



Oxfam

FALL 2002

Exchange

WHAT'S THAT IN YOUR COFFEE?:
OXFAM'S COFFEE CAMPAIGN

OXFAM IN AFGHANISTAN

HOPI PEOPLE VS. PEABODY COAL





Oxfam
America

OXFAM EXCHANGE
Volume 2, Number 1
Fall 2002

JENNIFER WILDER
Editor

KEVIN PEPPER
Associate Editor

JEFF DEUTSCH
Graphic Designer

Oxfam Exchange is published
three times annually. All material
©2002 Oxfam America.

MAIN OFFICE
26 West Street
Boston, MA 02111-1206 USA
800/77-OXFAM
info@oxfamamerica.org

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1112 16th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036 USA
oxfamdc@oxfamamerica.org

**OXFAM AMERICA BOARD
OF DIRECTORS**

Barbara Fiorito
Chair

Raymond C. Offenheiser
President

Chester Atkins
Seth Berkley
Michael Carter
Susan Clare
Bradley J. Greenwald
Paula Hayes
Wendy Johnson
Jennifer Leaning
Marc Lindenberg
Michael MacLeod
Janet McKinley
Peter C. Munson
Mary Racelis
John Riggan
Kitt Sawitsky
Magdalena Villarreal
Beth Warren
Jennifer Yablonski

*Oxfam America is committed to
creating lasting solutions to poverty,
hunger, and social injustice.*

*Oxfam employees are represented
by Service Employees International
Union, Local 285.*

contents

- 3 **RIGHT NOW**
- 4 **COLD PLAY BACKS MAKE TRADE FAIR CAMPAIGN**
- 5 **SOUTHERN AFRICA FOOD CRISIS**
- 6 **AGAINST ALL ODDS – COPING IN AFGHANISTAN**
- 8 **OXFAM IN AFGHANISTAN –
FOR THE LONG HAUL**
- 9 **WHAT’S THAT IN YOUR COFFEE? –
OXFAM’S COFFEE CAMPAIGN**
- 10 **LOMA LINDA – ESCAPING THE COFFEE CRISIS**
- 12 **NEWS SHORTS**
- 13 **H₂OPI**
- 14 **THE VOICE OF LASHI**

6



10



14



13



Oxfam Dumps Sugar at WSSD

In protest to massive subsidies for agricultural products by wealthy nations, Oxfam “dumped” 9,000 sachets of subsidized European sugar in cafes around the site of the **World Summit for Sustainable Development** in Johannesburg, South Africa, last August. The action drew attention to the fact that European and U.S. taxpayers pay huge amounts indirectly to enable their farmers to produce major commodities like sugar, corn, and wheat below cost. This forces the price of these crops so low that small farmers in developing nations are driven out of business and these countries can no longer grow their own food supplies.



While wealthy nations expand their markets and “feed the world,” poor farmers are driven into deeper poverty, unable to compete and prevented by World Trade Organization rules from protecting their markets with tariffs. According to Oxfam trade policy adviser, Penny Fowler, “It’s especially relevant here at a summit which should be producing an action plan to defeat poverty. We’re on the doorstep of Southern African countries facing famine. One of them, Mozambique, has seen its sugar farmers denied a route out of poverty because they are locked out of European markets by these policies. The loss of income amounts to nearly three-quarters of annual EU aid.”

Make Trade Fair Turns to Coffee Crisis

The worldwide Oxfam campaign, **Make Trade Fair**, (See *Oxfam Exchange* Spring 2002), is drawing international attention to the rules of trade that cause great inequities between wealthy and poor nations. On September 18, 2002, Oxfam launched a worldwide campaign, called “**What’s That in Your Coffee?**,” to call attention to the plight of coffee farmers. 25 million coffee farmers around the world are plummeting into desperate poverty due to an oversupply of coffee that has driven down prices paid to growers. Read more about Oxfam’s **Global Coffee Rescue Plan** to help farmers now and bring about changes in the coffee marketing system.

Mary Robinson Named Honorary President of Oxfam International

Stepping down from her role as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson has been named the Honorary President of Oxfam International. She is taking up residence in New York City where she will head up a new project called The Ethical Globalization Initiative.

Oxfam America looks forward to working closely with Mrs. Robinson, drawing on her strong background in human rights to help us shape our own programs. Oxfam’s respect for social and economic rights is a driving principle in our fight against poverty.

WRITE TO US!

We welcome reader's comments and ideas. Please include your name and address and mail to:

Editor, Oxfam Exchange
Oxfam America
26 West Street
Boston, MA 02111-1206

Send email to editor@oxfamamerica.org,
or fax to 617-728-2562.

We will print as many letters as possible, but reserve the right to edit for space and clarity.

British Rock Band Promotes Oxfam's Fair Trade Message

Coldplay's new album, *A Rush of Blood to the Head*, was number one on the British charts during its first week of release, and enjoyed sweeping popularity in the U.S., hitting number five on the Billboard 200. The album encourages its listeners to support Oxfam's **Make Trade Fair** campaign, and asks them to visit the campaign's website, www.maketradefair.com.

