

WINTER ISSUE 2006

NEIGHBORS

A WORLD NEIGHBORS REPORT FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



WORLD
NEIGHBORS

Inspiring People • Strengthening Communities

Conversations with Mel



A series of images from Melanie's February 2006 trip to India. While there, she visited with World Neighbors program participants in Bihar and Karnataka.

"We believe in the strength of each individual to change his/her life if only given the chance to do so, with a few words of support and encouragement along the way."

ON A SUNDAY MORNING IN APRIL 1951 AT ST. LUKE'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN OKLAHOMA CITY, A TALL, LANKY GUEST PREACHER SHOOK THE WORLD. HAVING BEEN BACK IN THE U.S. FOR SIX YEARS FOLLOWING HIS WORLD WAR II SERVICE IN THE PHILIPPINES, DR. JOHN L. PETERS FOLLOWED THROUGH ON A COMMITMENT THAT HE HAD MADE WHILE A DYING SOLDIER FROM TENNESSEE LAY IN HIS ARMS, "IF I GET OUT OF HERE ALIVE, I'M GOING TO DO SOMETHING, SOMEHOW, SOMEWHERE ..."

On that Sunday morning, Dr. Peters spoke about the need for a more equitable system across the world, about the need for a program to address the root causes of poverty and despair, about a program that would meet "real needs with real solutions." He dreamed of an organization that was humbly administered, fully respectful of each individual and aware of the reality that "what men need and want are not always what we think they need and want." From the people clustered around Dr. Peters after service that morning, World Neighbors was born.

WINPHOTO

For 55 years, his vision has been lived out through a remarkable history of excellence – reaching more than 25 million people in 45 countries whose lives have been transformed by World Neighbors unassuming, practical and modestly funded program of support.

Today, World Neighbors has a presence in hundreds of villages throughout 16 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Thousands of the poorest people on Earth in the most rural and remote areas of the world benefit from our integrated programs, resulting in farmers who can continuously provide more food for their families and livelihoods; children who are healthy and attending school; reduced infant and maternal mortality rates; beautifully made crafts that generate additional income; and leaders and community members who have the skills and determination to tackle their problems for years to come.

By listening to the needs of a community and working alongside them to address those needs, World Neighbors roots are deeply entrenched in communities with an abiding sense of partnership with local participants.

World Neighbors invests in the most precious resources of these communities – people. We believe in the strength of each individual to change his/her life if only given the chance to do so, with a few words of support and encouragement along the way.

Dr. Peters once said in the early days of World Neighbors: "We can change our world if we care enough to get involved with our brothers and sisters in programs that respect their dignity, that do not violate their self-respect, that help them stand on their feet and participate in their own development." This still holds true today.

This issue of Neighbors features the 2005 annual report for World Neighbors. I would like to apologize for its lateness. Please know that we appreciate your patience and that we commit to earlier deadlines for the year ahead.

With warmest best wishes and thanks to each one of you for your support of our work,

Melanie Macdonald

Melanie Macdonald
President and Chief Executive Officer
The May Ayers Milburn Chair

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Inspiring People · Strengthening Communities

| WINTER ISSUE 2006 | WWW.WN.ORG |

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MISSION STATEMENT

World Neighbors inspires people and strengthens communities to find lasting solutions to hunger, poverty and disease and to promote a healthy environment.

World Neighbors (<http://www.wn.org>), is an international development organization that works with some of the most remote and marginalized communities in ecologically fragile areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America. We support the transformation of communities by helping people address hunger, poverty, disease and other challenges that undermine their livelihood, and by inspiring lasting leadership and collective action for change. Since 1951, we have helped more than 25 million people in 45 nations improve their lives and the communities where they live.



Throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America, the World Neighbors WOW! program is working to improve the lives of women and their families, such as this Burkina Faso mother and child, through integrated programs. For more information, see page 30.

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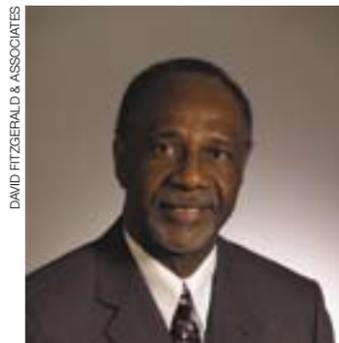
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On the cover: Children such as this young girl from Guatemala are facing new challenges following devastating mudslides caused by Hurricane Stan this past October in the Lake Atitlán area. For more information on what World Neighbors is doing to help long-term recovery efforts, turn to page 6. Photo by Margaret Woodson Nea.

News Briefs



Keith Anatol, vice president operations

Professionals added to World Neighbors team

World Neighbors is proud to announce the addition and/or promotion of several professionals to its staff team.

A native of Trinidad and Tobago, Keith Anatol, vice president operations, comes to World Neighbors with several years of progressive finance, business and general management experience in the private, government and non-governmental organization (NGO) sectors. Most recently, he served as director of finance for CUSO, the Canadian, non-governmental version of the U.S. Peace Corps. As vice president of operations, Anatol is responsible for the oversight of all aspects of operations and the development and institution of organizational policies and procedures, financial management, information technology and facilities and capital assets.

Having most recently worked in a coordinator role within World Neighbors, Erin Engelke has been promoted to vice president marketing and communications, a role in which she has primary responsibility for managing the organization's public image. Her position also has several revenue generation responsibilities, including special event fundraising activities and grant seeking for educational programs.

Christopher Price has accepted the role of coordinator international program operations. Price relocated to Oklahoma City from Denver, Colo., where he served as the executive director and founder of Global Diversity Alliance,

Inc., while consulting for a local anti-violence program. He has extensive organizational development, program development and management experience working in partnership with non-governmental and community-based organizations, as well as public sector agencies in 15 countries.

