“"My prayer [for Haitians] ... to be more empowered—to be actors, to be active, to rebuild our country, to rebuild ourselves.

—Yolette Etienne, Oxfam country director, Haiti, Jan. 2010

Soon after 2009 ended, the third deadliest earthquake on record in the world struck Haiti.

The quake showed how poverty places people at terrifying and deadly risk. Some 230,000 people died and more than a million others were displaced. Yet within days, many Haitians were piecing their lives back together—selling goods in makeshift markets, organizing camps for displaced people, and salvaging what they could to rebuild.

People do not want to wait idly for help; they want to be agents of their own change, creating solutions to their own problems.

Think what’s possible if Haitians could claim their basic human rights: shelter, freedom from fear and violence, clean water to drink, a means of earning a living under decent conditions, and a way to hold governments and corporations accountable to respect these rights.
A letter from the president

Dear friends,

A year ago, I asked you to stand with Oxfam America in these difficult economic times. You did. And what a difference you’ve made.

Just as we were closing the books on 2009, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck Haiti with deadly effect. Oxfam was well situated to mobilize key resources quickly; we already had 200 staff members on the ground and were immediately asked to lead the initial coordination of all international humanitarian delivery of water and sanitation in Haiti. Using Web and mobile technologies to coordinate our efforts, we notified our supporters of the situation within 90 minutes of the quake. Oxfam’s first MP3 podcast—made five hours after the quake and marketed via Twitter and other social media—got 9,000 hits in 12 hours. By day 2, Oxfam had become a central figure in a rolling global news story about “aid agencies’ use of new media” in the BBC, Reuters, and the Wall Street Journal.

With your support, even in lean times, we could do our job.

There’s no doubt that 2009 was a lean year. Contributions shrank and we made some painful strategic adjustments, but we remained firm in our conviction that there was a continued commitment in America to support our work. And incredibly—despite a prolonged recession and historic unemployment in the US—Americans donated more than $709 million to the relief and recovery efforts in Haiti.

This response to Haiti speaks volumes about the desire of the American people to engage the world with their values and generosity. It was a wonderful expression of what our nation stands for, not simply what we stand against.

We have an opportunity now to act on our vision and our values in Haiti.

Looking forward, I want to imagine a Haiti where—instead of solutions imposed by outsiders—development initiatives are driven by the needs of the people.

I want to imagine a Haiti where there is transparent information about aid, facilitating greater accountability between the Haitian government and Haitian citizens, and between all Haitians and the US government.

I want to imagine a Haiti where external aid works in concert to help Haitians emerge not only from the ruins of the earthquake, but also from the unjust systems that have trapped them in poverty for decades.

This is what effective aid means to us. I believe in this vision—for Haiti’s future and the future of other poor nations—and Oxfam will champion it in Washington and beyond.

I hope that you will continue to support this vision and that we will continue to give you reason to invest in Oxfam. Everything we do is thanks to your trust and support.

Raymond C. Offenheiser
President
A letter from the chair

Dear friends,

In a few months, I will have served five years as chair of Oxfam America, 12 years on the board, and 16 years with the finance committee. Over that time, the fundamental values of the organization have not changed, but our competence has grown ever stronger. The resources to get things done—our people, our systems, our strategic partnerships and grant-making—are far greater. And all of this progress has been driven by your steadfast support.

I’m struck by the symmetry of my term as board chair: I began just before the Asian tsunami in 2005, and I am wrapping up in the wake of the tragedy in Haiti. Looking back, while Oxfam’s response to the tsunami was first-rate, it took everything we had. Our systems and staff were strained to the breaking point. Five years later, the very hour the earthquake hit Port-au-Prince, Oxfam’s executive leadership was off-site at a meeting, but the rest of the staff shifted into high gear immediately. We communicated with supporters in the first hours. Everyone knew what to do and did it. We logged long hours to be sure, but we were not operating in crisis mode. This may sound obvious, but it took thoughtful leadership, targeted investment, and hard work to reach this new level.

Our progress extends beyond emergency humanitarian response. In our long-term development work, the move from a one-off project approach to an integrated program approach, backed by increasingly sophisticated impact assessment, has enabled us to shift our limited resources to initiatives with the highest potential to serve vulnerable communities. Some of the choices we faced in 2009 were particularly difficult, but necessary.

Through all of this, Oxfam’s board has actively and diligently played its part. I could not ask for a more dedicated, well-informed, hard-working group of people. They took the time to conduct a careful and transparent search for my successor as chair of Oxfam America. Their decision to choose Wendy Sherman as our chair-elect well in advance of my departure has given the two of us the opportunity to work together in my final year, ensuring continuity on all fronts.

I am so proud of what the Oxfam community has accomplished. And so honored and grateful to have been part of it.

Many thanks to you all.

Janet A. McKinley
Chair, Board of Directors
SUDAN: In response to a potentially disastrous shortfall of external aid to people in Darfur, local groups rose to the challenge, providing clean water, sanitation, and other services to more than 200,000 displaced people in 2009.

More than 2.7 million people in Sudan rely on international aid for survival. Increasingly, local organizations working in camps and villages in North Darfur have—with Oxfam America’s help—been expanding their skill and capacity to claim a rightful role in ensuring their region’s well-being.

“All along our strategy has been to empower local groups by helping them build their strength and effectiveness,” says Michael Delaney, Oxfam America’s director of humanitarian response. “By supporting local agencies, as we have throughout this crisis, they are now in a better position to tackle the ongoing issues of housing, health care, and water resources that confront the people of Darfur.”