Coldplay's Chris Martin recently spent a week in Haiti to promote Oxfam International's **Make Trade Fair** campaign.

"We really wanted to advertise something that we actually cared about," says Martin, "and we do care about issues of trade – so we're prepared to risk looking stupid to talk about it."

Martin recently went on a trip to Haiti with members of Oxfam Great Britain to see how unfair global trade rules affect some of the world's poor.

"I went to see what happens when people aren't paid enough for their goods," Martin said. "It's the most disgusting exploitation on such a massive level by big companies and by the trade laws themselves."

On their trip, Martin and members of Oxfam Great Britain visited an Oxfam-supported coffee cooperative.

"This co-op was just three years old, and still very basic," Martin remembers. "The women told us how they can't afford to send their children to school, or buy even basic health-care. I've never seen anything like this before. Yolette Etienne, the inspiring Haitian woman who heads Oxfam here, keeps telling

me to look for the hope. 'We've just got to do things bit by bit,' said Yolette. 'You've got to see the good that these little projects are doing.' I loved meeting people like Yolette who are working to change things, to do something practical. They're trying to help Haiti grow from the bottom up, and we can do our bit by buying Fair Trade products, as well as pressuring politicians to change this insanity, to make trade fair."



Southern Africa Food Crisis – International Concern Doesn't Match Needs

More than 13 million people in southern Africa are hungry. If the world does not come forward with adequate assistance, they could face starvation.

Millions of people – especially the poorest – in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Zambia, Mozambique, and Swaziland are threatened. The World Food Program characterizes the emergency as the “most serious humanitarian crisis taking place in the world today.”

“We need the money right now,” says Julio de Sousa, Oxfam America’s Southern Africa Regional Director. Food now will keep people alive. If donors wait too long, many will die or endure terrible – often crippling – malnutrition. It takes months to convert dollars into food on the ground. “The outside world must understand how urgently we need their help,” says de Sousa.

To make a donation, visit our website at www.oxfamamerica.org/donate or call 800-77-OXFAM.

Many reasons are given for southern Africa’s worst food crisis in more than a decade, but the failure of the region’s staple maize crops due to a three-year drought is the greatest. Many farmers have now sold off all of their assets (even their land) to buy food. In Zimbabwe, the price of bread rose 24 percent and cooking oil 81 percent between May and June, according to the UN Relief and Recovery Unit. Almost 95 percent of the families interviewed by the UNRRU were living on one meal a day, which consists of either tea, sadza, wild fruits and roots, or vegetables. With HIV/AIDS infection rates as high as 25 percent, the epidemic accelerates and compounds an already drastic food crisis.

OXFAM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA – THE RESPONSE

Oxfam has long worked with partner organizations in southern Africa that now reach thousands of people with food and other relief resources. Since May, 2002, Oxfam America has provided food aid to 61,000 people in Zimbabwe monthly, through our partner organization, the Association of Women Clubs (AWC).

AWC is distributing seeds and fertilizer and teaching women how to make income-producing products such as peanut butter, soap, and candles. A micro-credit program helps start new businesses. Hearty strains of sweet potato and cassava are being introduced to farmers in Mozambique to enhance their crop yield next spring.

In the months ahead, Oxfam will help increase food production and develop new crops and water management systems. Oxfam is also bringing pressure on international donors to ensure that humanitarian assistance for this region remains a priority over the long course of this crisis.

Naison Mukutirwa in Chikomba District, Zimbabwe, picking up mealie meal at the AWC food distribution center.

FIDELIS ZVOMUYA





JENNY MATTHEWS/NETWORK

AGAINST *all odds:*

COPING IN AFGHANISTAN

by Jennifer R. Wilder



Above: Kobra is one of 30,000 widows in Kabul. Prior to the drought, widows like Kobra depended on their neighbors for assistance. Now their neighbors have nothing to share.

Facing: Elizabeth Stites with children in Sar-e-Pul in northern Afghanistan.

A year after 9-11, after US-led bombing and the routing of the Taliban, after more than 23 years of war, after the displacement of millions into refugee camps, the people of Afghanistan are struggling to reclaim their lives in an environment still plagued with poverty, conflict, and insecurity, and in what feels like a drought without end.

In early 2002, Elizabeth Stites, a former Oxfam intern, joined a team of researchers from the Feinstein Famine Center at Tufts University to survey food security in Afghanistan. The researchers were commissioned by the U.S. Agency for International Development, to learn how people were coping with the continued drought and the extent of food resources at the household level. They aimed to make recommendations for how donors could assist in significant and long lasting ways.

Over the course of five months, the four-person team worked in 16 provinces of Afghanistan, training local men and women to conduct focus group interviews with individuals from more than 1,100 Afghan households. The groups consisted

of men, women, young boys and girls. Team members also spoke to civil and military authorities, aid workers, and donor representatives. These accounts provided a generalized assessment of how Afghans were coping with crisis.

