terrible news: "Pisco was destroyed," she said. "Luis found out that four of his relatives had died: his younger sister, who was only 25 years old, died with her baby; he also lost a niece, who was 16, and a cousin."

Assessing the situation in Pisco

Oxfam's humanitarian coordinator, Sergio Alvarez, was on a military flight to Pisco within hours of the quake, and he started the crucial process of assessment needed to design Oxfam's humanitarian response. The scene in Pisco was near total devastation, with most of the adobe buildings flattened and hundreds of people dead. But, with ample news coverage of the disaster and many resources eventually finding their way to the city, Alvarez turned his attention and Oxfam's resources to communities where he knew more poor people were awaiting assistance. "We are especially worried about people in the rural areas because their houses are extremely vulnerable, and they are harder to reach," he said the day after the earthquake.

Alvarez's fears were realized as he worked his way along cracked roadways blocked by landslides. In the Pisco River Valley, he visited agricultural areas well out of the media spotlight where 40 percent of the homes were destroyed and people were living outdoors in the middle of winter with no shelter or clean water, and little food.

In one small community called San Jacinto, Alvarez said he was surprised by the community's degree of organization. "When I arrived here, the situation was pretty bad, with most of the houses collapsed and people with no safe place to stay," he said. Many were living in makeshift tents. "Now they really need improvements in water and other basic sanitation services."

Oxfam's response

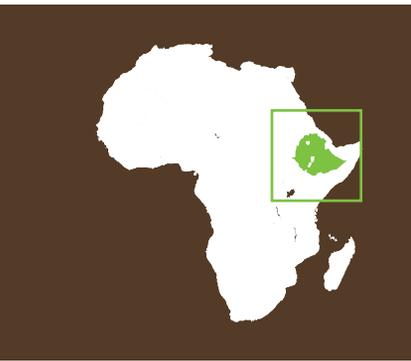
It is in these rural areas that Oxfam is centering its assistance: clean water and latrines to prevent the spread of disease, and temporary shelter. The goal is to coordinate with other aid organizations working in this area to provide assistance to about 2,000 of the 3,000 families living there.

Within three weeks after the quake hit, Oxfam delivered 185,000 gallons of clean water to people living in camps for displaced people near Pisco, and started distributing 7,500 blankets. Oxfam set up an office staffed with a dozen workers and flew in 450 tents and the equipment needed to provide 1,000 latrines and enough tanks to store more than 21,000 gallons of clean water.

As we go to press, Oxfam is finishing setting up water systems for delivering 5,000 gallons of clean water a day. Our program will help 1,550 families with shelter for the next month while they rebuild their homes using earthquake-resistant techniques. A second phase of rebuilding and rehabilitation will include helping communities advocate to ensure that the government distributes aid equitably, as well as creating systems so that communities will be better prepared for any future emergencies.

Oxfam estimates that the initial response to the earthquake will cost \$1.3 million and that the second phase will probably exceed \$1 million. Within two days of the earthquake, Oxfam America's online supporters had contributed more than \$200,000 to the new Peru Earthquake Relief and Recovery Fund and as we go to press, online donations have topped \$344,000.

To help the people of Pisco and Ica recover, please go to www.oxfamamerica.org/whatwedo/emergencies.



Starbucks Campaign

Anatomy of a Win

Andrea Perera explains how Oxfam and Ethiopian farmers coaxed a groundbreaking agreement out of Starbucks.

Gemedo Robe walked to the podium outside the Addis Ababa Sheraton, a white shawl wrapped around his shoulders. An 85-year-old coffee farmer, Robe had come to support Ethiopia's trademark initiative. He'd left his village for the first time to explain why companies like Starbucks should recognize Ethiopia's ownership of its own coffee brands.

"The names Yirgacheffe, Sidamo, and Harar are as unique to Ethiopia as the flavors of the coffees," he said. "Whoever says these names are not the property of Ethiopia is as crazy as someone who would say the name I gave my first-born son is no longer his."