Throughout 2009, we worked with six different Sudanese groups that have a range of expertise, from peacebuilding to skills training to environmental protection—all important building blocks on the road to community empowerment.

And it was one of those Sudanese partners—Sustainable Action Group—that identified fuel-efficient stoves as a partial solution to the danger of assault that women and girls face when they leave the camps to gather firewood. In a three-way partnership between Oxfam, the Sustainable Action Group, and the US-based Darfur Stoves Project, the production of 9,000 stoves is now underway—and camp residents in need of incomes are building them.

The goal is not only to keep women safer by cutting the amount of time they spend searching for wood beyond the safety of the camps, but to reduce the demand for the resource, which is leading to severe deforestation in some areas.

But how the stoves were designed is more telling than the design itself. Made from sheets of metal, the stoves look deceptively simple, but they incorporate ideas provided by Sudanese women living in the camps. Their features include tabs that can hold a plate for baking bread and vents designed to limit the amount of air rushing in on gusty Sudanese days.

“Whether we know that the best answers to problems come from people themselves—those who understand the local dynamics and have a deep knowledge of the region,” says Sara Musa, Oxfam America’s regional director in Sudan. “That’s why we turn first to local partners and community members for solutions.”

So, in 2009, when the towns and camps of Kebkabiya and Shangil Tobay lost the humanitarian support they needed to guarantee a clean supply of water to residents, Oxfam worked with two partner organizations to take charge of the water situation. Within a few short months, these groups were able to scale up their work, reaching more than 136,000 people (like these young residents of Shangil Tobay, pictured at left) with clean water, sanitation, and other essentials.

2009 INVESTMENT
Sudan humanitarian crisis: $1.60 million
DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Watch our Darfur stove video:
oxfamamerica.org/darfurstoves
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:
In 2009, violence drove 900,000 people in the eastern provinces from their homes; many community members try to fill the needs of those displaced.

“In Congo, anyone can be in need of help at any time.” That’s the blunt assessment of a 45-year-old woman (pictured at left) who opened her home to a family of 10 fleeing violence in the eastern provinces of Congo. We are calling her Annie. We are withholding her real name to guard her safety in a place where conflict has ravaged the region, leaving hunger, sickness, and death. From 1998 to 2007, an estimated 5.4 million people lost their lives in the fighting in Congo and the hardship it spawned.

Annie herself, the mother of four children, knows what it’s like to be displaced. Others helped her in her time of need, and last year, in Sange, she returned the favor when the town’s population doubled as waves of people streamed in, searching for safety. Fighting had escalated and villagers were paying the heaviest price: in 2009 alone, 900,000 people in the region fled their homes, thousands of women and girls—some as young as four—were raped, and at least 1,400 civilians were killed.

Amid unspeakable violence, there is also kindness. The majority of displaced people don’t live in makeshift camps; instead, they live with families—like Annie’s—who welcome them. In 2009, photographer Rankin traveled to Congo for his second visit. The generosity of people there inspired him to ask people in Sange to document their lives by photographing the people and things they loved. (See black-and-white images at left.)

As Oxfam affiliates trucked in clean water, distributing soap and buckets, Oxfam America focused our efforts on supporting the Congolese people through advocacy. We funded a study on rape as a weapon of war, which was completed in 2009 by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. At the Panzi Hospital in South Kivu, researchers reviewed more than four thousand records of sexual violence survivors to create a bank of rigorous data that Oxfam can use to shape both our program and policy objectives.

In 2009, we pushed for members of the US House of Representatives to join the bipartisan African Great Lakes Caucus, whose mission is to broaden understanding of the humanitarian challenges in the region and draw attention to the critical need civilians have for protection. We called on the UN Security Council and pressured the international community to stop backing a military offensive that was intended to disarm rebels but was causing profound suffering among ordinary Congolese.

2009 INVESTMENT

Humanitarian policy, advocacy & campaigns: $347,000
PUBLIC EDUCATION | POLICY & ADVOCACY

Watch related video on sexual violence in Congo: oxfamamerica.org/drcviolence

Watch our audio slideshow
“From Congo with Love”: oxfamamerica.org/congowithlove
to be actors

Poverty puts people in harm’s way. In El Salvador, those who have few resources cannot afford to build homes strong enough to withstand severe storms. In Bangladesh, poor people are forced to live on low-lying, marginal lands. Yet no matter how poor a community is, people can take steps to reduce their risk, to act to protect themselves and their families.

EL SALVADOR: Deadly rains struck the central provinces in late 2009. In communities equipped to respond, everyone survived.

Fourteen inches of rain fell in just four hours, quickly transforming streams into turbulent rapids and triggering landslides on steep hillsides that sent trees and boulders crashing into the villages below.

For many, the results were lethal: nearly 200 people died. But in the 98 hard-hit towns and villages where Oxfam had been supporting disaster-preparedness programs, there were no fatalities.

“Community members are always the first responders in disasters,” says Oxfam disaster specialist Enrique Garcia, “so we are making sure those who live in the most dangerous places are trained and equipped to support their communities effectively.”

It was the local residents themselves—armed with megaphones, two-way radios, and first-aid kits—who alerted their neighbors, sending them along safe evacuation routes to shelters before the storm swept away their homes.

Once safe in shelters, those who had been uprooted from their homes immediately needed water and other essentials.

Here, too, the rapid response reflected preparedness: Oxfam had supplied a warehouse with emergency equipment and helped 21 Salvadoran aid agencies become proficient in disaster response.