THE STORY OF DROUGHT

The story of a drought that persists year after year tells of the breakdown and crushing collapse of society. Although Afghans are accustomed to occasional dry spells, they were unprepared for an extended drought. Such a drought – the worst in living memory – now persists into its fourth year in many parts of Afghanistan.

The Afghans showed great resilience and determination to keep crops and animals alive and families intact. As wells and local water sources ran dry, family members walked up to six hours to fetch water for fruit trees and kitchen gardens. Such tactics succeeded for the first year, but as the drought continued, many saw their orchards wither, and the eventual loss of the family cow, sheep or goat ended an important source of dairy and protein.

The loss of assets and nutritional diversity increased the spiral into debt, poverty, and uncertainty. Many report livestock losses greater than 70 percent. People sold off essential assets such as stoves, blankets, looms – even ceiling beams holding up the roofs. Too many have been reduced to placing their daughters into premature marriage (some as young as seven) in exchange for food, cash, or fuel wood. Young boys are often sent to work as shepherds in distant villages or provinces. The grief from the separation of families is boundless.

Charity is a central tenet and highly valued aspect of Muslim society, and the poorest are sustained by those with wealth as part of the fabric of community life. As the wealthy disappear, so do resources for the poorest. Today, many Afghans who were previously part of the middle class have joined the ranks of those with nothing left.

Debt is fundamentally alien to the Muslim value system. To borrow is shameful, as is lending for interest. The impoverishment caused by the drought, however, has turned many to debt for survival. A crisis of shame now hangs over many Afghan homes, with men unable to venture out in fear of encountering someone to whom they owe money. Many have mortgaged their homes, orchards, and land, resulting in the emergence of a large population of those without access to land.

AID TO AFGHANISTAN

Last fall, as the bombing began, relief agencies warned of widespread starvation if massive amounts of aid were not brought into the country early enough to reach remote communities before they were isolated by winter snow.

Because of the drought, the snows were light, and assistance reached many remote areas. Starvation appears to have been averted, and more than 60 percent of households surveyed received some form of assistance from national or international organizations.

The level of need in Afghanistan remains staggering. Yet, as Elizabeth Stites reports, “The Afghan people are incredibly resilient. They have been coping with conflict for more than 20 years, and have faced their share of natural hazards. Afghans have been successful traders for centuries, and an active private sector is bringing in commodities from neighboring countries.” In most parts of the country, the problem is not availability of food but lack of money to buy food from the markets. Even subsistence farming has largely failed due to the drought.



According to Stites, the real need now is a massive infusion of resources to enable communities to regain their land, reactivate their livelihoods, build new homes, and access markets. Millions are still returning from refugee camps, often to destroyed homes in waterless villages. The drought continues, and communities badly need funds to rebuild the advanced underground irrigation canals and water storage systems that had served them for centuries. Families need to prepare for winter by increasing their food stores and repairing shelters.

“At first glance,” says Stites, “the situation in Afghanistan seems overwhelming – you don’t know where to start. But the Afghan people have incredible strength, and tapping into their knowledge may be essential to provide effective assistance from the international community.”

Read about the work that Oxfam is doing in Afghanistan today on page 8.

OXFAM IN AFGHANISTAN – FOR THE LONG HAUL

Jennifer R. Wilder

In the 12 years Oxfam has worked in Afghanistan, the challenges facing our partners have hardly changed – drought, food shortages, conflict, destroyed villages, and displaced people. Only now, the same problems are much worse.



KENNY RAE/OXFAM AMERICA

Returned refugees unable to live in their home villages are taking refuge in unsafe collapsed buildings in Kabul. Oxfam partners are rebuilding homes outside Kabul.

Continued drought in many parts of the country makes it extremely hard for villagers and thousands of returning refugees to pick up their lives, start planting crops, raise livestock, and replant their orchards. Their lives remain precarious.

Most of Oxfam's funding currently supports local organizations helping with essential needs:

- Food and medicine distribution
- Health care
- Landmine and bomb disposal (It is estimated that it will take at least seven years to destroy the 10 million mines littering Afghanistan.)

- Rehabilitation of water and irrigation systems
- School construction
- Rebuilding homes
- Replanting orchards, training farmers to develop alternative and improved crops
- Road construction and maintenance

Thousands of Afghans fled their homes for refugee camps, both inside Afghanistan and in neighboring countries. Oxfam brought emergency water systems to several of these camps, sharing with refugees the importance of sanitation in such close quarters. Without this intervention, thousands

might have died from malaria, diarrhea, and other preventable diseases. (See www.oxfamamerica.org/art2629.html for more information on Oxfam's emergency water and sanitation program.)

In the Istalif district, north of Kabul, the Taliban destroyed virtually every house. Oxfam partner organization AREA is distributing free food to villagers while they rebuild their homes. As the houses take form, they receive concrete beams, doors, and windows manufactured in an Oxfam-funded factory in Kabul. This factory provides income to hundreds of unemployed workers, while offering people earthquake-resistant homes.