Associate Vice President for Community and Reproductive Health Linda Jo Stern has recently returned to the U.S. after spending five years in Honduras where she served as founder and director of an international health project and has more than 20 years of management experience and 30 years of public health experience. Stern has served as an adjunct instructor at Boston University and is published in her field.

We also welcome the following individuals to the World Neighbors staff team: Carrie Hill, outreach education coordinator; Victoria Hoge, special events coordinator; April Millaway, volunteer coordinator; Heather Sarles, WOW! (Work of Women) coordinator; Sarah Sims, annual giving coordinator; Danielle Walker, media relations and publications coordinator; and True Wallace, leadership gifts coordinator.

These new positions are a direct result of the World Neighbors three-year strategic plan, Inspiring People, Strengthening Communities. "We realized that we had to invest in additional human resources to support the initiatives in our ambitious strategic plan," said Melanie Macdonald, president and CEO of World Neighbors. "Through a significant restructuring and hiring period



Erin Engelke, vice president marketing and communications

within the organization, including the creation of a new marketing and communications department, we have involved many people with exceptional talent as a part of our staff team."

Nepal Partner Honored with Reflections of Hope Award

The Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum will honor the humanitarian efforts of Durga Ghimire, co-founder of Tamakoshi Service Society (TSS), a community-based organization improving the lives of marginalized people in Ramechhap, Nepal, as the recipient of the 2006 Reflections of Hope Award. The award, established in 2005 as part of the tenth anniversary commemoration of the Oklahoma City Bombing, honors a living person or group whose extraordinary work has significantly impacted a community, state or nation. It also exemplifies that hope not only survives but also thrives in the wake of political violence.

Ghimire will be honored at a reception and dinner on April 19, 2006, at the Meinders Hall of Mirrors, Civic Center Music Hall in Oklahoma City. This prestigious international award also includes a \$25,000 honorarium. In addition, Ghimire will partner with the Memorial & Museum in its education and outreach programs in the coming year.

"It is truly an honor for us to recognize Durga for the amazing work she does to provide hope and empowerment to families in her part of the world," said Kari Watkins, Oklahoma City National Memorial Executive Director. "Her work exemplifies the hope that comes in the wake of adversity and the life-changing effect it can have on a community."

In the midst of civil war in Nepal, where widespread intimidation, coercion and human rights abuses are prevalent, Ghimire and her husband Jagdish, World Neighbors South Asia area representative, grew this voluntary grassroots organization to over 6,000 members in 40 villages, providing basic services in preventative and reproductive health care, sustainable agriculture, water supply and income generation through rural micro-enterprise. With no government aid, and with the help of only a few external agencies including World Neighbors, TSS is the only agency providing these essential services in the Maoist guerilla-controlled area of Ramechhap. The Reflections of Hope Award was created by the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation to recognize those who find and, by their actions, exemplify hope in the midst of tragedy, respond selflessly and give of themselves to improve the lives of others.

Innovation in service delivery award presented to World Neighbors partner

The Medical Center for Orientation and Family Planning (CEMOPLAF), Ecuador, was



A CEMOPLAF health worker in Ecuador uses simple visual images to explain how diseases can be transmitted and what preventive steps can be employed.

recently awarded the Marjorie C. Horn Operations Research Award for 2005. This award, presented annually by the Research, Technology and Utilization (RTU) Division of the Office of Population and Reproductive Health, Bureau for Global Health, USAID Washington, recognizes excellence in implementation of operations and program research and/or utilization of research results for program improvement.

World Neighbors partners with CEMOPLAF to support their program that combines reproductive health, family planning, primary health, food security, natural resource management and community organization and

planning. A team of both agriculture and health promoters based out of the CEMOPLAF clinic works with several communities to increase their knowledge about reproductive health, improved nutrition, reduced maternal and infant mortality, family planning practices and preventative practices to reduce disease. Participants are then able to access high-quality, affordable health and reproductive health services of the CEMOPLAF clinic.

According to a press release issued by USAID, CEMOPLAF "was selected for its long-standing commitment to the use of research for program improvement. For many years it has worked to

maximize access to family planning services by conducting research on ways to reach underserved populations, including indigenous groups, adolescents and men. The organization is innovative, constantly developing new approaches to service delivery problems, and using research to evaluate those approaches." Dr. Marjorie C. Horn served as the deputy chief of the RTU until her death in 2002. She served as the team leader for operations research and was instrumental in launching the agency's initiative to eradicate female genital cutting. The award was established in recognition of her many accomplishments and in memory of her life well-lived.

INSPIRING PEOPLE—STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES: MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER



The entire World Neighbors staff team during the 2005 Global Conference Inspiring People, Strengthening Communities: Moving Forward Together.

For the first time in six years, World Neighbors staff members from around the globe were in the Oklahoma City area during Inspiring People – Strengthening Communities: Moving Forward Together, a World Neighbors global conference, this past November. Held at the Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education on the University of Oklahoma campus in Norman, the conference was both a chance for international and domestic staff to interact, and a catalyst for a strengthened team approach and deepened understanding of all World Neighbors goals. World Neighbors has a domestic staff of 35 and 145 staff stationed in its program areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America. For many, this was the first time they had visited Oklahoma City headquarters or been to the United States.

Both international and domestic staff valued the opportunity to meet their colleagues face-to-face. "I think for me, as a new staff member, it was more about feeling part of the organization, meeting my colleagues from all over the world and making connections with lots of new friends," said Paul Joicey, World Neighbors Southeast Asia area representative.

Others welcomed the chance to reconnect with long-time supporters during the invitation-only donor event held on Saturday, Dec. 3. "I think one important thing that happened during the conference was that I met Stanley Reynolds and Bob Curtis again," said Rene Lucero, Philippines program coordinator. "They were former colleagues and I never thought I would see them again. They have started helping me trace back the history of World Neighbors work in the Philippines."