Robe spoke at this coffee ceremony last December as a kind of local celebrity. His face—the gray beard, the unflinching stare—had become the iconic image of Oxfam America's Starbucks campaign.

to draw attention to the issue. Though initially reluctant, Starbucks entered into serious talks with Ethiopia in May. By June, they had finalized an agreement that could change the coffee industry forever.

"The true victors of this campaign are the 1.5 million coffee farmers in Ethiopia whose lives will improve," said Abera Tola, director of Oxfam America's regional office in Ethiopia. "They have given a glimmer of hope to millions more like them all over the world who deserve recognition for the quality products they generate."

At Oxfam, we feel it's important to stop and recognize a victory. But after all the celebratory emails have been sent, what comes next? For an organization interested in creating lasting solutions to poverty, the end of an effort is in many ways the beginning. This is when the real analysis comes in; just what went into this win?

“The names Yirgacheffe, Sidamo, and Harar are as unique to Ethiopia as the flavors of the coffees. Whoever says these names are not the property of Ethiopia is as crazy as someone who would say the name I gave my first-born son is no longer his.”

Launched in October 2006, the campaign asked that the coffee giant sign an agreement acknowledging Ethiopia's right to license and distribute its fine coffees. By recognizing Ethiopia's intellectual property rights, Starbucks could give poor farmers a chance to earn a greater share of the profits.

Aware of Starbucks' status as a global brand interested in maintaining its socially responsible reputation, Oxfam used grassroots activism and strategic media

Creating public pressure

Oxfam began negotiating with Starbucks in 2005 when we first learned about Ethiopia's efforts to trademark its fine coffees. After dozens of conversations between our Boston headquarters, the Seattle home of Starbucks, and Ethiopia's Intellectual Property Office in Addis Ababa, it became clear that high-level talks would not be enough. It was time to enlist the public.

At a grassroots level, Oxfam worked with a coalition of allies to organize members of the Ethiopian Diaspora, students, Starbucks employees, and our own supporter base. By the campaign's end, more than 100,000 people had gotten involved, many of them sending Robe's photo around the world on postcards, flyers, and posters. Robe's face even appeared



▲ At a coffee ceremony in Addis Ababa, coffee farmer Gemedo Robe asks Starbucks to sign a licensing agreement with Ethiopia. Robe's photo graced countless campaign materials, including the poster pictured behind him.

on web sites and in newspaper ads during a series of global “days of action” in places like Seattle, Scotland, and Hong Kong. The accompanying message to Starbucks remained simple: Honor your commitments to coffee farmers.

Throughout all this work, Oxfam tested creative ways to engage our supporters. We filmed the days of action and posted the video on YouTube. We sent a petition to Starbucks that became the most popular online action in our organization's history. We had supporters participate in a photo petition on Flickr. And we promoted it all on our social networking pages on MySpace and Facebook.

Eventually Oxfam's message reached Starbucks' shareholders. A few sent letters to Starbucks supporting Ethiopia's trademark initiative. And at the Starbucks annual general meeting in April, some joined members of the Ethiopian community in asking pointed questions of both the company CEO and chairman.

With activists combining efforts around the world, Oxfam ramped up the public

pressure by focusing on the press. Over the course of the campaign, major media outlets—including NPR, the BBC, CNN, Time, Fortune, and The Wall Street Journal—featured the David-and-Goliath struggle of the Ethiopian farmers and Starbucks.

“What might have remained a little-noticed bureaucratic dispute became an international affair when Oxfam, a nonprofit relief and development group, began publicizing it in the fall,” wrote The Wall Street Journal in a March 5 article.

Remembering the “ground truth”

Each aspect of the campaign had its impacts. But it just may have been the voice on the ground that resonated loudest with Starbucks. In the end, the company seemed to accept the simple truth: The campaign wasn't about a development agency, a roaster, or a government. It was about people like

Robe, the coffee farmer demanding economic justice.