Please visit our website at www.oxfamamerica.org for more on Oxfam in Afghanistan.

Below: Before attending this new Oxfam-funded school, children in Badakshan had never had a school in their community.



KENNY RAE/OXFAM AMERICA

WHAT'S THAT IN YOUR COFFEE?

The Oxfam Campaign to Overcome the Coffee Crisis

by Chris Hufstader

A silent, humanitarian crisis is sweeping across 50 coffee-producing countries, affecting 25 million families who grow coffee.

People in the business call it a “coffee crisis,” but most consumers are blissfully unaware that oversupply and low prices are sowing devastation, despair, and hunger among 25 million coffee farming families around the world. They depend on the coffee industry for their livelihood, and the price they receive for their crops has fallen by 70 percent over the past five years.

As part of its international **Make Trade Fair** campaign, Oxfam has responded to this unprecedented humanitarian crisis by launching a global campaign called “What’s That in Your Coffee?” In a comprehensive report titled *Mugged: Poverty in your coffee cup*, Oxfam calls for the major players in the coffee industry to support a **Global Coffee Rescue Program** to overcome the current crisis and create a more stable market. The report analyzes the origins and effects of collapsed coffee prices and urges American consumers to join Oxfam in bringing relief to farmers and a change to the system.

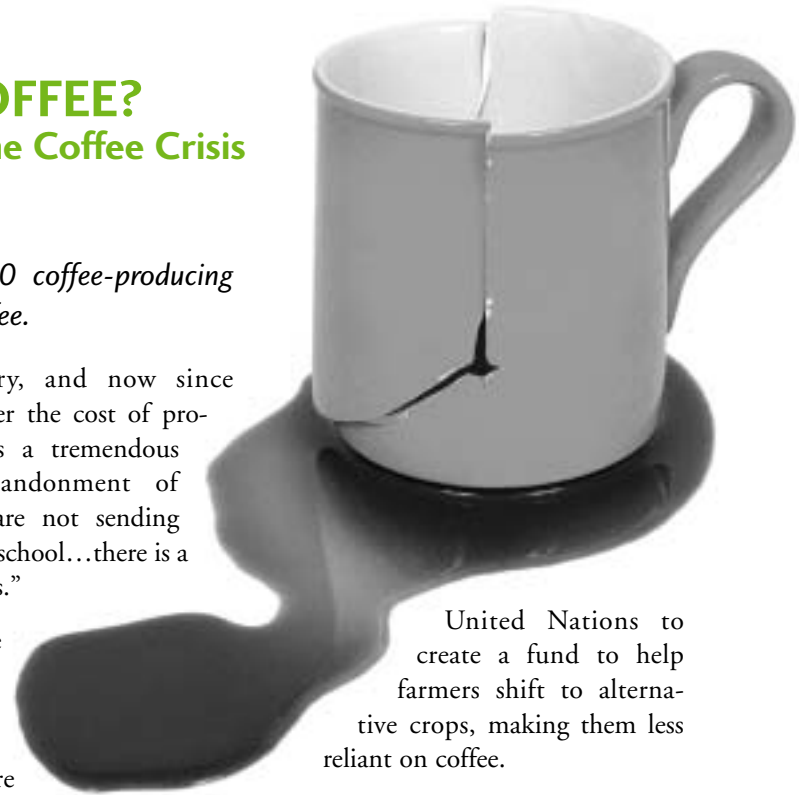
With coffee selling for less than it costs to produce it, many farming families can not afford health care, or eat regularly. In Central America, the signs of crisis are obvious. Half a million jobs have been lost due to the coffee crisis. Thousands of farm workers are without food or hope as they have turned from their lands, seeking jobs in cities and foreign countries. In La Dalia, Nicaragua, press reports last year estimated there were 16,000 people begging in the streets and feeding their children from garbage cans. Dagoberto Suazo, a coffee farmer from a growers’ cooperative in Honduras, says, “Honduras is a coffee

growing country, and now since prices don’t cover the cost of production there is a tremendous amount of abandonment of farms, parents are not sending their children to school...there is a tremendous crisis.”

Low prices are precipitating similar problems in all 50 countries where coffee is produced.

Large coffee companies have taken advantage of worldwide overproduction to pay farmers comparably less than their ancestors earned 100 years ago.

Oxfam brings decades of experience working with poor coffee communities to the development of our **Global Coffee Rescue Program**. Oxfam asks corporations to immediately pay growers a higher price for good quality coffee. The higher price must cover the costs of production and allow a living wage. To further improve farm revenues, Oxfam also calls for the largest coffee companies to introduce a portion of Fair Trade coffee into all their products. This would guarantee Fair Trade cooperatives at least \$1.26 for each pound of coffee, which is about three times the price the farmers might otherwise receive. We also recommend the destruction of five million bags of coffee stocks, to get the supply more in line with demand and push up prices. Perhaps most importantly, Oxfam urges the International Coffee Organization, governments, and the



United Nations to create a fund to help farmers shift to alternative crops, making them less reliant on coffee.