By Danielle Walker

Tragedy in the Country of the Eternal Spring

How World Neighbors Guatemala program is rebounding from disaster

AS HURRICANE STAN ROARED ACROSS CENTRAL AMERICA THIS PAST OCTOBER, VILLAGERS IN THE HIGHLAND AREAS OF GUATEMALA WERE WONDERING HOW MUCH MORE RAINFALL THEY, AND THEIR ECOLOGICALLY FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM, COULD POSSIBLY HANDLE.

Although Stan was a relatively weak storm that only briefly reached hurricane status, it was embedded in a larger non-tropical system of torrential storms that dropped upwards of 20 inches of rain across Guatemala, El Salvador and southern Mexico¹ this past fall. For the vulnerable steep slopes in the Lake Atitlán watershed, these rains proved to be utterly devastating. Flooding and mudslides wiped out entire communities and caused thousands of deaths. On Oct. 11 at least 1,500 people were

confirmed to have died and up to 3,000 were believed missing.² The worst single incident appears to have occurred in Panabaj, an impoverished Mayan village whose people benefit from World Neighbors programs. “While surveying the damage in Panabaj, we came across a large pile of stones where more than 800 victims were buried,” said Elmer Lopez, World Neighbors Mesoamerica area representative. “In other communities, the situation was not so different.” World Neighbors began work in the Lake Atitlán watershed, in the department of Sololá,



NEWSPAPER IMAGES BY LA HORA

A series of front-page images from La Hora, a Guatemalan newspaper, chronicling the flooding caused by Hurricane Stan. Image dates are Oct. 4, Oct. 6 and Oct. 8, 2005.



RICK ALBERTSON



RICK ALBERTSON



The mudslides caused by Hurricane Stan damaged infrastructure and destroyed homes and crops throughout the Lake Atitlán watershed.

Footnotes 1 and 2: Wikipedia.com

October 4, 2005

How life changed in Santiago Atitlán

Juan Tacaxoy is a member, president and cofounder of Asociación Maya Nuevo Sembrador Integral (AMNSI), a community based organization in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala. He and his family used to live in the village of Panabaj in Santiago Atitlán.

Just a few months ago, Tacaxoy and his family led a peaceful life, working to organize and strengthen AMNSI and the local coffee production.

The events that occurred on Oct. 4, 2005, described in Tacaxoy's own words, changed the history of this beautiful region.

"Look, we didn't know anything that Tuesday night. Suddenly, we felt a terrible rain but we went to sleep. I woke up at 2:30 a.m. and felt how a terrible mudslide fell over us. At 3:00 a.m. I felt the second mudslide falling and (it) kept coming till the dawn. When I came out of the house I saw that I was in the middle of the mudslide. Because our house is made of concrete it handled and supported the mudslide but everybody around had already gone. We remained in the house until 9:00 a.m. The firemen came at 3:00 p.m. looking for the people here in Panabaj and sent us to Santiago. But people were gone or dead."

Fortunately, Tacaxoy was able to protect his family from the mudslide. But because of the disaster, his home and the entire surrounding area have become inaccessible. Because he and his family are not able to live there anymore, they were forced to move into his daughter's house.

Although Tacaxoy lost his home, land and years of hard work, the real disaster, he said, was the disappearance of the entire village, most of his neighbors and some partners from the village of Panabaj. The coffee plantation and its infrastructure were also severely damaged.

The history of Panabaj has been no less tumultuous. In 1990, Panabaj and its people survived a Civil War massacre where 75 people died at the hands of the army. The community demanded the expulsion of the military base in the zone and later built a monument to the memory of the victims. In addition, Tacaxoy and fellow AMNSI members spent 17 years in the mountains during the war fighting in the guerrilla lines to improve the precarious situation. This meant that at times they were completely isolated from civilization and their families.

Still, AMNSI members have had the courage to work continuously to try to rescue as many people and material possessions as possible. World Neighbors is helping the association repair the coffee processing plant and is supporting a group of new widows so that they may begin a new life following the tragedy.

Guatemala, in 2000. Its program benefits approximately 3,540 people and most of the work takes place in the communities of San Lucas Tolimán, Santiago Atitlán, San Pedro La Laguna, Santa Clara La Laguna and Santa Maria Visitation, all municipalities in the department of Sololá.

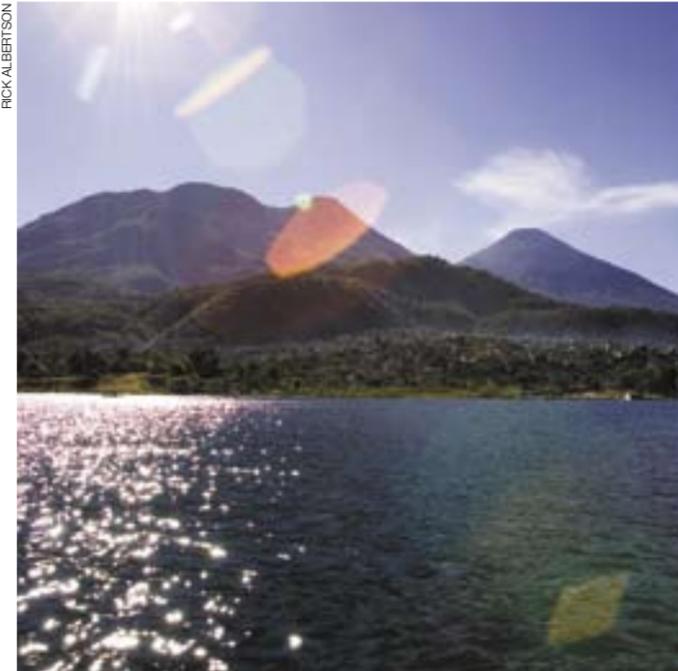
The program, called ECOPA-POCS, was initiated in collaboration with the community-based organizations that make up the Consortium of Associations of the Lake Atitlán watershed. Lake Atitlán is an important tourist attraction in Guatemala; however the indigenous communities surrounding the lake are subsistence farmers living in conditions of extreme poverty, who depend on small-scale coffee production for their survival.