Our partners have been working with communities to reduce risks on other levels as well. One had been helping residents who live on the edge of a ravine advocate for government support to relocate to a safer area. Another had helped a community group take a landowner to court, forcing him to control the flow of debris from his land into the riverbed.

“When the rains hit in November, the river overflowed,” says Mercedes Rivas, a member of the community, “but because of what we did, the impact was less.”

The relief in the villages is still palpable, and so is the pride. On a recent visit, children ran along an evacuation route in Fenadesal Sur, showing visitors the path to safety. (See photo at left.)

“What we want is for our grandchildren to have tranquility … not to live the anguish we have suffered through the years,” says Rivas. For that, she says, “It is very important to be prepared before, during, and after an emergency. That is what we work for.”

Reducing the impact of disasters is a priority for Oxfam. Even if we set aside the human cost and look just at dollars and cents, preventing disasters is a remarkably sound investment: research has shown that each dollar spent on reducing a community’s risk averts an average of three dollars’ worth of damage.

So, while we continue to respond to emergencies like the Haiti earthquake—delivering critical supplies to save lives and programs to restore incomes—we are increasingly focusing attention and resources on how to prevent events like hurricanes and earthquakes from causing devastating losses.

“Not all of society is prone to disaster,” says Luis Romano of the Humboldt Center, an Oxfam partner. “Rather, it is a certain sector of society: the poorest.” Oxfam is helping poor communities around the world fight for their right to lives that are safe from preventable disasters.

2009 INVESTMENT
Disaster risk reduction in Latin America: $969,000
DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Watch our video about the poverty-disaster link: oxfamamerica.org/poverty-disaster-link
BANGLADESH: In early 2009, communities finished building stronger homes to replace those lost to a severe cyclone.

When Cyclone Sidr hit Bangladesh in November 2007 and destroyed his home, Halim (see background image) received metal sheeting, screws, nails, and timber from Oxfam to rebuild. Because of his carpentry experience, he also received a carpentry toolkit to enable him to earn a bit of money by helping others in his community rebuild their homes.

In Padma, a small fishing village of about 700 families, Sidr wiped out every home. One of them belonged to the family of a young woman named Sarina. It was built on a strip of no man’s land, an exposed edge on the outside of a dike along an estuary where the Baleswar River meets the Bay of Bengal. Precarious in the best of times, locations like these make those who dwell on them increasingly vulnerable as climate change triggers stronger, more frequent storms.

Today, Sarina lives in a sturdy new home—one of 400 built in the area by Oxfam and our local partner, BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee). In phase one of the largest housing construction initiative we have ever undertaken, our goal was to help families like Sarina’s secure storm-worthy houses in a region where monsoons can leave a third of the country submerged in water, turning the dirt foundation of many coastal houses to mud. Sarina’s new house has not only a brick foundation but concrete corner pillars designed to withstand strong winds.

We are now building 280 additional homes with brick walls, concrete-reinforced brick columns, and concrete floors. Homeowners say their new homes make them feel safer than they have felt before. And with reason: After Sidr blew through, one Oxfam staff member noticed that the only buildings to survive were those made with concrete or brick.

Small but crucial adaptations like these are beyond the means of many in the world’s poorest places—places that are on the front lines of climate change. And that’s why we’re campaigning hard for US legislation and a global treaty that would do more than curb the emissions that cause global warming. We want to see funding set aside to ensure that the hardest hit communities can prepare for the impact that increasingly erratic weather will bring.

2009 INVESTMENT

Disaster risk reduction in Asia: $292,000
Development & Humanitarian Relief
Climate Change campaign: $1.88 million
Public Education | Policy & Advocacy

Watch our climate change video: oxfamamerica.org/wakeup
to be active

“As long as I can work,” Medhin Reda assures a visitor, she will be fine. Work is her best asset. Seventy-five percent of the world’s poorest people live in rural areas and rely on agriculture to survive. To be active does not mean just hard physical work; it also means solving problems by improving farming techniques, embracing new ideas, and adapting to a changing climate.

ETHIOPIA: In 2009, farmers joined a pilot initiative to safeguard their families in case of drought.

An experiment is unfolding in the northern Ethiopia region of Tigray that could help poor farmers across Africa find a measure of security in a way of life plagued by uncertainty, which is exacerbated by climate change.

Together with private insurers, Oxfam and Ethiopian partners have teamed up to offer farmers in Adi Ha weather insurance for their teff, a staple grain that feeds millions across the country. If there is not enough rain during a critical period of the growing season, farmers who buy the insurance will receive a payout cushioning them from the hardship drought brings. The genius behind the program is that farmers too poor to have cash on hand can purchase their insurance with labor, defying the old wisdom that they are uninsurable.

“It’s not that people don’t want insurance,” says Marjorie Victor Brans, a senior policy adviser for Oxfam, “just not on the terms it’s been offered.”

Reda (pictured at left), a single mother who lives with three of her daughters in a small stone house, is one of those who is trading her labor for the insurance. She ekes a living from a field of corn just below her home, as well as a field of teff that requires a three-hour round-trip hike to reach. Reda is also a participant in Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Program, a federal initiative that provides about eight million of the country’s most vulnerable citizens with food or cash in exchange for work on community projects. Through this new insurance program, safety net participants can work extra days and pay for their premiums.

“Because of repeated drought, which really affected me, I joined the insurance with the understanding it might solve my problems,” says Reda, who is working 24 days to pay for her premium. “It’s good for me to have the insurance as long as I can work and pay with labor. That is the only asset I have.”