When the old farmer from Afursa Waro village, whose face had launched the entire campaign, made one final appearance, it was in a thank-you video for Oxfam supporters.

Sitting among his fellow farmers in a lush meadow overlooking the Yirgacheffe hills, Robe looked into the camera once again. “We know that Oxfam and many people around the globe are standing by our side in supporting us in this effort,” he said. “You, our supporters, have given voice to our cause.”

Then Robe stood alongside his fellow farmers and, in unison, offered a series of customary bows.

“*Gelatoma. Gelatoma. Gelatoma,*” they said in Oromifa, their region's language. “Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.”



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To learn more about Oxfam America's work on Ethiopia's trademark initiative, go to www.oxfamamerica.org/starbucks.

“This Is the Future”

Landmark Victory in Bolivia



Chris Hufstader reports from eastern Bolivia, where, after centuries of discrimination and a decade of legal work supported by Oxfam, the indigenous Chiquitano people now have legal title to their ancestral territory.



EVAN ABRAMSON/OXFAM AMERICA

▲ Positive outlook: Lorenzo Charupá, 60, and his wife, Polonia Tomicha, 56, are helping to create a plan to manage the natural resources in the expansive territory that they and other indigenous people now control in eastern Bolivia.

The dry season has been a tough one for 60-year-old Lorenzo Charupá, a slim man wearing a frayed Adidas baseball cap. Standing next to his cattle cooperative's barn, on a hill deep in the forest, he can still smell the burnt vegetation from a recent forest fire as a strong wind whips through the trees. The fire burned some of the brown, dry grasses and sugar cane stalks that were intended as food for the co-op's 54 cows. "Normally we feed the cows all the sugar cane in the dry season, so now we're not sure what we are going to do," Charupá says. He and his compañeros are clearing a new pasture, crossing their fingers that there will be enough grass to get their cows through the southern hemisphere winter and into September and October when the rains come.

Charupá does not seem particularly worried, as he is used to the uncertainties of raising cattle. Moreover, he is confident about the long-term prospects of his community: in June of 2007, the president of Bolivia announced that the Chiquitano people had successfully completed all legal requirements to attain title to a vast area of Santa Cruz's eastern forest known as Monte Verde.

The indigenous people took advantage of an agrarian reform law passed in 1996 that allowed them to claim "original community territories" known by their

Spanish initials as TCOs. It took more than 10 years, but the Chiquitano people documented their claim for the Monte Verde TCO and defended it against ranchers and logging companies intent on exploiting the forest resources.

When Charupá talks about their success, his face lights up with pride and confidence: "We are the original inhabitants of the land here, and we wanted to be owners of it, the trees, and the minerals," he says. "Now we can talk about what is in our territory. ... Before they said it was only the businesses that could control it."

There are 33 communities, comprising roughly 5,000 people living in or near the Monte Verde TCO. They are now looking to the future and envisioning the best ways to manage and enjoy the roughly 3,830 square-mile territory.

Redressing historic injustices

Monte Verde has immense significance for the Chiquitano people. Their ancestors were moved out of Monte Verde in the 1700s by the Spanish and relocated to communities run by Jesuit priests. Chiquitanos were enslaved on *haciendas* and eventually forced to tap rubber trees in the early 20th century. The area near Charupá's village is part of San Antonio de Lomerío, a place of refuge for escaped slaves. Their descendents organized groups to work on the legal claim for their

“We are the original inhabitants of the land here, and we wanted to be owners of it, the trees, and the minerals,” he said. “Now we can talk about what is in our territory. ... Before they said it was only the businesses that could control it.”

territory, while illegal logging decimated their forests.