"These are among the poorest

people in Guatemala," said Peter Gubbels, World Neighbors vice president international program. "The survivors of the mudslides have lost their crops, all their belongings and their homes."

Agriculture in the watershed is managed by small coffee farmers and peasants who use the steep hillsides to grow coffee, corn, beans and vegetables which they use both for food sustenance and income. Indeed, the impact on agriculture and livelihoods has been great. Lopez estimates that Stan affected the bean, corn and coffee crops by 80, 60 and 30 percent respectively. "Corn is food security," he said. "It's planted in May and harvested in November, so there will be a great deal of hunger through next October."

A view of Lake Atitlán.



RICK ALBERTSON



RICK ALBERTSON

While villagers rely on corn for food, coffee is the cash crop in this area of Guatemala, and, according to Lopez, 25 percent of coffee plantations were completely destroyed by mudslides. While ecological coffee production can be an important part of sustainable usage of the fragile natural resources of the watershed, low international coffee prices and lack of markets threaten to force farmers to revert to less sustainable production of other crops,

such as corn, which require a clean field.

"The vulnerability of this fragile ecosystem may have been exacerbated due to the coffee crisis in the last few years – the very low prices have made it increasingly difficult for small farmers to make money and survive," said Gubbels. "The resulting danger is that coffee and tree cover have been cut down to plant corn or other crops, possibly not using soil conservation techniques. This leads to deforestation, soil erosion and, following torrential rains, mudslides and disasters."

Lake Atitlán is already threatened due to high rates of deforestation, high levels of erosion and sedimentation in the lake and pollution. World Neighbors has been working in this region to provide technical support to the consortium of community-based organizations around the lake in production, processing and

marketing of ecologically friendly coffee. This allows small-scale, indigenous farmers to benefit economically, improve their well being and contribute to the protection of the watershed.

Following the disaster, World Neighbors mobilized its Disaster Crisis Response team and initiated relief and recovery efforts for the communities affected in the Lake Atitlán watershed. While Lopez was authorized to distribute funds to begin immediate relief efforts, the long-term effects of this disaster are untold. Displaced survivors, currently in refugee camps, are not only coping with the loss of livelihood and food staples, but community and water infrastructures as well. To assist in this effort, a full-time position has been created out of the program office in Guatemala City. Cesar Sunun has been hired as Atitlán program coordinator.

"We have been supporting

Displaced Hurricane Stan survivors, like this Guatemalan family, are currently living in refugee camps.

a way to respond to people's expressed needs and to build upon their own capacities, organizational structures and coping mechanisms, having addressed the immediate crisis in a way that will return them as quickly as possible toward a long-term recovery," said Lopez.



RICK ALBERTSON

It is estimated that 25 percent of the coffee crops in the Lake Atitlán area have been destroyed by mudslides.

TO HELP LONG-TERM RECOVERY EFFORTS IN GUATEMALA, PLEASE CALL WORLD NEIGHBORS AT 1-800-242-6387 OR VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT <http://www.wn.org>



World Neighbors Haiti Celebrates 10 Years

WORLD NEIGHBORS HAITI PROGRAM, VWAZEN MONDYAL AYITI, CELEBRATED ITS 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY THIS PAST SUMMER. FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS, IN HER OWN WORDS, OF ONE PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE WORK THAT WORLD NEIGHBORS HAS ACCOMPLISHED IN THIS CARIBBEAN COUNTRY:

10 Harvests of Coffee for World Neighbors Haiti
Carla Bluntschli

A person's age is sometimes still calculated here in Haiti by the number of coffee harvests one had seen in his/her lifetime. Any more, though, it's the turn of the calendar pages that marks time. World Neighbors Haiti sang, clapped, danced,

laughed, reflected and enjoyed with its friends the fruits of its determination after 10 coffee harvests – otherwise 10 years of hard work. It was an honor to be among these people of Haiti. People whose families have lived in the rugged mountains probably for centuries who now are members of groups committed, in spite of local, national and international



Cantave Jean-Baptiste, Haiti country director, presents during a special church service honoring the ten year anniversary of World Neighbors Haiti.

politics, to finding another model for survival. I have had a perhaps unique experience in having known World Neighbors for most of its 10 years here in Haiti. I have had the privilege of watching World Neighbors Haiti hold firm against tremendous adversities both worldly and other that would have extinguished this flame of hope rather than see it continue to flourish. Now with more than 20 years of being planted in Haiti myself, closely involved with many people active in the work of change, I was able to perceive during those few hours of presentation the team had carefully and respectfully put together for the public's eye on July 22, 2005 with delight.

I remain convinced that there is a solution to Haiti's problems and it is simply found in the idea

of loving or respecting oneself. It is a simple idea but revolutionary. I have witnessed, heard and seen this solution, this respect, incarnated in the team members of World Neighbors Haiti. It was the simple testimony at this celebration by a partner group member as he described in his own words that when World Neighbors Haiti brings knowledge and information to the people in the mountains that it was like they brought a university to the doorsteps of those who may have never seen the inside of a primary school classroom. He called it a "Popular University." In Haiti when they use the word popular, it doesn't mean something that is a favorite; it means rather the idea that it is available to the common people. In a country where the people know that they have been denied access to a fair and equal education, it is no small thing for someone to see World Neighbors work like the implanting of a university for the people. When this fellow called it a university it was because he felt that World Neighbors was coming to build on, not belittle their own stores of vast generational and experiential knowledge with education from the outside.