This program challenges conventional wisdom about farmers burdened with poverty and the role that the private sector can play in alleviating it. Through collaborations like this—undertaken with both enthusiasm and healthy skepticism—Oxfam is tackling poverty by finding ways to tap the vast resources and political influence of the private sector.

“Our efforts to reduce poverty are far more effective when we engage private sector actors alongside governments and other stakeholders,” says David Satterthwaite, Oxfam America’s global microinsurance lead. “Good corporate citizens have tremendous potential to create more stable and healthy markets that ultimately can benefit the bottom line and the common good.”

2009 INVESTMENT
Microinsurance in Ethiopia: $258,000
DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Watch “A Tiny Seed and a Big Idea”: oxfamamerica.org/tinyseedbigidea
VIETNAM: In 2009, the willingness of many small-scale farmers to embrace new growing techniques increased the income of these farmers by nearly 16 percent on average.

Across Asia the words for “to eat” have a literal translation: “to eat rice.” Rice is the staple of every meal, and its importance culturally and agriculturally cannot be overstated.

Working with local partner organizations in Cambodia, Oxfam reached more than 110,000 poor farmers (like Nguyen Thi Bay pictured at right) by the end of 2009 through promotion of a cultivation method that yields more rice using less water and fewer seeds.

With training in this method—which many Oxfam supporters will recognize as the System of Rice Intensification, or SRI—Cambodian farmers have learned how to use less to grow more, in some cases doubling their harvests. (See photo at left of a rice plant grown using SRI principles and another using conventional ones. The plant on the right is SRI rice.)

Based on our experience in Cambodia, Oxfam began partnering with organizations in Vietnam to promote SRI in 2007. The real news in 2009 was that SRI efforts in Vietnam had already exceeded the reach of SRI in Cambodia.

By midyear, over a quarter million farmers across 21 provinces in Vietnam had applied SRI principles to cultivate more than 210,000 acres of rice fields. Why such dramatic numbers? Oxfam was instrumental in convincing the Vietnamese government to apply its agricultural extension resources to promoting SRI.

Data from participating growers and local officials indicate that rice farmers in Vietnam are able to earn an additional $137 per acre per season by using SRI. At a time when small-scale farmers are under increasing pressure, SRI provides more food and greater financial security.

"SRI is awesome," says Le Ngoc Thach, president of the Dai Nghia cooperative in Vietnam. "It rightly responds to the pressures of high input costs and low margins in this tough business where many farmers have suffered.

This money means a lot for us small farmers … If we add that with the money from selling chickens or a pig, we can strengthen our home, or we simply put the money aside to pay for tuition fees, books, and clothes for our children."

The increased income is particularly helpful for women using SRI; some 76 percent of the farmers participating in Oxfam America’s SRI program in Vietnam are women.

2009 INVESTMENT

System of rice intensification (globally): $615,000
DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF
“”

to rebuild our country

In poor countries, in rural communities, or where infrastructure has been eroded through neglect, among the first things that need to be restored are sources of clean water and decent sanitation systems. These seem like simple elements when you’re talking about rebuilding a country, but they are essential. Access to clean water is a right and the foundation of well-being for all communities.

**ZIMBABWE:** In 2009—in response to a cholera epidemic that sickened more than 98,000 people—local aid groups repaired boreholes and launched public education efforts.

Oxfam’s clean water delivery has long been considered the gold standard internationally. It’s one of our most effective tools to support people fighting the spread of waterborne illnesses like cholera. An epidemic of the diarrheal disease swept through Zimbabwe last year, not only sickening more than 98,000 people, but killing 4,288. The disaster struck as the country struggled with a host of other problems, including food shortages, hyperinflation, and the collapse of water and sanitation services. Strapped for cash, many rural communities did not have the means to repair deep, machine-drilled wells, known as boreholes, forcing people to rely on other sources for their drinking water, such as rivers where bacteria can easily accumulate.

Oxfam responded swiftly, reaching more than two million people with assistance, ranging from public health education to repairing hundreds of deep wells so that communities could have a source of clean water to stem the spread of the outbreak.

In Kadoma, located more than 100 miles outside the capital, Oxfam worked with our partner, Practical Action, to get clean water to families. (See map at left of the municipality of Kadoma posted in the offices of Practical Action.) In Mudzi, one particularly hard-hit district in the northeast, Oxfam joined forces with another partner, the Single Parents Widow(er)s Support Network, to tackle the problem of broken boreholes. Local workers traveled over miles of rough roads to remote locations with truck-loads of new pipes and a public health engineer to coordinate the repairs.

Each borehole fixed meant that several hundred people once again had access to clean water.

One of these people was Wonderful Nyatsuto, who reported that about 15 people in his community had fallen sick with cholera and five had died. When workers made the final repairs to the borehole near his home, he cupped his hands and drank deeply as clean water once again rushed from the pump.

Because limited infrastructure puts Zimbabweans at risk, Oxfam drew on our long experience with water and sanitation issues. Using lessons from our work in Ethiopia (see next page), in 2009 we established a cholera early warning system for communities in Mudzi. Relying on a network of newly formed “village cholera committees” tasked with reporting cholera cases to the local health center, the program is designed to help prevent future outbreaks of the disease.

**2009 INVESTMENT**

**Zimbabwe humanitarian crisis:** $1.19 million

**DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF**

Listen to audio blogs recorded in Zimbabwe: oxfamamerica.org/cholerasongs

In poor countries, in rural communities, or where infrastructure has been eroded through neglect, among the first things that need to be restored are sources of clean water and decent sanitation systems. These seem like simple elements when you’re talking about rebuilding a country, but they are essential. Access to clean water is a right and the foundation of well-being for all communities.
ETHIOPIA: A drought early warning system driven by women in rural communities attracted the Ethiopian government’s interest in 2009.