You can learn more about the coffee crisis and Oxfam’s Make Trade Fair campaign at www.oxfamamerica.org/coffee and www.maketradefair.com.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

to overcome the coffee crisis:

Buy Fair Trade Coffee:

Fair Trade coffee ensures that a larger part of the price you pay for coffee goes back to the farmer. Ask for it at your favorite coffee shop or supermarket; urge your friends to buy it.

Join Oxfam’s campaign to get Procter & Gamble to put Fair Trade coffee in their products.

To join us, or find out where to buy Fair Trade coffee visit our website at www.oxfamamerica.org/coffee.

Loma Linda

Escaping the Coffee Crisis

by Kevin T. Pepper

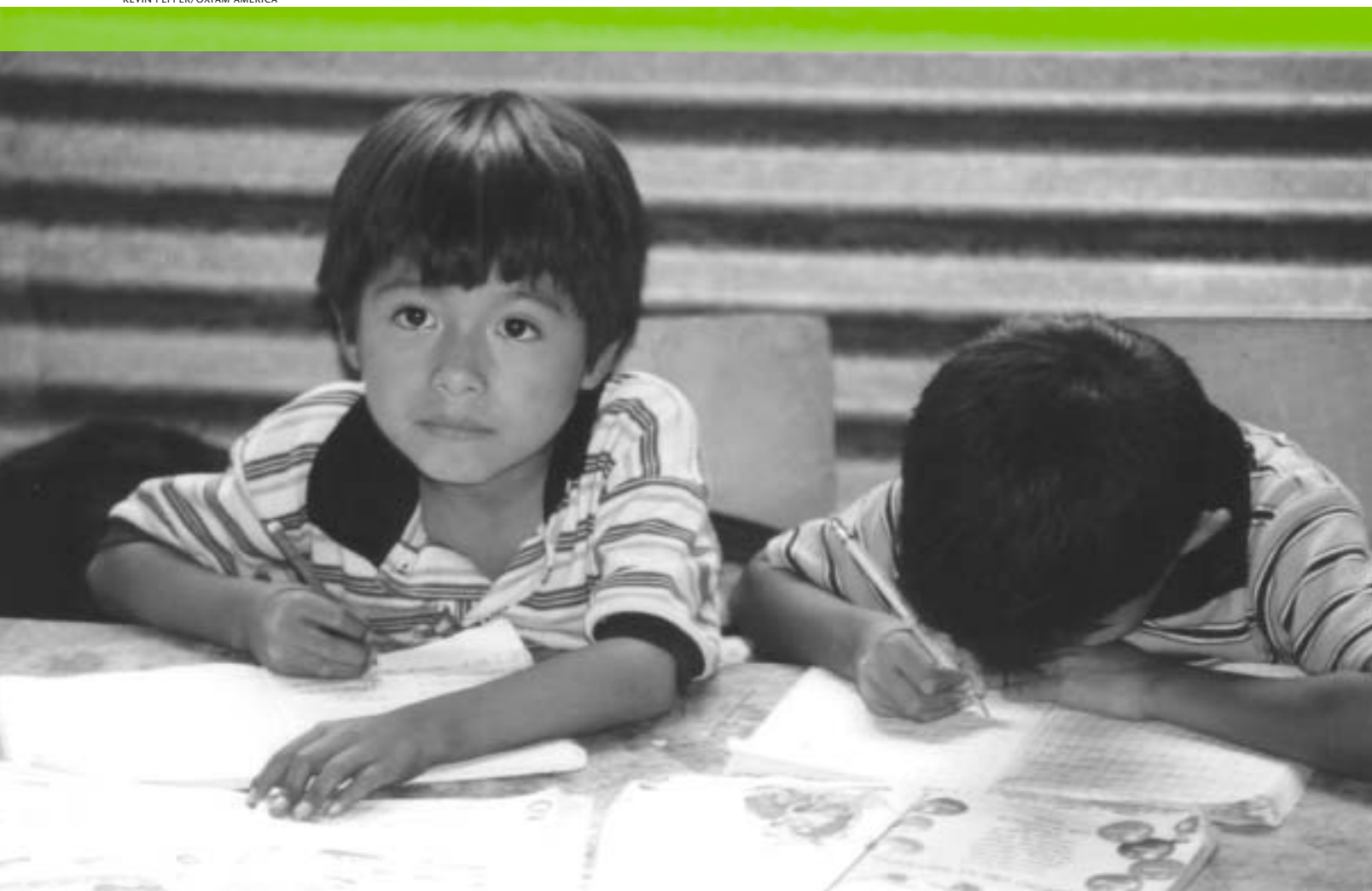


Loma Linda is nestled comfortably atop a plateau in the heart of the Sierra Madres mountains, about 200 kilometers west of Guatemala City in the department of Quetzaltenango, whose Mayan name, “Xe laju’ noj,” means “under 10 mountains.”

