



Oxfam
America

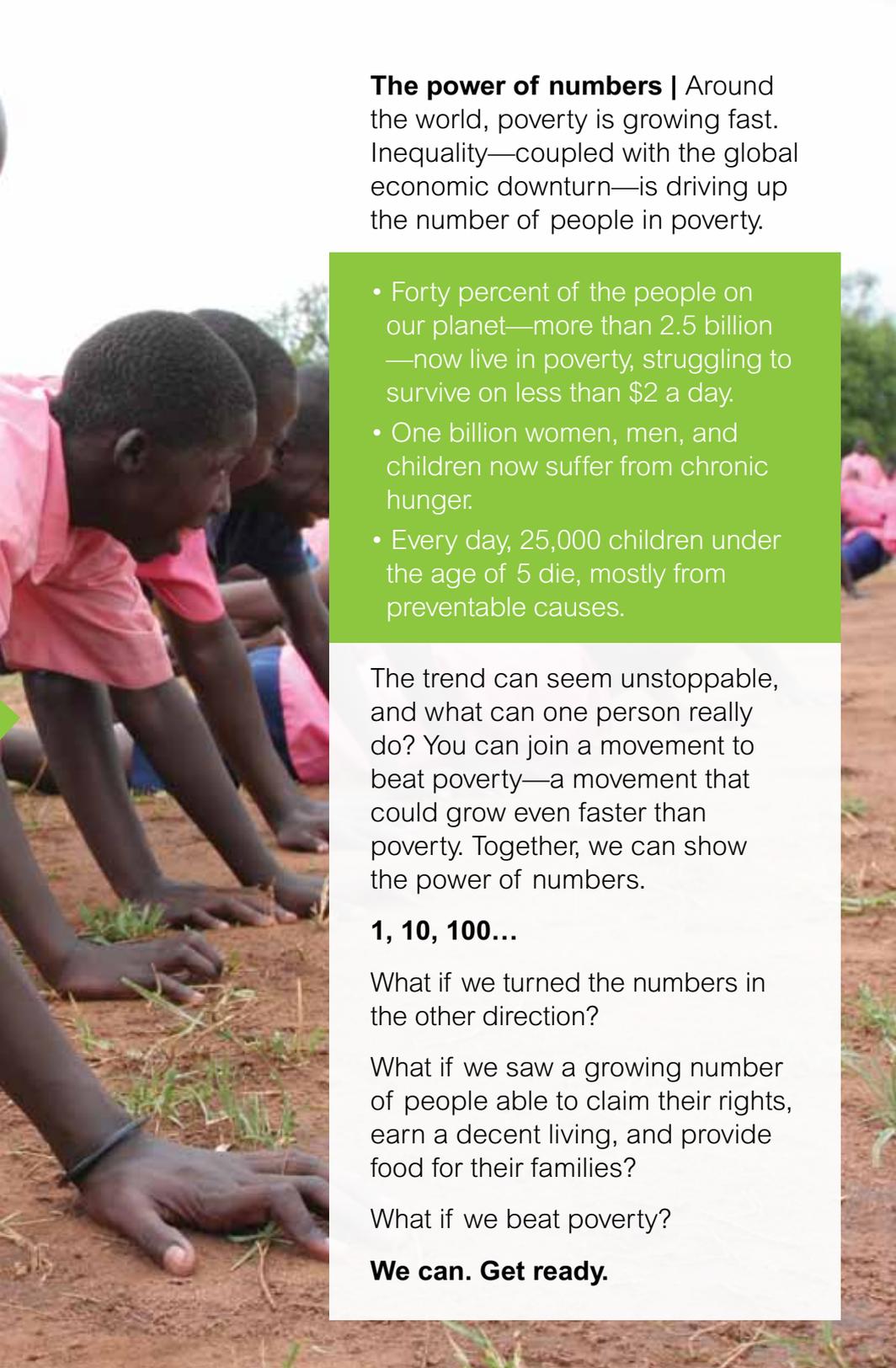
INTRODUCING

ACT FAST with Oxfam



ACT FAST with Oxfam

Pupils from Pandwong Primary School, Kitgum, Uganda, warming up for athletics trials. Pandwong enrollment has increased owing to the influx of children driven from the countryside by conflict. Many children walk to the school from camps just outside town. Around the world, poverty and conflict have a disproportionate affect on children. *Geoff Sayer / Oxfam*



The power of numbers | Around the world, poverty is growing fast. Inequality—coupled with the global economic downturn—is driving up the number of people in poverty.