Under late afternoon clouds, girls fill plastic jugs with water from Ketele Pond (see background image), then carry the 40-pound containers home on donkeys or their own backs. In recent years, including 2009, a shortage of rainfall has withered crops, killed livestock, and dried up many local water sources.

“Now, all the other women and I spend six hours a day round trip collecting water for our households,” says Loko Dadacha, a widow and mother of six from Gutu Dobi village.

Women and girls, who traditionally gather water and care for children, bear a heavy burden when drought strikes southern Ethiopia’s rural communities. But women also hold the key to identifying and responding to droughts before they turn deadly.

Dadacha is one of a growing number of participants in an early warning drought surveillance system designed by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative and implemented by Oxfam America. The system depends on women’s intimate knowledge of their communities and combines it with broader data on disease, livestock, harvests, and market conditions. By staying abreast of what’s happening locally—how much milk the animals are producing, how many meals families are eating a day, whose children are sick with diarrhea—Dadacha provides a visiting data collector with a monthly report.

Those data capture early changes in the community’s well-being that can prove devastating to families if left unaddressed. And the process gives villagers an opportunity to meet regularly with government officials and aid groups to develop ideas for solving these problems. In 2009—during an outbreak of acute diarrhea that coincided with a serious shortage of clean water—villagers from Gutu Dobi decided to learn more about water and sanitation. More than 90 participants learned how to dig pit latrines and cap them with cement tops provided by a local aid group. Other projects include repairing local water sources, like Ketele Pond, and providing families with goats that can withstand drought.

In the year ahead, Oxfam will begin training local partner organizations to take over implementation of the program—making it a solution that will last.

Oxfam’s efforts also target the larger issues beneath disruptive weather patterns. “The climate is changing, and with every season, the amount of rain is less,” says data collector Terefua Bagajo.

In January 2009, Oxfam organized Ethiopia’s first National Climate Change Conference, bringing together more than 400 leaders from the government, NGOs, business, and civil society to explore sustainable solutions to the crisis.

2009 INVESTMENT

Ethiopian drought relief: $1.04 million
DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

Watch related video blog: oxfamamerica.org/waterwise
“”

to rebuild ourselves

With the simplest things—the opportunity to voice an opinion, decent working conditions—people can lay claim to the basic rights that belong to us all. And with rights come self-reliance, active citizens, and effective states.

UNITED STATES: In 2009, farmworkers renegotiated a historic labor contract.

Food grown cheaply on American soil often carries hidden costs. Many US field workers (like those pictured at left in Dudley, NC) face low wages and hazardous working conditions.

In March 2009, one of Oxfam’s partner organizations, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), helped North Carolina farmworkers renegotiate their contract—the first in the nation to provide a host of protections for immigrant workers, including better pay and a voice in their living and working conditions.

“Our job is to teach workers to speak up … not be silent,” says FLOC founder Baldemar Velásquez.

More than 30 percent of the US’s estimated three million farm laborers toil in fields in the Southeast. Oxfam’s Decent Work program helps farmworkers and meat processors in the region—especially people of color, immigrants, and women—to secure their rights to collective bargaining, fair compensation, safe working conditions, and freedom from discrimination. The program also brings together employers, labor groups, and others to set higher standards for corporate social responsibility.

In September 2009, these efforts yielded what US Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis called a “huge victory” for workers. One of the country’s largest food service companies, Compass Group, announced that it would buy winter tomatoes only from growers that pay a fair wage and offer good working conditions. The decision—made in partnership with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, an Oxfam partner—includes a strict code for monitoring hours worked and employee safety.

Oxfam works to influence state and national policies that establish and protect workers’ fundamental rights. Oxfam is also working closely with partners on a new national initiative to encourage consumers to buy food produced under fair working conditions.

2009 INVESTMENT

US decent work program: $1.40 million

DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF
Mali: With more than 10,000 Saving for Change groups in Mali, women there helped the community-driven microfinance program exceed 320,000 participants on three continents in 2009.

In 2005, Oxfam America launched its unique microfinance program: Saving for Change. The program was created to help people—especially women in rural areas—create savings groups. Participants deposit savings into their group’s fund and can take out small loans to cover household needs, deal with emergencies, and finance small businesses. Group members share the profits from their loans to each other and work together to address community issues like preventing and treating malaria or learning improved agricultural methods.

Soumba Doumbia is a Saving for Change entrepreneur from Mali. She sells vibrantly colored cloth on the ground in the shade cast by her front porch. She conducts her business in a courtyard full of children, bubbling cauldrons of shea butter, and animals. Thanks to a loan from her Saving for Change group, she financed her business, which allows her to earn more than she could gathering and selling kola nuts, making shea butter, and trading in grains like millet and sorghum. She now has enough money to buy food during the rainy season when most people run short.

Before her Saving for Change group was established, “We had no hope,” Doumbia says. “If we had problems, we would ask people for money, but they did not always say yes. Now we can find money for our problems through the group.”

In June 2009, the program hit a milestone: a quarter million participants, most of them women in Africa (like the Saving for Change participants in Zantiebougou-Fala, Mali, pictured at left).

“It’s been moving to see women use this program not only to improve their family finances, but also to create fundamental changes in power,” says John Ambler, Oxfam America’s senior vice president for programs. “When I spoke with women in Saving for Change groups in Mali, they told me how the program had helped them gain greater respect in their villages.”