To me, World Neighbors team members in Haiti are no less than the quality of their own heroes they celebrate every year. Those heroes who fought for freedom from slavery, opening the path for freedom for all people who were enslaved around the world as well as

for the independence from the domination of another, thereby able to claim this country for themselves. I have no less degree of respect for their work than for the work of the original liberators of their country. I believe that World Neighbors team members are true liberators, both for themselves and for each person they work with who is freed from these mental chains and healed from these infected scars. Their weapons are no longer swords and cannons, but instead the simple belief in themselves and their country.

The techniques, the details of what World Neighbors Haiti does, are the small stuff, the great stuff is that they believe, they respect and they do. May their steps continue to be strengthened in this very difficult and slippery world!"

"I remain convinced that there is a solution to Haiti's problems and it is simply found in the idea of loving or respecting oneself."

—Carla Bluntschli

Haiti's children benefit directly from integrated programs in sustainable agriculture, community and reproductive health, income generation and savings and credit.



Bolivia Journey:

Discovering the Contrast between Barren Landscapes and Bountiful People

SIX WORLD NEIGHBORS PARTNERS FROM ACROSS THE U.S. RECENTLY SET OUT ON THE FIRST WORLD NEIGHBORS JOURNEY TO BOLIVIA IN MORE THAN A DECADE. THE 10-DAY SOJOURN TOOK US INTO THE BARREN AND SUN-BAKED MOUNTAINS OF NORTHERN POTOSI, AN ISOLATED REGION INHABITED BY QUECHUA AND AYMARA-SPEAKING PEOPLE. WE TRAVELED TO THIS REMOTE PART OF THE ANDES TO LEARN HOW WORLD NEIGHBORS AND COMMUNITIES WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD HUMAN CAPACITY FOR CHANGE, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREAS OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.

By Christopher Sacco and Emily Estes

Following our arrival in the city of Cochabamba, we traveled five hours to Sacaca, a dusty collection of tin-roofed adobe houses settled in the middle of a nearly treeless, 10,000-foot plateau. After a brief visit to our rustic accommodations, we were ushered to the mayor's office to meet a group of public officials and health promoters that had traveled on foot, some walking for as long as 10 hours, to welcome us.

The evening began with a skit on the theme of reproductive health performed by four men, two of them donning traditional Andean women's clothing. The mini drama portrayed an uncomfortable conversation about pregnancy and family planning between a married couple and its in-laws, a difficult scene to play in any culture but one particularly thorny in a remote Quechua community where talking about sex is typically taboo. The work of the volunteer promoters had obviously made substantial headway in bringing the topic of sexual health to the public floor.

Of the 197 Bolivian communi-

ties that work with World Neighbors, only about 30 are accessible with all-terrain vehicles, yet even those typically cannot be reached for four to six months of the year when swollen rivers and landslides render the dirt and cobblestone roads impassable. Additionally, water is scarce and there are no sewer or sanitation services outside of the department's capital and a few of the more prosperous towns, and electricity and telephone services are luxuries enjoyed by only a small percentage of families. Moreover, the government presence in this area is limited to a small public school system and the Ministry of Health - both of which work with World Neighbors to advance the concerns of Northern Potosi's rural residents. According to a progressive Bolivian law known as SUMI, the Maternal and Infant Universal Insurance Law, contraceptives are available to women free of charge. The reality for rural people, however, is quite different. It is common for women to walk

Children in traditional costumes at a health fair in Saka'ni, Bolivia.

REBECCA JAMES



UPCOMING

WORLD NEIGHBORS JOURNEYS

- July 2006 Kenya
- November 2006 Guatemala
- January 2007 Burkina Faso

For more information on how you can participate in a World Neighbors Journey, please contact Emily Estes, World Neighbors Journeys coordinator, at (860) 343-1941 or via e-mail at emestes@comcast.net.

“It was a privilege to sit in on the training sessions, and to hear how World Neighbors had helped the people overcome the many challenges.”

—Mary Lynne Portman



JETHRO PETTIT

several hours to medical facilities in order to receive an injection of Depo-provera, the preferred means of birth control, only to find that stocks have run out.

The hardened landscapes of Potosi and the overwhelming absence of public support for its people impressed long-time World Neighbors supporters Bill and Mary Lynne Portman, while

In Northern Potosi, World Neighbors is working with 198 communities to integrate reproductive health and sustainable agriculture programs, as well as training farmers about soil and water conservation, organic fertilizers and improved seed technology.

the enthusiasm and persevering spirit of the poteseños captured their hearts.

At the end of the Journey, Mrs. Portman reflected, “It was a privilege to sit in on the training sessions and to hear how World Neighbors had helped the people overcome the many challenges of living in such a harsh environment. These beautiful people are truly the ‘neighbors’ we went to meet and learn from. There are many lessons we could take home, from the gracious hospitality we were shown as strangers, to the constant effort they exert to overcome the difficult challenges of daily living. That is a reality of the world we do not know when we live our lovely lives in the U.S.”

As Mrs. Portman asserted, while the obstacles are great, the willpower and perseverance of the poteseños gave us reason for hope. World Neighbors focus on creating local capacities by training and forming volunteer promoters has led to impressive, hard-won gains where many thought no progress could be made. Presently, World Neighbors is supporting the social organization of promoters into networks and helping those to establish linkages with local governments and hospitals. Not only

have the family planning activities already begun to self-perpetuate, but local communities are taking on similar responsibilities with respect to agriculture.