The mountains themselves are a patchwork of vegetable and coffee farms, stitched together by winding rivers that dip and rise lazily over the quilted foothills. Imagine the most fertile swath of Iowa farmland buckled and compressed under tremendous seismic pressure, and draped over rolling hills in perfect geometry.

Below: With extra income earned from the sale of Fair Trade coffee, farmers in Loma Linda are able to send their children to school.

KEVIN PEPPER/OXFAM AMERICA





KEVIN PEPPER/OXFAM AMERICA

Jerónimo Bollen, General Manager of Manos Campesinos, is instructing coffee farmers in Loma Linda on how to use new coffee processing machinery, purchased with Fair Trade revenues.

Loma Linda's high-altitude perch yields a high-quality Arabica coffee, a connoisseur's coffee bean.

Everyone in the village – men, women, and children – works the harvest.

“We were born together with the coffee plant,” says Mateo Reyneso, President of Loma Linda.

Since the categorical collapse in coffee prices in 1997, the world price of coffee has fallen 70 percent to a 30-year low. The U.N. World Food Program reports that thousands are suffering from severe malnutrition in the coffee-producing areas of Guatemala.

Unable to cover the cost of production, thousands of coffee farmers cannot earn the income necessary to feed their families, send their children to school, purchase essential medicines or pay for visits to the local doctor.

While many coffee farming communities across Central America and around the world have been subjected to dramatic losses, the villagers of Loma Linda are seeing the benefits

of selling their coffee to an Oxfam-supported Fair Trade cooperative, Manos Campesinos. With the assistance of Manos, they have been able to maintain and even improve their standard of living.

In the conventional coffee trading system, small-scale producers receive only a tiny percentage of the final market value of their product. Fair Trade cooperatives like Manos Campesinos address this inequity by bypassing middlemen and selling directly to international buyers at a fair price. Farmers selling to the Fair Trade market are currently guaranteed a minimum of \$1.26 a pound, as compared to an average price on the conventional market of 48 cents a pound.

For Loma Linda, a relationship with Manos Campesinos has drastically altered daily life in the village.

In 1996, Loma Linda sold one container of coffee (37,000 pounds) to the conventional market in Guatemala. In the 2001-02 harvest, Loma Linda sold over three containers of coffee (over 113,000 pounds) to the Fair Trade market, and one container to the conventional market, earning over \$105,000 in a single harvest – record earnings for the community. With this extra income, farmers in Loma Linda and other villages that work with Manos Campesinos have purchased food and clothes for their family, sent their children to school, and purchased coffee processing equipment and other machinery to overhaul their operation.

Agricultural training and technical support have enabled farmers to increase their yield, and Manos Campesinos has equipped them for a wider and more lucrative market.

With the extra income from Fair Trade marketing, young people have seen the promise of growing coffee yields and no longer have to leave their villages to find work elsewhere. Families are no longer torn apart and demoralized.

“In these communities that export their coffee to the Fair Trade market,” says Jerónimo Bollen, President of Manos Campesinos, “there are people who have said to us recently ‘It’s amazing to see how migration has decreased almost to zero!’ The social impact of the Fair Trade market is incredible for us.”

Oxfam America is helping Manos Campesinos to strengthen members’ ability to export their coffee more efficiently and increase their visibility to coffee buyers. Manos offers workshops and seminars to outfit farmers with the necessary training and skills to negotiate

“...it’s amazing to see how migration has decreased almost to zero!’ The social impact of the Fair Trade market is incredible for us.”

– Jerónimo Bollen, President, Manos Campesinos

these contracts and streamline their production and exportation process.

Jerónimo and his team are currently assisting the farmers of Loma Linda to make a switch to organic coffee, replacing pesticides and chemical fertilizers with an all-natural production process that fetches a much higher price on the Fair Trade market.

Loma Linda’s only school is built at the entrance to the village. There are seven classrooms, overflowing with eager students, who four years earlier were working in the coffee fields. Despite the leaky roof and outdated teaching materials, the villagers see the school as a blessing. The school is an investment in their children, and a vision for the future of their community.

The Shuar and Achuar Peoples Unite to Discuss Oil Development

Narcisa Nuis Mashienta Jimbiti, 21 years old, is a leader of the Independent Federation of the Shuar People of Ecuador (FIPSE), in the southeast Ecuadorian rainforest lowlands. Last July she presided over the first organized assembly of women in the history of the organization. This assembly has been instrumental in building strength, credibility, and community support for the increased participation of women in Shuar communities.

The Shuar indigenous people have historically lived on ancestral lands, maintaining their own language and traditions. Today, they face significant cultural, environmental, and economic threats, due to the interests of transnational oil companies in Shuar territory.