By the end of 2009, Saving for Change’s global total was over 320,000 group members in 6,000 villages in Cambodia, Mali, El Salvador, and Senegal. This rapid rate of growth is distinctive. “A traditional microcredit institution might take eight or 10 years just to reach 10,000 borrowers,” says Ambler.

Participants have saved in excess of $6 million so far.

2009 INVESTMENT

Saving for Change (globally): $3.85 million

DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF
PERU: In 2009, evidence given to the country’s National Human Rights Coordinator prompted the government—under pressure from local communities—to investigate violence against mine protestors.

Farmers in northern Peru are concerned that a proposed copper mine will pollute the water and affect their ability to grow their crops. In 2004, Oxfam helped communities near a proposed copper mine in the highlands of Piura hold a referendum. Of the 60 percent of voters who participated, the overwhelming majority voted against mining in their community.

Farmers (like the one pictured selling goods in a farmer’s market in Piura) voiced two primary concerns. First, the Rio Blanco Copper mining company, eager to explore for minerals on community lands, lacked permission from locals to do so—a violation of Peruvian law. Second, farmers feared that a mine could pollute the water that thousands rely on to grow their crops and to drink.

“This is … why we don’t want to see this mine in our Peru,” says Cleofé Neyra, a farmer featured in a film about the Rio Blanco case that Oxfam produced in 2009.

Neyra was among those who mobilized for a meeting with government and mine officials in 2005. As citizens marched toward the exploration site, police and mine security attacked the unarmed farmers with tear gas, detaining Neyra and 28 others. They were beaten and held for three days. One farmer died in custody.

It was not until 2009 that photos of the detained, tortured farmers were leaked to Peru’s National Human Rights Coordinator, and the government agreed to investigate. Oxfam’s local partner organization, known by the Spanish acronym FEDEPAZ, is providing legal aid to local leaders unjustly charged with terrorism. FEDEPAZ and another Oxfam partner, CooperAcción, are also working with the government to tighten regulation of environmental impact studies and to ensure citizen participation in decisions about mining. Oxfam is also funding studies on economic alternatives to mining in the region, such as organic agriculture.

Working at the international level to support the efforts of communities like Neyra’s, Oxfam’s Right to Know, Right to Decide campaign is pushing for governments and companies to respect the right to free, prior, and informed consent of communities affected by oil, gas, and mining operations. Half the world’s poorest people live in countries rich in natural resources. Farmers and indigenous people have a right to be consulted about mines that will affect their means of making a living. Oxfam is working to ensure that they have a voice in decisions that affect their future.

2009 INVESTMENT
Oil, gas, and mining in Latin America: $1.07 million
DEVELOPMENT & HUMANITARIAN RELIEF | PUBLIC EDUCATION | POLICY & ADVOCACY

Watch Cleofé Neyra’s story: oxfamamerica.org/cleofe
Oxfam’s global reach

Around the world, Oxfam America prioritizes building organizations, enabling ideas, and supporting initiatives in communities working their own way out of poverty. We do this through our regional offices on five continents, and through Oxfam International: an alliance of 14 Oxfams working in nearly 100 countries alongside 3,000 local organizations. In 2008–9, Oxfam International’s total expenditures exceeded $770 million, spent on long-term development projects, humanitarian emergencies, and campaigning to urge governments to take action on issues like global climate change. Since much of Oxfam’s work is grounded in communities around the world, when disaster strikes, we are well positioned to be first responders: channeling funds, aid workers, and supplies to where they are needed in a matter of hours.
Asia
Office: Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Countries where we funded work:
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Vietnam
Total investment in region: $4.0 million
Top three investments (as percentages of total):
Agriculture & livelihoods, 40.1%
Saving for Change, 16.9%
Humanitarian relief & risk reduction 10.9%

Africa
Offices: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | Dakar, Senegal | Pretoria, South Africa
Countries where we funded work:
Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Zimbabwe
Total investment in region: $15.6 million
Top three investments (as percentages of total):
Humanitarian relief & risk reduction, 31.5%
Agriculture & livelihoods, 26.5%
Saving for Change, 9.9%
Measuring impact:
What, why, how, and—perhaps most important—what then?

Oxfam’s mission is to create lasting solutions to poverty, hunger, and social injustice. Some say this is impossible to measure. We say such measurement is an obligation.

WHAT do we mean by impact?
Many organizations measure “outputs”: how many people they’ve fed, how many textbooks they’ve provided. Oxfam seeks “impact,” not just outputs. This means we address the root causes of poverty and social injustice, not just symptoms.

WHY does measuring impact (rather than just outputs) matter?
There are many NGOs that build irrigation systems for farmers. Oxfam does it differently. Beyond the physical system, we focus on changing how the local government plans and invests so that poor communities get a fair share of public resources for irrigation. We help farmers build skills and diversify harvests. We connect marginalized communities to national and international markets, where they can make a better profit. We also work inside villages to ensure that community members—men, women, minorities—all have equitable access to farmlands improved by irrigation. Lasting change is not just about a water pump or a canal; it’s about changes in power relations.

HOW do we measure impact?
Such changes take time. That’s why we develop 10–15-year program strategies. Each is designed as a learning process in which we, our partners, and poor people themselves identify successes and shortcomings, and work together to overcome them. We set long-term goals, identify measurable indicators, do baseline studies, and engage local researchers to provide independent evaluations of progress regularly.

Perhaps most important: WHAT THEN?
We gather and analyze data—along with partners and external evaluators—continuously. So what then? How is the information used to course-correct or increase our impact?
Impact case study | Oxfam’s oil, gas, and mining program in West Africa

Our goal is to work with communities, governments, and mining companies so that revenues are reinvested wisely by governments, the environment is protected, and communities closest to mines have a voice in the process.