After learning how farmers – armed with basic information on nitrogen fixation – used legumes as green manure and achieved a four-fold increase in potato production, Andrew Estes, a recent business graduate from Auburn University who has spent many summers working at his family’s agricultural products company in Texas and who joined us on this journey, pointed out that, “Learning how to make do with what resources they have is the only way these families can make any progress; they can’t wait around until advanced technologies become accessible, because maybe they won’t.”

Anyone who visits Northern Potosi cannot help but be shocked by the contrast between the barren landscape and the bountiful human spirit. Though the way forward will not be easy, the resolve and initiative shown by the poteseños left little doubt that World Neighbors was on the right track to helping the people of Northern Potosi find their potential and forge a better future. ●



WIN PHOTO

A day in the life of Musangi Muvali, Kenyan

Traditional Birth Attendant

Interview by Richard Wanjohi, World Neighbors East Africa program, edited by Ruth Okowa, community and reproductive health coordinator World Neighbors East Africa program

DESPITE THE PERSISTENT DRY CONDITIONS, WOMEN AND THEIR YOUNG CHILDREN ARE STREAMING IN FROM THE LOCAL AREA TO A MONTHLY OPEN CLINIC AT KATHOMA, A VILLAGE LOCATED IN THE YATTA DIVISION, KITUI DISTRICT, KENYA.



CATHERINE MCKAY

As a traditional birth attendant, Muvali belongs to a group of community health workers such as this one.

“Hurry up. We have to be there before I miss out on the work going on,” I am reminded by Musangi Muvali.

Muvali is a traditional birth attendant (TBA), having been trained in a project by World Neighbors and the Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Health, Kitui district office.

Kathoma is located in one of the largest districts in the East Africa province of Kenya. The area suffers from harsh, dry weather conditions, little or no rainfall in the past two years, poor infrastructure and sparsely distributed health facilities. As a marginalized community, the need for trained TBAs to provide services, advice and counseling at a grassroots

level is evident.

Muvali is approaching 60 years of age. She lives and works on a small farm with her husband and seven of her 11 children. Four of her children have either married or are working away from home in other towns. The last born, a 14-year-old boy, is in Class 7 and hopes to attain the highest level of education possible by working hard and attending the university. Each year he helps his parents prepare the land for farming but nothing much is achieved because of the lack of rain. They are all hopeful that the rains will come this year and there will be a good harvest.

In Muvali’s view, the good harvest translates to better feeding

habits as well as extra money for the women through the sale of the surplus produce. This enables the women to visit the mobile clinic more often since they will be able to pay for the services. Muvali has learned to juggle the different responsibilities in her life: family and home as well as community work.

“Here we are! As you can see, we have a lot of work to do. I would have failed my fellow TBAs if I didn’t come to the clinic today,” Muvali says as we arrive at the camp for the day’s mobile clinic.

The bi-weekly and monthly mobile clinics are a project that was initiated in 1985 by World Neighbors in consultation with the Ministry of Health and the KDC. A baseline study revealed the need for reproductive health services for women and children in the area. The Kamba community has suffered from the harsh weather, prompting men to migrate from rural communities to urban areas in search of work. This has resulted in women taking on responsibilities as heads of household and the breadwinners.

As we move around the clinic, Muvali informs us that their first mobile clinic day, held in 2002, was attended by fewer than 10 women. The number has now grown to more than 100 women per any clinic day. On this day in particular, most of the women have come to weigh their babies, receive advice on post-natal services and to get medication at an affordable cost. We do find that there are a few expectant women in the group who are there to re-



MARGARET WOODSON/NEA

ceive prenatal services.

“This initiative has helped me support my family in many ways including providing food for them as well as providing delivery assistance to hundreds of families. I’m always happy to meet with some of the children I helped deliver and some are big enough now to even help me in some of the work we do,” Muvali chuckles as she enters the clinic.

Muvali says she assists in seven deliveries per month on average, and through her TBA training, she has been able to improve her skills in midwifery and become more hygienic in her work. She also is able to offer services to a larger population, and out of her meagre supplemental income as a TBA she has been able to successfully raise and educate her children.

“Almost all my children have been through secondary education with some attaining college

education. I have also managed to train other women as TBAs and they earn a living from that,” Muvali said. “Most of these women practice in their villages and do not attend the monthly mobile clinics.”

During our visit, Muvali told me that this was the first of two clinics to be held that month. She also informed us that the Ministry of Health (MOH) has changed its guidelines on TBAs and they are not to assist in delivery. They will continue offering advisory services as well as training for young couples and mothers on the emergencies that can occur during delivery. Members of the communities disagree – most still feel that it’s necessary to have TBAs among them, which is influenced to some extent by culture and the fact that health facilities are generally not financially or geographically available.

“Although we do not get as much money as we would want, the satisfaction of seeing successful deliveries and healthy growing babies is more than enough.”

—Musangi Muvali

The clinic has at least five volunteers who help handle the influx of young mothers and their infants. There are also five TBAs, three of whom were present during this visit. Muvali informed me that TBAs are given a small fee for their services, though this is not guaranteed since most women in the community cannot afford to pay.

“Although we do not get as much money as we would want, the satisfaction of seeing successful deliveries and healthy growing babies is more than enough,” Muvali said.

Muvali is grateful to World Neighbors for the support and training they have offered. The community health workers have been able to improve their services to a great extent because of this training.

Muvali hopes to continue to offer health services to the community and possibly train a member of her family to succeed her. She also anticipates that couples in the community will be able to increase their standard of living through proper family planning, which will insure that the minimal resources they have will be put to better use. In turn, the TBAs and other community health workers will receive better stipends for their services.

“Maybe I will be able to build a semi-permanent house in the near future to replace my thatched hut,” Muvali laughs.

Kenyan families continue to benefit from the services of World Neighbors trained traditional birth attendants.