- Forty percent of the people on our planet—more than 2.5 billion—now live in poverty, struggling to survive on less than \$2 a day.
- One billion women, men, and children now suffer from chronic hunger.
- Every day, 25,000 children under the age of 5 die, mostly from preventable causes.

The trend can seem unstoppable, and what can one person really do? You can join a movement to beat poverty—a movement that could grow even faster than poverty. Together, we can show the power of numbers.

1, 10, 100...

What if we turned the numbers in the other direction?

What if we saw a growing number of people able to claim their rights, earn a decent living, and provide food for their families?

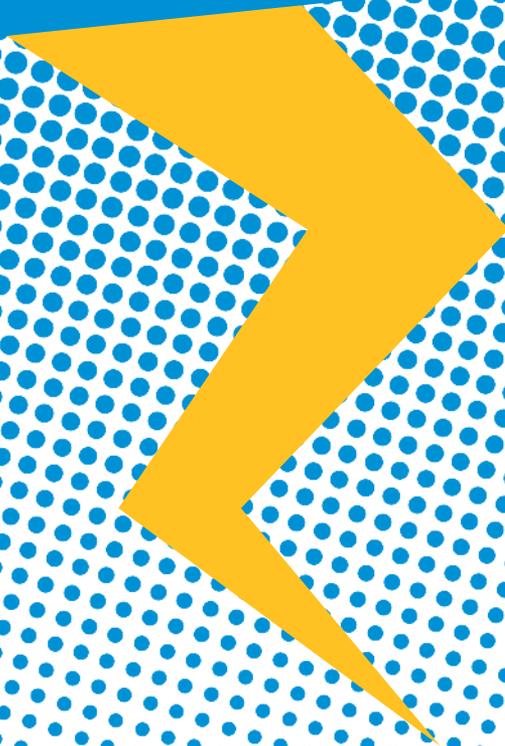
What if we beat poverty?

We can. Get ready.



INTRODUCING

ACT FAST
with Oxfam



We've got to ACT FAST. If we reach out to others right now, we can launch a movement—a movement that could grow even faster than poverty.

It's simpler than you think. And far more powerful: **1, 10, 100...**

At Oxfam, we know the power of exponential growth. What starts small—with one person, one idea, a few dollars—can quickly become a force for widespread change.

We've seen this power in rural Mali, West Africa, when we trained a small group of local women to pool their money in village savings and lending groups; the movement spread from person to person, village to village, and today includes over 250,000 members on three continents.

We've seen it in Cambodia when an Oxfam partner began teaching a few farmers about the System of Rice Intensification, an innovative technique that allows growers to produce twice the rice they once did using fewer seeds. Today, thanks in part to word of mouth, more than 100,000 farmers and their families are benefiting from this knowledge.

These stories show the power of numbers. And the force behind these numbers is people just like you. When we combine our efforts, we become a movement—a force for change. If we can harness that energy, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

**But we can't wait.
We have to start now.**
So, make a pledge to
ACT FAST with Oxfam.



PLEDGE TO

ACT FAST with Oxfam

When you pledge to ACT FAST with Oxfam, you are agreeing to do three things. At its simplest, it will only take you 15 minutes to fulfill all three pledge commitments. You can choose to fulfill the pledge in the way that works best for you.

Each step builds on the power of numbers: **1, 10, 100**. And each person who takes the pledge brings us closer to our goal of beating poverty.

What's it all about?

Sign 1.

Tell 10.

Raise 100.

Sign 1.

Add one name—yours—to the pledge to ACT FAST with Oxfam.

You can sign your name online at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast, on the enclosed envelope, or in person at an event. However you sign the pledge, you signal your commitment to ACT FAST to beat poverty.

Tell 10.

Educate 10 people about Oxfam's work and the need to ACT FAST.

It's easy to get the word out even if you're pressed for time. Send an email to 10 friends or, if you have the time, host a community event.

The more people who hear about our growing community, the faster the movement to beat poverty will grow. Real grassroots change relies on the power of numbers—that's why each pledge helps to grow the movement exponentially.

Check out page 12 for more ideas and tools.