Indicators for impact | We define impact indicators in four key categories. Such systemic change is a high bar, but that's what shifting power demands. These are the indicators for our West African oil-drilling and gold-mining program:

Individual and collective voice and influence
• Number of formal actions filed by mining-affected populations relative to the total number of violations recorded.
• Evidence of community influence on mining decision makers' debates and actions
• People’s satisfaction with civil society and local elected officials working to amplify their voices and influence
• Percentage of trained elected local councilors who engage with policy makers at the national level and with companies on the issue of gold mining and oil

Social practice
• Percentage of official complaints from villages filed with the judiciary or mines on which the government or companies take action
• Rating by community members of the quality of the consultative processes among the government, company, and community in key mining or drilling areas. (An important part of that rating will be based on a comparison of investment by mines in social development against the development needs as defined by communities.)

Government and private sector policies
• Rating of the government’s fiscal transparency
• Quality of adoption and degree to which national mining laws are in line with and support the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) mining code
• Percentage of independent environmental and social impact assessments on gold-mining and oil proposals made fully available to the public

People’s well-being
• Rates of violence and intimidation across the region (per population affected)
• Rates of monitored human rights violations (per population affected)—especially water quality and land compensation violations

Possible WHAT THEN scenarios | Our West African monitoring systems are just starting, but here are some hypothetical scenarios:

What if > Imagine that our data tells us that—over the next two years—community satisfaction with civil society efforts on mining has increased, but rates of formal complaints per documented violation remain low.
Then > We might choose to put greater effort in rights awareness training in communities and put a new effort into connecting communities to legal aid networks.

What if > Imagine that we see major improvements in government transparency about revenues, but also see a decrease in community satisfaction regarding mining concessions and the investment of revenues in social development projects.
Then > We might redouble our efforts to strengthen civil society, helping organizations and local leaders amplify their voices and influence. We would also follow up with locally elected councilors to see if they have any insights into what change might be happening at the top but not the grassroots level.

What if > Imagine that in the next five years, there is still no reduction in land violations where our partners work, but every other indicator shows impressive improvements.
Then > It’s likely that we would quickly organize some primary research to figure this out, because those relationships just do not seem to make sense. That combination of data might tell us that there’s something wrong or missing in our program strategy and point toward how we can do better.

In 2008–9, we finalized long-term strategies for nine programs around the world. By the end of this year, we will have designed impact measurement systems for all of those programs, and completed impact baselines for all nine.

Next year we will be able to tell you what has changed for the better or not, and what might be trending for the worse. And we’ll tell you what we and our partners are going to try instead to move things in the right direction. Because the world’s most vulnerable people deserve no less.
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(as of April 1, 2010)

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In 2009, Oxfam America addressed the still-uncertain fund-raising environment by making tough strategic choices about how to invest our resources. Fortunately, we took action early in the fiscal year to reduce expenses and focus our activity. Thus far, we have weathered the financial and economic downturn well, and we are able to stand behind our partners and meet our commitments to the people Oxfam serves.

Thanks to the support of our extremely committed donors, unrestricted contributions were higher than we had anticipated, producing a net increase in unrestricted assets. As we have continued to put to work the monies raised through the Campaign for Oxfam America and through other large restricted contributions made before 2009, we have seen our temporarily restricted net assets shrink. Fund raising for the campaign ended in 2008, although investment of those funds will continue for several years. Consequently, we experienced a decline in total net assets of $11.1 million in 2009.

Total contributions decreased 27 percent in 2009. Restricted contributions were down, but this was attributable in large part to our successful completion of the campaign in 2008 and to the happy fact that there were comparatively few humanitarian disasters in 2009. Our unrestricted contributions decreased by 8 percent, which was a less significant drop than we’d anticipated in light of the depressed economy. Yet despite these decreases and continuing volatility of financial markets, our conservative investment policies paid off: our investment income was positive for the year.

In order to conserve our resources and ensure our lasting ability to meet commitments to partners, however, we faced some extremely painful choices in 2009. We cut operating expenses and planned phaseouts of selected programs that we concluded were not aligned as well with our long-term strategy, shifting some of those resources elsewhere. We closed our office in Pretoria, reduced our programs in southern Africa, and expanded our work in Darfur, for which we received substantial new funding. We also continued to invest in core programs promoted through our $63 million Campaign for Oxfam America, such as empowering women and families, creating economic opportunity, saving lives, and measuring the impact and effectiveness of our programs.

Our efforts to cut costs yielded a decrease of $1.2 million in total expenses from 2008. We reduced our spending on development and humanitarian relief programs by $630,000, mainly by phasing out much of our work in South Africa (work that is continuing through partner organizations and other Oxfam affiliates) and wrapping up work on our tsunami program. We also achieved a net savings of $271,000 in the public education, policy, and advocacy areas. Fund-raising expenses and management and general expenses declined by $263,000.

In all, Oxfam America fared comparatively well during a year of financial turmoil and uncertainty. We count ourselves fortunate. We cannot ignore, however, the fact that few poor communities around the world gained ground this year. For those trapped by poverty and injustice, difficult financial conditions affect them disproportionately. We are keenly aware that in these times, our best financial management still leaves the needs of too many unmet. We are committed to being the best possible stewards of our donors’ funds while remaining focused on our mission.