It took more than a decade of hard work and sustained Oxfam support for the Chiquitano people to achieve their goal. Oxfam helped three local organizations, in Lomerío, San Javier, and the village of Monte Verde, coordinate their work and collaborate with the Center for Legal Studies and Social Research (known by its Spanish initials CEJIS) to get the technical training to gather satellite positioning data on the TCO borders and investigate 158 land claims by ranchers and other nonindigenous people trying to grab a piece of the territory. Only a small number of these claims were legitimate, and it was only through the legal support, technical data, and satellite photos gathered by the community members and CEJIS that the Chiquitanos could defend their claim from these interlopers, some of whom were using forged documents.

During this time the indigenous people struggling for their land and the staff of CEJIS supporting them were subjected to physical attacks, threats, and intimidation. In some areas in the TCO, civic committees organized by nonindigenous ranchers and loggers hired armed thugs to attack the offices and representatives of the local indigenous groups. One was burned down just last December in San Javier—the group lost all its radio equipment, computers, and legal documents. In another incident, Leonardo Tamburini, the Argentinean director of CEJIS, was kidnapped and beaten severely in 2002 when he was investigating a fraudulent claim for more than 37,000 acres by nonindigenous ranchers.

The real work begins

During the last two years of the struggle for legal title of Monte Verde, Oxfam has also supported research designed to help Chiquitano communities create sustainable ways of living with their new forest resources.

Charupá says such planning will be essential for the future. “We are deciding together what areas are for crops,” he

says. “We are setting aside areas for grazing, hunting, and to preserve trees. We have a map showing all the different areas and what we will do there. Everything has its place.”

José Luis Rivera, president of the indigenous organization of San Javier, says that the Monte Verde territory is good productive land and that the people of his community want to grow more beans, rice, corn, yucca, and other crops for their own use and for sale in local markets. Additionally, he wants to help those raising cattle to improve their pasture and produce more milk and cheese for sale. San Javier’s plans also include handicrafts produced by local women, who make hats, hammocks, leather belts, and ceramics. With the legal title in hand, the community has the confidence to make proposals to development organizations that might have otherwise been reluctant to support agricultural projects on lands the community did not legally own. “These institutions will have no doubt we can do these projects on our own land,” Rivera says. “We have the right to our land and can respect our culture.”

Outside Rivera’s temporary office, his compañeros are building a new office to replace the one burned down by thugs last December. The walls and metal roof are up, and the smell of sawdust mixes with the wood smoke and cooking scents from



a nearby restaurant. Pablo Solis Chuviru, 57, is looking at the new building and reflecting on the struggle to gain the legal title to Monte Verde and what it means for the future for his small village, Turuxnapez, which means “Heaven’s Door” in the local Bésiro language. “I hope we can hunt and fish, and use our trees in an orderly way,” he says, resting in a chair in the winter sun. “Now we are using a forest management plan so that our children will benefit from the forest. This is the future for them; they can see the fight we won. For them it is a treasure.”

An indigenous farmer from Palestina holds rice grown by her family. In Monte Verde, farmers are working together to develop plans to manage their territory, including growing rice and other crops, pasturing livestock, and setting aside areas for hunting and areas to preserve biodiversity.



EVAN ABRAMSON/OXFAM AMERICA



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To learn more about Oxfam America’s programs in South America, go to www.oxfamamerica.org/southamerica.



Make Oxfam a part of your tradition

This year, we invite you to make Oxfam a part of your tradition by taking one easy step: Skip a Meal for Oxfam. Often the simplest practices are the ones that touch us most. If you have not already done so, please consider starting this very personal tradition.

The task is simple. On the Thursday before Thanksgiving—November 15th—or on another day of your choice, skip a meal to remember the more than 854

million people who are hungry. Then contribute the money saved to Oxfam America.

For more information on Skip a Meal or other personal ways to make a difference, visit Oxfam's *Fast for a World Harvest* at: www.oxfamamerica.org/fast or contact Oxfam's *Fast* team at (800) 597-FAST or fast@oxfamamerica.org



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