WN PHOTO

To hear the whispers of a few

WOW! program works as a collective voice for women in World Neighbors programs

Women such as these co-operative members in Ghana are benefiting from activities supported by the World Neighbors WOW! program.



"Everyone I talk to is excited and willing to help in any way they can. It really opens up their world. They like the idea of reaching out to make a tangible difference."

—Amalea Muniz, Arizona WOW! Network founder

By Heather Sarles

AS DAWN BREAKS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AROUND THE GLOBE, WOMEN IN WORLD NEIGHBORS PROGRAMS ARE WAKING UP TO A BETTER FUTURE. THEY HAVE CLEAN WATER TO DRINK, MORE FOOD FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND MEDICAL ATTENTION WHEN THEY ARE SICK. THEY ARE LEARNING HOW TO READ, BECOMING LEADERS IN THEIR VILLAGES, MAKING FINANCIAL DECISIONS AND HELPING TO BUILD A BETTER TOMORROW.



Capital Corridor WOW! Network party guests enjoyed good food and enriching education this past March. WOW! Party hostess Jill Weiler, second from left, welcomed family, friends and WOW! Membership Associate Wariko Waita, third from right, into her home to raise awareness of women's issues throughout World Neighbors program areas.

Transforming a community is a process that requires patience and understanding.

Although all World Neighbors programs include women, we have learned that helping families increase their income or food production does not always lead to less work or a better life for women and children. In 2000, WOW!, or Work of Women, was founded by a

group of World Neighbors supporters who wanted to ensure that the needs of women were being met in World Neighbors programs.

Through membership fees and donations, WOW! supports and enhances World Neighbors efforts to improve the lives of women and their families. Through programs such as literacy education, food

security, nutrition, leadership training, income generation, reproductive and community health, savings and credit, clean water and sanitation and gender equity, women are finding their voice. They are becoming stronger, learning more, speaking up and participating in the decision making process.

And just as women in World Neighbors programs become advocates for wider change in their communities, WOW! acts as an agent of advocacy as well. Through awareness campaigns, educational events and its Web

site, <http://www.workofwomen.org>, WOW! members are supporting the work of their sisters in the field. By speaking in one collective voice, we can guarantee that the whispers of the few are heard by many.

World Neighbors realizes that great change cannot happen without education. With that in mind, WOW! Networks were created in 2005. Consisting of WOW! members across the U.S., these groups organize educational events, host engagements for World Neighbors international staff, raise funds to support WOW! and coordinate awareness campaigns in their local communities.

"I think the new Networks will bring more people to WOW!," said Amalea Muniz, Arizona WOW! Network

Susan Chambers, president of the Oklahoma WOW! Network, speaks during a WOW! event.

founder. "Everyone I talk to is excited and willing to help in any way they can. It really opens up their world. They like the idea of reaching out to make a tangible difference."

Currently there is one official WOW! Network in Oklahoma and four new networks pending in the Washington D.C., Phoenix, Knoxville and San Francisco Bay areas. Members in the Dallas/Ft. Worth, Austin and Seattle areas have also expressed interest in forming WOW! Networks in their cities.

"I am amazed by the rapid growth of WOW! Networks," said WOW! Coordinator Heather Sarles. "The women involved in the networks are movers and shakers. They are raising funds, organizing events and spreading the word about WOW! and World Neighbors. It's great!"

For more information about WOW!, visit <http://www.workofwomen.org>.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Join WOW! now and help change the lives of women and their families in World Neighbors programs. To learn more, visit <http://www.workofwomen.org> or call (800) 242-6387.

World Neighbors Heads to the Classroom



WINPHOTO

WORLD NEIGHBORS IS HEADING BACK TO THE CLASSROOM WITH ITS NEWLY DESIGNED WORLD NEIGHBORS IN THE CLASSROOM KITS. ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED IN THE 1990S BY MEMBERS OF THE WORLD NEIGHBORS STAFF TEAM IN COLLABORATION WITH LEADING LOCAL EDUCATORS, THE CURRICULUM KITS ARE SET TO MAKE THEIR DEBUT IN SEVERAL OKLAHOMA CITY-AREA PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS THIS SPRING.

In the early 1990s, a curriculum was made available, free of charge, to elementary and middle school instructors throughout the U.S. through the generosity of two charitable foundations. They included a teacher's guide with lesson plans, newsprint student reader handouts and a video, and, when first introduced, were well received by Oklahoma educators who were trained on its use by a World Neighbors staff team member.

In 2003, the curriculum underwent a critical review and staff determined that while the lessons were still highly relevant and succeeded in meeting important state student-testing requirements, they would benefit from the addition of region-specific artifacts.

"Many of our students have difficulty grasping the similarities and differences of world cultures or understanding the day-to-day struggles of the world's peoples without concrete, hands-on experiences,"

said Pam Merrill, classroom kit curriculum author. "For this reason, the creation of curriculum was focused on incorporating the new kits on genuine artifacts from the many cultures that inhabit three major regions of our planet. Such artifacts include musical instruments, religious or ceremonial objects, and everyday tools necessary for survival. Students will have the opportunity to examine these artifacts up close, allowing them to temporarily 'see' the world through another's eyes."

Staff also determined that music CDs would be an important complement to the curriculum, and that placing some information on DVDs, in addition to drafting new lesson plans, would create a more exciting learning vehicle.

The curriculum kit now includes a teacher's guide with lesson plans, student reader magazines, artifacts from each region, laminated photographs, a music CD, a video and a CD-ROM with PowerPoint lessons. Each lesson plan also correlates with the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) standards for World Studies and World Geography, and offers teachers multiple strategies for developing reading comprehension skills.