Joe H. Hamilton
Treasurer & secretary
### Statement of activities
(Oxfam America and Oxfam America Advocacy Fund | Years ending October 31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$52,070,000</td>
<td>$71,480,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>1,115,000</td>
<td>1,350,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>371,000</td>
<td>307,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total revenue gains and other support</strong></td>
<td>$53,556,000</td>
<td>$73,137,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>EXPENSES</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and humanitarian relief programs</td>
<td>39,121,000</td>
<td>39,751,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public education</td>
<td>7,086,000</td>
<td>7,970,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy and advocacy</td>
<td>5,263,000</td>
<td>4,650,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total program services</strong></td>
<td>51,470,000</td>
<td>52,371,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>4,034,000</td>
<td>4,171,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fund-raising</td>
<td>9,154,000</td>
<td>9,280,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total support services</strong></td>
<td>13,188,000</td>
<td>13,451,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td>$64,658,000</td>
<td>$65,822,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Change in net assets** |            |            |
| Change related to unrestricted funds | 2,208,000  | 906,000    |
| Change related to temporarily restricted funds | (13,310,000) | 6,409,000 |
| **Total change in net assets** | (11,102,000) | 7,315,000 |
| **Net assets at the beginning of the year** | 89,061,000 | 81,746,000 |

| **Net assets at the end of the year** | $77,959,000 | $89,061,000 |

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**Statement of financial position**
(Oxfam America and Oxfam America Advocacy Fund | As of October 31)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$3,157,000</td>
<td>$2,458,000</td>
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<td>Investments</td>
<td>70,109,000</td>
<td>72,865,000</td>
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<td>Pledges receivable</td>
<td>11,884,000</td>
<td>19,518,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other assets</td>
<td>2,806,000</td>
<td>2,694,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net fixed assets</td>
<td>2,174,000</td>
<td>2,875,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td>$90,130,000</td>
<td>$100,410,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS** |            |            |
| Liabilities            |            |            |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses | 3,353,000  | 3,573,000  |
| Grants payable         | 4,341,000  | 3,181,000  |
| Other liabilities      | 4,477,000  | 4,595,000  |
| **Total liabilities**  | 12,171,000 | 11,469,000 |
| **Net assets**         |            |            |
| Unrestricted           | 36,235,000 | 34,027,000 |
| Temporarily restricted  | 40,154,000 | 53,466,000 |
| Permanently restricted  | 1,568,000  | 1,568,000  |
| **Total net assets**   | 77,959,000 | 89,061,000 |

| **Total liabilities and net assets** | $90,130,000 | $100,410,000 |

For Oxfam America’s audited financial statements and Form 990, please go to oxfamamerica.org/annual2009.
Gifts received in 2009

Oxfam America is extremely grateful to have the support of 240,000 individuals, foundations, and corporations whose gifts make all of the work highlighted in this report possible. We are particularly pleased to have earned the confidence of 37,000 new supporters and welcome them to the family of those committed to creating lasting solutions to poverty, hunger, and injustice.

With this report, we gratefully acknowledge those who gave $5,000 or more. We offer our heartfelt thanks to the tens of thousands of supporters we don’t have space to list here, including the many employers that sponsor workplace campaigns and matching gifts programs.

(Contributions to Oxfam America and the Oxfam America Advocacy Fund received between November 1, 2008, and October 31, 2009)
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Eugenie Allen and Jeremy Feigelson
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L’Uomo Vogue
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Karl and Dian Zeile  

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A just world without poverty

Our mission:
To create lasting solutions to poverty, hunger, and social injustice

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Working together to end poverty and injustice

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. Oxfam America is an international relief and development organization working to change that. Together with individuals and local groups in more than 100 countries, Oxfam saves lives, helps people overcome poverty, and fights for social justice. To join our efforts or learn more, go to oxfamamerica.org.
“I love to have knowledge,” says 8-year-old Ngabu.

He lives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where more than five million people have died since 1998 as a result of war.

At Oxfam’s invitation, in 2009, renowned British photographer Rankin traveled to Congo, using his camera to capture the human face of one of the world’s deadliest conflicts. (See page 9 for more information.) The situation in Congo has left many committed Oxfam supporters with a sense of hopelessness. It is a feeling that afflicts even the most stalwart.

That’s why Ngabu’s words struck us.

It is the hope and potential in the millions of children like Ngabu, their parents, and their neighbors that underpin Oxfam’s work. We are inspired by their commitment to tackle what many people see as insurmountable.

Oxfam’s approach to achieving our mission is threefold: saving lives, helping people overcome poverty through long-term development, and fighting for social justice by campaigning for policy change in both the global north and south. It is this third piece that is hardest for many to understand and embrace, because it seems removed from the urgency of individual lives. Yet it offers some of the most powerful tools for widespread change.

In 2009, Oxfam’s major advocacy campaign focused on climate change adaptation support for poor communities hardest hit by the climate crisis. Our efforts are reflected in the climate and energy legislation passed by the House of Representatives in June 2009, which included $1 billion per year by 2020 for climate adaptation in developing countries and Oxfam-proposed policies for community-based adaptation programs. In addition, the Copenhagen Accord on climate change set a goal of mobilizing $100 billion per year by 2020 for developing countries, including for climate adaptation.

In 2009, the focus of our advocacy work in Congo was protecting civilians. So, we have been campaigning to pass the International Violence Against Women Act, the first comprehensive piece of US legislation that could help stem violence against Congolese women.

Advocacy may seem removed from individual lives, but it’s not. Beneath all we do is the conviction that—given the means—Ngabu and others like him can find solutions to the injustice and poverty they face.

Working together to end poverty and injustice