



# *transformations in leadership*

The Journal of the East-West Center Leadership Certificate Program

Edited by Carl Polley and Wow Krittiyawadee Pongpanich  
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THE EAST-WEST CENTER is an education and research organization established by the United States Congress in 1960 to strengthen relations and understanding among the peoples and nations of Asia, the Pacific and the United States. The Center contributes to a peaceful, prosperous and just Asia Pacific community by serving as a vigorous hub for cooperative research, education and dialogue on critical issues of common concern to the Asia Pacific region and the United States. Funding for the Center comes from the United States government, with additional support provided by private agencies, individuals, foundations, corporations and the governments of the region.

THE EAST-WEST CENTER LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATE PROGRAM is a two-year, interdisciplinary program which enhances the East-West Center experience by bringing together student fellows to learn how to lead and navigate change as engaged citizens in the Asia Pacific region. It helps East-West Center students achieve the following goals:

- Learn about the servant leadership model and civic engagement and apply this knowledge through action plans, community service work and internships.
- Develop in-depth knowledge of historical leaders, classical leadership theories and diverse models of indigenous leadership in the Asia Pacific through international film and literature.
- Develop personal leadership skills and capacity by designing case studies and profiles of contemporary leaders in the Asia Pacific.
- Meet and interact with local leaders, including through the Asia Pacific Leadership Program's Distinguished Leaders Lecture Series.
- Integrate leadership studies into the personal and professional lives of students, including their educational goals at the East-West Center, as engaged citizens and agents of change in the Asia Pacific region.

# ***transformations*** in leadership

Spring 2007

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# A Note from the Editors

by Wow Krittiyawadee Pongpanich

This journal is a compilation of thoughts, ideas and inspirations that have resulted from our shared experience in the East-West Center's Leadership Certificate Program. Over the past four semesters, from Fall 2005 to Spring 2007, students from more than 14 different countries have come together to better understand the true meaning of leadership.

In the first year of our Leadership Certificate, we studied concepts of “servant leadership” and put theory into action by volunteering and interning with various organizations on Oahu that matched our personal and professional interests. In addition to gaining practical work experience, we engaged in deep self-reflection to recognize who our role models are and how they have helped to shape our values and aspirations. We have dedicated a section of this journal titled “Profiles in Leadership” to share with you stories and profiles of these exceptional role models and leaders. Among the profiled leaders, two are Nobel Peace Prize Laureates—Kenyan environmental activist Wangari Maathai (awarded in 2004) and Bangladeshi micro-credit pioneer Muhammad Yunus (awarded in 2006). Others who inspired us include MA‘O Farms directors Gary and Kukui Maunakea-Forth, social entrepreneur Olin Lagon, and Burmese-American Director of the Pacific Gateway Center Tin Myaing Thein. In the second year of our Certificate, we read great works of theory and literature and learned about exemplary world leaders through documentaries and films.

*Leadership is a lifelong journey, and constant within the process are the personal transformations that one goes through.*

Over the course of these two years, we have learned more about our classmates' passions and interests, which range from environmental and gender issues to human rights, politics, law, education, public health and economic development. Our inter-disciplinary approach towards the concept of leadership resulted in an insightful and dynamic educational experience. Through class presentations and discussions, we were exposed to social issues from many parts of the world. In the section on “Contemporary Leadership Issues” we share with you our genuine concern for and knowledge of these various topics.

Leadership is a lifelong journey, and constant within the process are the personal transformations that one goes through. Creating change requires endurance and exceptional will power to overcome obstacles that stand in the way. Through our studies, we have seen numerous examples of miraculous changes that were a result of one ordinary person who decided to stand up for their beliefs. We learned that, as leaders and followers, we are morally obligated to speak out and stand up for what we strongly believe. This journal reflects only a fraction of our personal dialogue that has contributed to our self-growth within our time in the Leadership Program. We hope that our work inspires you as much as it has inspired us, and we invite you to join us in taking action and making a positive transformation for yourself and those around you.

# Introduction

by Stuart H. Coleman

Leadership is an elusive concept, hard to describe and even more difficult to define. Yet when we see it in action, we can clearly sense its transforming effect on both leaders and followers. Gandhi once wrote, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” By devoting his entire life to the cause of India’s freedom, the shy and mild-mannered lawyer changed his life and the course of history. He began by practicing what he preached, and his authentic leadership transformed the world.

Although Gandhi started out as a stiff and ineffective barrister, he later shed his British clothing and his constricted way of thinking as a colonial subject. He embraced his cultural heritage and the spiritual practice of nonviolent resistance, which began with his own personal change and ended with the complete cultural and political transformation of his people. The peaceful example of his satyagraha movement inspired Martin Luther King’s campaign for civil rights in the American South, Aung San Suu Kyi’s democratic resistance in Myanmar and Nelson Mandela’s anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

In his book *Transforming Leadership*, James M. Burns writes, “Leaders take the initiative in mobilizing people for participation in the process of change, encouraging a sense of collective identity and collective efficacy, which in turn brings stronger feelings of self-worth and self-efficacy...By pursuing transformational change, people can transform themselves. The word for this process is empowerment. Instead of exercising power over people, transforming leaders champion and inspire people.” Burns goes on to say that political despots like Hitler, Stalin and Mao were mere power-holders who ruled through fear and violence, rather than inspiring their followers toward positive change.