Oxfam America is supporting FIPSE as they seek to organize their constituents and analyze the potential impacts of oil development on their lands. FIPSE leaders are seeking to develop a strategy to determine the appropriate path for community development, and the role that oil should play in this process.



THEA GELISPAN/OXFAM AMERICA

Narcissa, a representative of the Independent Federation of the Shuar People of Ecuador (FIPSE), is leading her organization in building alliances with the neighboring Achuar people to collectively respond to proposals for oil exploration on their lands.

The Shuar and Achuar are committed to defending their territories, cultures, and their right to self-determination, in the face of powerful forces of the global economy.

Oxfam America's 3rd CHANGE Initiative Training

On July 27th, 91 college students arrived in Boston, MA, to participate in the 3rd Oxfam CHANGE Initiative training. The CHANGE Initiative, a highly competitive, national program, trains students to become leaders actively engaged in social justice issues. This year's outstanding group of CHANGE leaders join past leaders in a growing movement of students committed to social justice.

For seven days, 91 students worked together with Oxfam staff and outside consultants to strengthen their leadership skills, and learn about Oxfam's campaigns, including Fair Trade coffee, the Fast for a World Harvest, Oil, Gas and Mining, and the Food and Farm campaign.

We at Oxfam look forward to all the wonderful work that these students will be involved in and extend our admiration and respect for their enthusiasm, compassion, and vision.

Congratulations and welcome!

Stockholm Environmental Conference

Oxfam America recently supported the Stockholm Environmental Conference, which addressed the ecological effects of Agent Orange in southeast Asia. From July 26-28, sixty-five delegates addressed the long-term consequences of toxic bombing during the Vietnam War on ecosystems, public health, and economic activity in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. A primary focus of the conference was the ecological impact and health risks posed by the dioxin Agent Orange, which still lingers in the soil and has devastated mangroves in the Mekong delta among the many damages it has imposed. The conference declaration calls for "a new large-scale effort" to resolve the consequences of the war "in a spirit of restorative justice," and appeals for increased assistance from the world community, particularly the United States.

Oxfam currently supports research in Vietnamese communities on the residual impact of dioxin and other agents.

Please visit www.nnn.se/vietnam/environ.htm for more information about the conference.

SAVE H₂OPI WATER

by Laura Inouye, U.S. Program Officer

The Black Mesa Trust seeks to raise awareness and mount public opposition to a massive coal slurry pipeline threatening the water resources of the Hopi people in Arizona.

The mesas rise up out of vast stretches of sand and rock baking in the hot Arizona sun. Few trees and no signs of water dot this arid landscape, home to 10,000 Hopi and 27,000 Navajo Indians living on Black Mesa, their ancient, sacred home.

Deep within Black Mesa lies the Navajo Aquifer, a large underground water source that, for centuries, has fed the surface springs and shallow wells that enable the Hopi and Navajo people to survive in the desert. Pristine water stored in the aquifer moves under Black

Since 1970, Peabody has withdrawn 40 billion gallons of water from the Navajo Aquifer – enough to sustain the entire Hopi tribe for more than 350 years.

Mesa and is discharged by artesian pressure into a network of gentle washes and springs.

The Aquifer is vital not only as the sole source of water for consumption and agriculture on Black Mesa, but also because many springs fed by the aquifer are held sacred in the spiritual and cul-

tural traditions of the Hopi.

In 1966 Peabody Coal Company (now Peabody Energy) sunk eight wells deep into the heart of the Navajo Aquifer to extract water for use in a coal slurry line, which supplies electrical power to 1.5 million homes in Las Vegas and Southern California.

Since 1970, Peabody has withdrawn 40 billion gallons of water from the Navajo Aquifer – enough to sustain the entire Hopi tribe for more than 350 years. Quantities of water are wasted by frequent slurry spills. Vernon Masayesva, Executive Director of Black Mesa Trust, reports that just two spills this year have wasted over 150,000 gallons of aquifer water that the Hopi people could have used. “On Hopi, not a drop of water, the lifeblood of the planet, is wasted,” said Masayesva.



Vernon Masayesva, founder of Black Mesa Trust and former Hopi tribal chairman, has put the U.S. Office of Surface Mining on notice, declaring “No longer will we tolerate unchallenged cultural imperialism that exploits our natural resources and destroys our sacred lands.”

20 years, some Hopi villages will be without water.

The Oxfam-supported Black Mesa Trust was founded to support Hopi efforts to protect their water. After Peabody filed an application last January to expand operations and increase its water usage by 32 percent, Black Mesa and their allies delivered more than 5,400 opposing comments to the Office of Surface Mining.

Despite the level of protest, the Office of Surface Mining reneged on its promise to hold public hearings on the new mining application, once again depriving Native peoples of a voice in controlling their environment.

Vernon Masayesva and Leonard Selestewa, a Hopi farmer, have appeared twice before the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, urging them to investigate Peabody’s exploitation of their resources and the failure of government officials to stop it.