"The curriculum is perfect for Oklahoma teachers," said Carrie Hill, World Neighbors outreach education coordinator. "There's little or no lesson planning involved on their part - we provide it all so

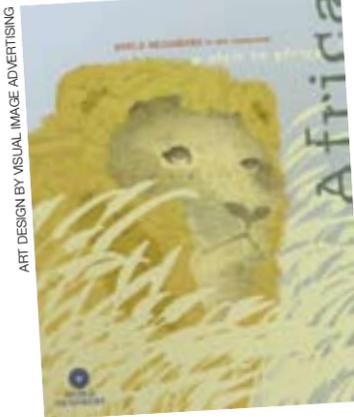
Each World Neighbors in the Classroom kit includes a variety of genuine artifacts from the region the kit represents, as well as student readers, a teacher's guide, music CDs and videos.

that it's easy to integrate into their classes."

With the addition of so many new collateral materials, special attention needed to be paid to the packaging and cost of the materials. With the generous support of an Oklahoma City public relations and advertising firm, an Africa kit prototype was developed which allowed World Neighbors to show a tangible product to possible funders. As a result, \$75,000 in grant money was received to bring this project to life. A rolling suitcase with a retractable handle was chosen as the exterior packaging so that the kits could be easily transported by teachers. Each suitcase features vibrant exterior and coordinating material graphics indicating its representative region. Three kits together, one each for Africa, Asia and Latin America, equal one set.

This spring, the sets will be provided to Oklahoma City- and surrounding-area public and private schools free of charge. Evaluations from participating educators will help in determining the scope of this project next year.

"Our hope is to expand this idea to other school systems in the state next year," Hill said. "After that, we would love to make these kits available nationally."



ART DESIGN BY VISUAL IMAGE ADVERTISING

A peek at the Africa student reader from the World Neighbors in the Classroom kits.

Making a Difference by Offering Hope



Paul and Ann Milburn at Paul's office in Shawnee, Okla.

By Kimberly Mauck

Having been introduced to World Neighbors through his brother during college, Paul Milburn has become a prototype for a World Neighbors donor in many ways. Milburn agrees wholeheartedly with World Neighbors Founder Dr. John L. Peters' philosophy that private donations and sustainable programs can make a difference in the lives of the impoverished.

What a difference half a century makes. After 50 years with World Neighbors, including \$1.7 million in endowments, many

years of service on the Board of Trustees, including being named Trustee Emeritus, and visiting World Neighbors programs in five countries, Milburn and his wife Ann are giving more, in the form of a \$540,000 challenge grant program called From Hunger to Hope.

For the next three years, the Milburns will match all gifts from first-time donors and increased gifts from established donors to aid World Neighbors programs where the need for funding is greatest.

"Paul and Ann have been so generous to help us fund programs where desperate needs

may not have been fulfilled," said Peter Gubbels, World Neighbors vice president international program. "The funds donated by the Milburns, leveraged with the challenge, will help us undertake low-cost, high-impact initiatives in neglected areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America that will save lives."

About two-thirds of the Milburns' giving over the years has been of a challenge nature, an effort to maximize the impact of his donation, Mr. Milburn said. It's all a part of his life's mission, which he says is to share his blessings and make a difference in the world.

His blessings have been multiplied by a lifetime of hard work, Mr. Milburn said.

"I stay busier than I should, but I've developed a successful and profitable business," Milburn said. "By stretching myself, it's become possible for me to make a difference."

Hailing from Shawnee, Okla.—born in the back of a Ringling country store—Milburn worked his way through college at what was then called Oklahoma A&M (Oklahoma State University), and then joined the Air Force. After a stint in Tokyo, Milburn returned home to begin a career in education. Twenty years later, Milburn's keen business sense drove him to turn his part-time real estate business into a full-time career. He married his wife Ann, a retired educator, 17 years ago.

"Ann has always been very supportive and enthusiastic about supporting World Neighbors," Milburn said. "She's accompanied me on trips to World

Neighbors programs in Honduras, Ecuador and Guatemala."

The success of Paul Milburn Acreages has had an impact on people and organizations around the world, from local libraries, churches and civic organizations, to poor communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

At age 75, Milburn's strong work ethic is still evident, both in his globetrotting and his giving. In 2001, he and Ann established an endowment, named the May Ayers Milburn Chair, in honor of his mother, to support the salary of World Neighbors president and chief executive officer.

The Milburns enjoy sharing the World Neighbors message with people today, and hopes their gift will help bring even more people in to further that message.

"We make more difference per dollar than any other organization," Mr. Milburn said.

The Milburns have seen that difference—and the hope World Neighbors offers—firsthand. They have helped make the difference, and now they are challenging other donors and potential donors to offer hope once more.

"We can make World Neighbors grow by thinking outside the box to make a difference," Mr. Milburn said.

You can help us meet this challenge by indicating that you would like your qualifying gifts matched. Please see either the back cover of this Neighbors or the postage-paid envelope included. For more information, call World Neighbors at 405.752.9700.

FROM HUNGER TO HOPE

How you can help World Neighbors meet the need

As part of their challenge grant, Paul and Ann Milburn have challenged World Neighbors to raise \$180,000 by June 30 to support new and enhanced program opportunities in Niger, Mali, East Timor, Haiti, the Philippines (Mindanao) and Tanzania. For a donor to qualify to have his or her gift matched, they must be either first-time donors or current donors who contribute "over and above" their cumulative contribution made to World Neighbors during the last fiscal year, July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005.

First time donor

John Doe donation	\$100
Matching funds	\$100
Total donation with match	\$200

Previous donor

John Doe total giving fiscal year 2004	\$100
John Doe donation fiscal year 2005	\$150
Matching funds	\$50
Total donation with match	\$200

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World Neighbors gratefully acknowledges the following commemorative gifts received from September 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005

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