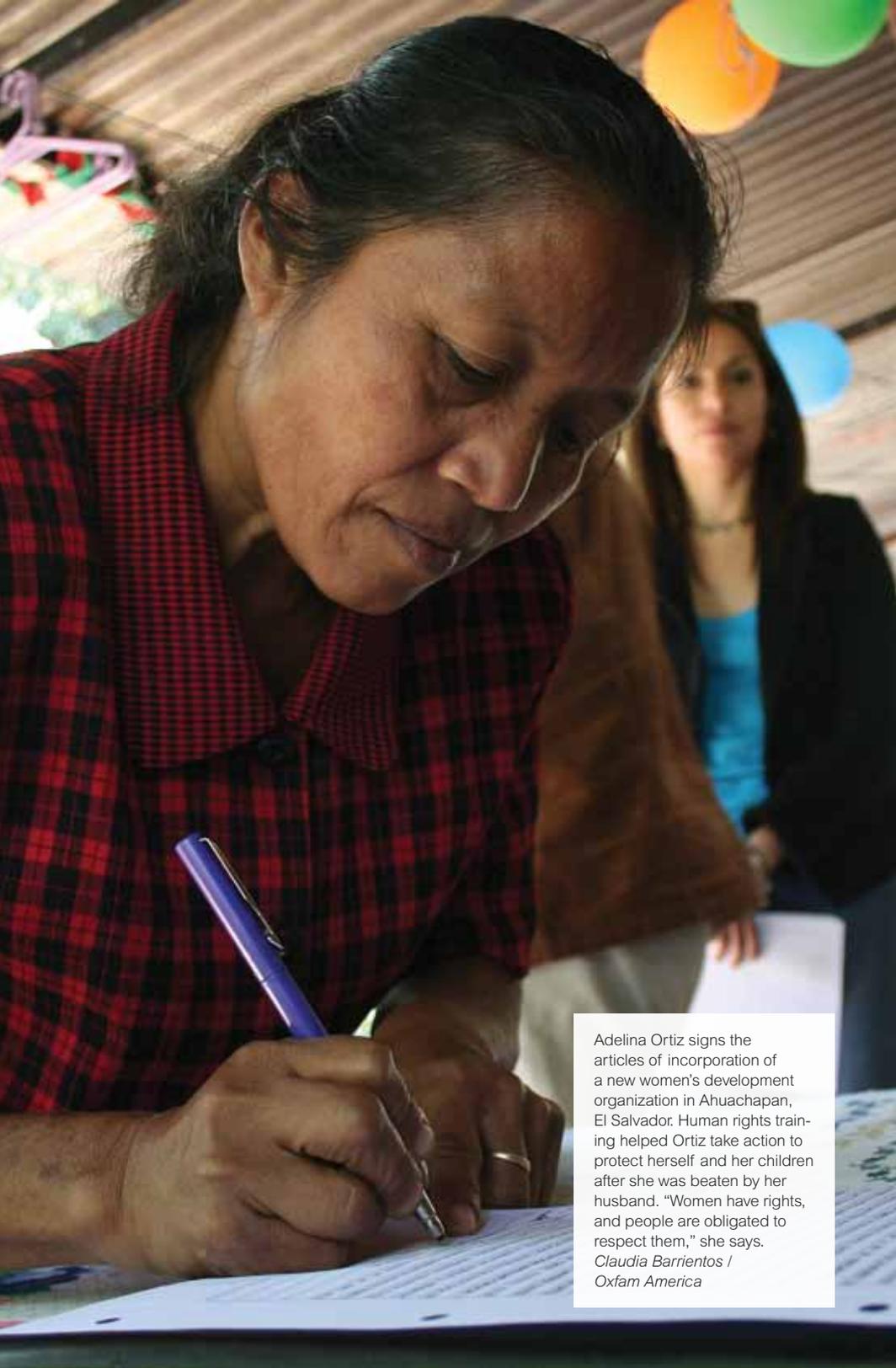
Raise 100.

Raise \$100 for Oxfam's work to beat poverty.

If time's short, just make a donation at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast/ donate or write a check and mail it back to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. If money's tight, how about inviting 10 friends to each pitch in \$10? Want to teach kids about the power of giving? Set up a lemonade stand and charge \$1 per cup.

See page 16 for more ideas and tools.

1, 10, 100: You're part
of something bigger.



Adelina Ortiz signs the articles of incorporation of a new women's development organization in Ahuachapan, El Salvador. Human rights training helped Ortiz take action to protect herself and her children after she was beaten by her husband. "Women have rights, and people are obligated to respect them," she says.
Claudia Barrientos / Oxfam America

Sign 1.