Mr. Masayesva, Mr. Selestewa and others at Black Mesa Trust are still hopeful that the barrage of technical data, legal arguments, and community pressure will turn the tide in their favor.

Visit www.blackmesatrust.org to learn more about The Black Mesa Trust.

In 2000, The Natural Resources Defense Council reported aquifer water levels down by more than 100 feet in some wells. Hydrologists predict that within



Left: Since 1970, Peabody Energy’s coal mine on the Hopi reservation has withdrawn 40 billion gallons of water from the Navajo Aquifer – enough to sustain the entire Hopi tribe for more than 350 years.

WILLIAM CAMPBELL

WILLIAM CAMPBELL

THE VOICE OF LASHI

by Kevin T. Pepper

In southern China, the Yangtze River, Lancang (Mekong) River and Lashi Lake converge in one of many crucial watersheds which contribute their resources to the mighty Mekong River that flows through five other countries before emptying into the South China Sea.

Throughout the Lashi region live thousands of people, the majority of whom belong to the Naxi and Yi ethnic minority groups, who have traditionally made their living by fishing the waters of Lashi Lake, growing potatoes and other crops, or employed as government loggers.

In 1998, China launched a national forestry program and effectively banned logging in 18 provinces over

The government also declared Lashi Lake a nationally-protected wetland reserve, a measure taken to protect rare bird species that feed on the lake's abundant fish supply. Hundreds of fishermen had no alternative form of employment, and suffered a dramatic loss of income. In addition, the government built a dike on the lake to divert water to Lijiang Town, a popular tourist attraction known for its canals.

The expanded lake has flooded on numerous occasions, damaging crops and destroying livelihoods for hundreds of villagers.

Oxfam America is supporting financial assistance and environmental awareness training to hundreds of families in the Lashi District.

Microcredit projects, technical training, and capacity-building workshops are helping villagers become economically productive, while preserving and protecting a delicate ecosystem.

The program has also established a local Watershed Management Committee, created to address the range of interests represented in the watershed region. Members of the committee attended a workshop on local environmental

concerns that contribute to widespread poverty. Issues ranged from massive deforestation and harmful agricultural techniques to the need for energy sources other than wood.

Confronting a severe food shortage, Oxfam has funded microcredit loans for villagers to purchase seeds and livestock, and helped farmers with technical skills and the successful cultivation of new crops. The government is encouraging families to plant trees, such as Sichuan pepper in the highlands and cherries in the lowlands, to earn extra income and prevent soil erosion.

Most recently, Oxfam helped clear a 10-mile road, connecting a Yi village high in the mountains to larger villages in the lowlands. Due to their remote geographic location, the villagers had been isolated from health care, educational opportunities, and a marketplace to sell their crops. They are now able to transport their potatoes to market and have access to the economic and political center of their region.

When the road was finished, Yi and Naxi came together to celebrate their new relationship, and invited various members of the village, township, and county government to join in their ceremony. They cut a ribbon upon completion of the road, their first joint success in reconciling previously competing interests, and the beginning of what promises to be a mutually beneficial relationship.



KATE LAZARUS/OXFAM AMERICA

Yi women gather at an Oxfam America-supported monthly microcredit meeting in Lashi Village, Yunnan, China. Microcredit loans provide people with money to buy improved potato seeds and livestock and help villagers open small shops to increase their income.

12 years – a good environmental practice with severe social and economic implications. For the thousands of people who depended on the forests for employment, fuel wood, and other vital resources, the ban was debilitating. The government has provided a minimal grain subsidy for thousands of villagers who have very little food and no means of income, but no long-term assistance plan is on the table.



PEDRO GUZMÁN/OXFAM

“If a few countries were less greedy, the people at the bottom would have a lot more. We can do our bit by pressuring politicians to change this insanity, and by buying Fair Trade coffee.”

– Chris Martin, UK rock band, *Coldplay*

Help end the coffee crisis. Please look for the Fair Trade logo when you purchase coffee.



TAKE STOCK OF YOUR GIVING!

Gifts to Oxfam America of stocks, bonds, or mutual funds that have appreciated in value since their purchase may be especially attractive to you under current tax laws. You can receive a charitable income tax deduction for the full fair market value of the asset, deductible up to 30 percent of your Adjusted Gross Income. You will also avoid any capital gains tax that would otherwise be due with the sale or transfer of the asset. And most important, making the transfer is simple. Oxfam America will provide complete instructions to make this process easy for you and your broker.

Special Notice: The Oxfam America brokerage account numbers have changed for 2002. Please contact Heather Glista at 617-728-2423 for our current stock giving instructions and account information.

Join Oxfam America's Online eCommunity

Stay informed about Oxfam America's work. Speak out and make a difference. Receive monthly email alerts about our work around the world. Help rally support for our policy campaigns and make an immediate impact.

Sign up by visiting Oxfam America's homepage at www.oxfamamerica.org.



26 WEST STREET
BOSTON, MA 02111-1206

insert
indicia
here