Add your name to the pledge to ACT FAST with Oxfam and signal your commitment to beat poverty. Sign the pledge online at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast, or just sign and mail back the enclosed envelope.

That was easy—and you're a third of the way done.



Become part of a history of working together for change

You're committed to making a change—and you're not alone. But until now, maybe you weren't sure what to do. Oxfam supporters have a long history of standing up for what they know is right. In 1970, a group of volunteers founded Oxfam America in response to the humanitarian crisis created by the fight for independence in Bangladesh. Then, on the Thursday before Thanksgiving 1974, something quite remarkable happened. Responding to Oxfam's call, 250,000 people nationwide participated in the first Oxfam America *Fast for a World Harvest*; they fasted for the day or for a meal, raising awareness about hunger and donating their food money to Oxfam. So began a national movement to alleviate hunger and poverty in our world. And that's how we first understood the power of "acting fast." Starting today, you've joined a movement to take it all to the next level.

What is Oxfam America?

Oxfam America is an international relief and development organization that creates lasting solutions to poverty, hunger, and injustice. We are part of Oxfam International, a confederation of 13 Oxfams working in more than 100 countries. Together with individuals and local groups in these countries, we save lives, help people overcome poverty, and fight for social justice. Want to know more about who we are, what we do, and what sets us apart? Go to www.oxfamamerica.org.

In an effort to raise awareness of the impact of climate change on poor people, Oxfam Action Corps members organized a Walk for Climate Justice at the Earth Day 2008 celebration on the Santa Monica Pier, in California.

*Liliana Rodriguez /
Oxfam America*



Tell 10.

To build a movement, we need to harness the power of numbers. When you tell at least 10 other people—family, friends, coworkers—about ACT FAST with Oxfam, you’re educating others, inspiring action, and showing people that they, too, have the power to make a difference. Each of us can become part of the growing movement to beat poverty.

Not much time? Go online

The fastest way to fulfill this step of the pledge is to use the web to help you get the word out. Go to ACT FAST with Oxfam at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast to find sample text for an email that you can forward to 10 friends. Or you can simply post a link to the ACT FAST with Oxfam pledge on your blog, web site, or social networking page. And you’re done!

Get the word out

Go to www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast to find the ACT FAST with Oxfam fact sheet and other materials about the pledge that you can print out and share, or go there to order copies of our materials by mail. Give these materials to neighbors with a note, distribute them in your faith community, share them with classmates, or post them on bulletin boards.

Share face-to-face

Use the ACT FAST with Oxfam materials to start a conversation at work, with family, in your neighborhood, or at dinner with friends. Host a community event: Oxfam supporters around the world have held everything from roundtable discussions to house parties, speaker series to film screenings, art exhibits to fashion shows, to raise awareness of our work to beat poverty. Not sure what to do? Try our signature event, the Oxfam America Hunger Banquet®. See page 19 to learn more.

Whatever method you choose, make sure you take this opportunity to educate others about ACT FAST with Oxfam. Distribute materials, tell others about what you’re doing, and invite them to join our movement.

Tell 10.

Tools & ideas for getting the word out

AMT OF TIME	IDEA
	<p>Send an email about ACT FAST with Oxfam to 10 friends.</p> <hr/> <p>Post a link on your blog, web site, or social networking page.</p> <hr/> <p>Print out 10 copies of the ACT FAST with Oxfam fact sheet. Mail them to 10 friends with a note, or give them to neighbors or classmates.</p> <hr/> <p>Tell friends or family about the pledge at your next gathering.</p>
	<p>Write a letter to the editor of your local paper. Talk about what you are doing and why it matters to your community.</p> <hr/> <p>Organize a group at your school, in your faith community, or in your workplace to take the pledge.</p> <hr/> <p>Going to a concert, festival, or campus function? See if you can set up an informational table.</p>
	<p>Host an event on campus or in your community to educate others about Oxfam's work and the need to ACT FAST.</p> <hr/> <p>Host an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event and tell guests about the pledge.</p> <p>See page 19 to learn more.</p>

TOOLS

Find sample text for an email at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast.

Go to www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast and click “Share this” at the bottom of the page.



ACT FAST with Oxfam fact sheet



ACT FAST with Oxfam fact sheet



“Oxfam America Organizing Guide”

Go to www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast and order the ACT FAST with Oxfam postcard.



“Oxfam America Organizing Guide” and ACT FAST with Oxfam one-pager

For ideas and tools on Oxfam’s events, go to www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast.



“Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® Event Toolkit”

““”

We held information sessions at four of our dining halls over the course of two weeks ... and did a series of presentations on hunger. This was a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness.

Thank you for all of your help and all of the supplies. It’s amazing how easy you’ve made it for our campus to open its eyes.

—Hazel Wetmore, student
Providence, RI



Downloadable tools at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast



In 2005, Oxfam launched Saving for Change, a program that trains community groups to save and lend small amounts of money. Here, women from the Banakoro, Mali, village Saving for Change group—dubbed Sabougnuma, or “good deed”—hold their weekly meeting. Over 250,000 Saving for Change participants around the world—mostly women—have collectively saved more than \$2.7 million. *Rebecca Blackwell / Oxfam America*

Raise 100.

Here's where the impact of this movement becomes tangible. As a third step, you raise at least \$100 to support Oxfam's work. You can donate on your own, donate with friends, or organize a fund raiser. \$100 may seem like a drop in the bucket when it comes to beating poverty, but imagine the impact we can have together as the movement exceeds \$1,000, \$100,000, or \$1 million.

The simplest way to give

Don't have much time? Donate online at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast/ donate or write a check and mail it back to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. And that's it—you're done! Oxfam will send you a receipt for your tax-deductible contribution, and we pledge to keep you posted on how much we've raised in the fight against poverty.

Harness the power of community

If you've got the time to do more or if money's tight, your pledge to ACT FAST with Oxfam can be an opportunity to bring others together for a good cause—and a way to show the power of giving in numbers. There are lots of ways you can raise the funds within your community, and we've created tools to help you—check out the table on the next page to learn more.

Beating poverty, one by one Your donations to Oxfam's emergency and long-term work can make a difference in people's lives:

- If you take the pledge, that's \$100—enough to help a fisherman, a basketweaver, or other entrepreneur start a small business.
- If 10 of your friends take the pledge, that's \$1,000—enough to stock two “cereal banks” with a supply of grains, like corn and millet, that a community can rely on if crops fail.
- If each of them gets 10 friends to pledge, that's \$10,000—enough to buy 350 farmers seeds, farm tools, and plants to increase and diversify their crops and feed their families.

Raise 100.

Tools & ideas for raising \$100

AMT OF TIME	IDEA
	<p>Really short on time? Fulfill the third step of the pledge by making a donation that's also a gift from Oxfam America Unwrapped.</p> <hr/> <p>Simply donate online or write a check.</p> <hr/> <p>Reach out to 10 friends and ask each person to chip in \$10. (You can even use Oxfam's personal fund-raising tool: www.oxfamamerica.org/myactfast.)</p>
	<p>As Oxfam's supporters have done since 1974, organize friends to skip a meal in solidarity with those around the world living in hunger. Donate the money you would have spent on food to Oxfam.</p> <hr/> <p>Hold a bake sale, garage sale, or car wash.</p> <hr/> <p>If you're using the pledge with kids as a learning tool, have them help raise money by hosting a lemonade stand or doing a penny drive.</p>
	<p>Use Oxfam's personal fund-raising tool to set up a page. Ask friends and family to pledge money for every mile that you walk, lap that you swim, or mile that you bike.</p> <hr/> <p>Host an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event. Tell guests about the pledge, and invite them to contribute what they can.</p> <p>See page 19 to learn more.</p>

TOOLS

Shop at
www.oxfamamericaunwrapped.com/actfast.

Donate online at
www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast/donate.

Or mail your check in
the enclosed postage-paid
envelope.

Go to www.oxfamamerica.org/myactfast to set up your page today.



“Oxfam America Hunger
Banquet® Event Toolkit”

“”

[To hold] a bake sale for Oxfam, ... 11 teens secured donated kitchen space and ingredients, made and packaged cookies and brownies, and sold them outside a grocery store. ... All told, the teens ... cooked up \$150 in support.

But perhaps they did something more important that day. ... They understood they were ‘part of something that was bigger.’

—Cindy Phoel,
Oxfam supporter



Downloadable tools at
www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast

Families in the Honduran community of Copan used to survive on two or three small meals of beans and corn a day. With support from Oxfam and a local partner organization, the community is now growing a wide variety of nutritious vegetables in family gardens. Their harvests provide not only food, but also insurance against future shortfalls.

Gilvan Barreto / Oxfam



OUR SIGNATURE EVENT: The Oxfam America Hunger Banquet®



The one thing I would like you to remember is this: Everyone on earth has the same basic needs; it is only our circumstances—where we live and the culture into which we are born—that differ. Some are born into relative prosperity and security, while millions, through no choice of their own, are born into poverty. ... While the US is one of the wealthiest countries on earth, more than 39 million Americans live in poverty. Stark inequalities prevail everywhere.

An excerpt from the Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event script

Few experiences bring to life the inequalities in our world more powerfully than an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event. Organizers and participants alike can experience firsthand how our decisions affect others in the world.

This year, hosting an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event can also help you fulfill your pledge to ACT FAST with Oxfam. You can use this event to educate at least 10 people about hunger and poverty issues (and even to raise \$100).

Here's how it works: Guests draw tickets at random that assign them each to either a high-, middle-, or low-income tier—based on the latest statistics about the number of people living in poverty. Each income level receives a corresponding meal: the 15 percent in the high-income tier are served a sumptuous meal; the 35 percent in the middle-income section eat a simple meal of rice and beans; and the 50 percent in the low-income tier help themselves to small portions of rice and water.

Guests can also assume characterizations that describe the situation of a specific person at the income level to which they've been assigned. (Find sample character tickets in the "Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® Event Toolkit" at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast.)

Finally, all guests are invited to share their thoughts after the meal. Use this opportunity to tell participants about your pledge to ACT FAST with Oxfam and invite them to take action. After an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event, few participants leave with full stomachs, but all possess a greater understanding of the problems of hunger and poverty and will hopefully be motivated to do something about them.

Check out our free "Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® Event Toolkit" for step-by-step instructions for holding your event and all the other resources you need. You can access the toolkit online at www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast.



Participants serve rice at an Oxfam America Hunger Banquet® event held at Oxfam's 2006 CHANGE Initiative training. The CHANGE Initiative is a competitive national program that trains college students to become actively involved in Oxfam's social justice work.
Laura McFarlane / Oxfam America

Turning the tables

Three times nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, Tony P. Hall served as a congressman from Ohio for nearly 24 years. In 2002, as a leading advocate for the world's hungry, he became US ambassador to the UN anti-hunger agencies in Rome. The night before Thanksgiving 2004, he invited 70 colleagues to his home there. Taking care to keep his plan under wraps, he transformed his traditional feast into a learning opportunity based on Oxfam America's Hunger Banquet event.

Upon arrival, guests were asked to draw a card that assigned them to one of three categories of wealth based on the latest poverty statistics. Some diplomats were lucky: they drew high-income cards and ate gourmet meals. Other less fortunate guests ate rice and beans. Most surprised were those offered only rice and asked to eat outside in a tent.

Said Hall: "I was thrilled that diplomats and journalists got a small taste of the realities of global hunger and poverty. Oxfam's *Hunger Banquet* is a great tool to raise awareness about these issues."



Oxfam's pledge to you

We'll keep you posted on how the movement is growing and how much money the ACT FAST pledge community has raised. Just think about what we can accomplish together: if 10,000 people each make this commitment, we'll raise \$1 million to help people grow more food, access clean water, start small businesses, or rebuild after disasters.

Contact us

We're here to help. To order materials, make a donation, or just ask a question about ACT FAST with Oxfam, contact us at:

Oxfam America
ATTN: ACT FAST
226 Causeway Street, 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02114-2206

Tel: (800) 597-FAST
Fax: (617) 728-2595
Email: actfast@oxfamamerica.org
www.oxfamamerica.org



In the village of Pampa Michi, Peru, Oxfam works with the indigenous Ashaninka people—including 11-month-old Liv's mother, pictured—to help community members earn a stable income through businesses like ecotourism. *Percy Ramirez / Oxfam America*

Over one billion women, men, and children now suffer from chronic hunger. Around the world, poverty is growing fast.

The trend can seem unstoppable. What can one person do?

Join a movement to beat poverty: ACT FAST with Oxfam. Together, we can show the power of numbers.

1, 10, 100: You're part of something bigger.

COVER: Children playing in the village of Lubao, Maniema in the Democratic Republic of Congo, near the site of a new community water source that Oxfam and local partners are helping the community to build. *Nabil / Oxfam America*



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All statistics used in "ACT FAST with Oxfam Sourcebook" are from the World Bank's World Development Indicators 2007, the World Bank PovcalNet database, the World Food Program, and UNICEF.

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