In the Leadership Certificate Program, we have embraced the concept of transformational leadership, and the students have put it into practice in their papers, class presentations, service-learning projects and internships. One essay in this collection profiles the Bangladeshi social entrepreneur Muhammad Yunus, whom the author interviewed just days after his winning the Nobel Peace Prize! Yunus has helped to transform international development by empowering the poor through micro-loans from his Grameen Bank. Another essay profiles fellow Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan environmental leader who created the Green Belt movement to plant trees in Africa. She has not only helped the environment but empowered women politically.

Another fundamental principle of the Leadership Program has been the concept of service learning, which seeks to integrate studies in the classroom with volunteer work in the community. This form of experiential learning emphasizes reciprocity and reflection. During their courses, students set up internships with local non-profits, worked with them to address societal problems, came up with creative solutions, and then reflected on their experiences. The students invested a great deal of time and commitment into organizations like College Connections Hawaii, Girl Fest Hawaii, Honolulu Habitat for Humanity, the Hawaii State Legislature Public Access Room, Kokua Kalihi Valley, MA’O Farms, Pacific Gateway Center, the United Nations Association and the Waikiki Aquarium, to name a few. One essay in this issue describes the internship that three students did at MA’O Farms, where they worked with community leaders Gary and Kukui Maunakea-Forth in Wai’anae, helping troubled teens transform themselves into young leaders. Students also profiled other inspiring local leaders like Olin Lagon and Tin Myaing Thein.

Thanks to a grant from the Hawaii and Pacific Islands Campus Compact, which promotes service learning, we are publishing this inaugural issue of our journal and holding our first symposium. Although everyone helped, I want to commend the editors Carl Polley and Wow Pongpanich for doing such a good job in publishing this issue. I would also like to recognize Krishna Subba and Vinh Nguyen for their work in putting together the Spring Leadership Symposium, which explores contemporary issues facing society and recognizes the accomplishments of the students and their community partners.

As the Coordinator of the Program, I have greatly enjoyed getting to know all of the Leadership Certificate students and seeing them evolve into authentic leaders. As Gandhi once wrote, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” I can honestly say that I have been touched and transformed by their dedication to helping others, working for social justice and promoting environmental sustainability. I look forward to seeing the changes they will bring about in the world.

Stuart H. Coleman  
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# Table of Contents

<b>Growing Organic Leaders Through Youth Empowerment MA‘O Farms and a Vision for the Future of Wai‘anae</b> by Bryan R. Bushley	1
<b>Nobel Laureate, Professor Muhammad Yunus Micro-Credit Pioneer</b> by Mohammad Shahinur Rahman	7
<b>Wangari Maathai A Transformational Leader</b> by Elizabeth “Cedar” Louis	10
<b>Profiling Olin Lagon</b> by Krishna Subba	13
<b>Tin Myaing Thein And Her Leadership</b> by Sarabibi “Sara” Thuzarwin Mayet	15
<b>The University of Hawaii A Center for Sustainability</b> by R. Don Peel	17
<b>White Man’s Burden No More A Call for a Changed Mentality in International Aid</b> by 2nd Lieutenant Travis Gramkowski, USAF	20
<b>Coral Reefs What They Can Teach Us About Leadership</b> by Kelvin D. Gorospe	23
<b>Obstacles to Participation The Grassroots Politics of Planning</b> by Bunnarith Meng	26

<b>Camel Jockeying and Child Trafficking The Need for Public Empowerment</b>	29
by Asma Bashir	
<b>Human Trafficking In the Globalization Process</b>	32
by Ei Kalya Moore	
<b>Poverty in Developing Countries And Farm Subsidies in Industrialized Countries</b>	35
by Hari Har Pant	
<b>Dengue Control in the Western Pacific Region Through Service Learning and Leadership</b>	38
by James Kelley	
<b>Slow Food A Servant Leadership Approach to Healthier Communities</b>	42
by Carl Polley	
<b>Disadvantaged Youth in Indonesia Empowerment Through Alternative Education</b>	45
by Dian Mitrayani	
<b>Alternative Dispute Resolution and Judicial Reform Bangladesh as a Case Study</b>	48
by Shinichi Nozaki	

# Growing Organic Leaders Through Youth Empowerment MA'O Farms and a Vision for the Future of Wai'anae

by Bryan R. Bushley

In the spring of 2006, I interned at the *Mala'Ai'Opio* Community Food Security Initiative (MA'O) – which means “youth food garden” in Hawaiian – a combination of organic farm, youth empowerment project, community economic development organization and food security initiative. For this project, I partnered with three other students from the University of Hawaii: Shahinur Rahman, Cedar Louis and Yurika Mori. Our primary objective was to assist MA'O Farms with documenting stories about the youth involved in the farm in order to enhance public awareness, fundraising and sales through the production of a small booklet and design of a poster for use in advertising at farmers markets. Here, I would like to share the rationale and inspiration for this important initiative, explain how our project at MA'O was conceived and evolved, and provide some reflections on what I have learned about leadership in the process.

Working with MA'O has rewarded me in immeasurable ways, far beyond my initial expectations. It provided me with opportunities both to learn about and become intimately involved in an innovative community development and youth leadership program and to be inspired by the dynamic leadership that MA'O directors Gary and Kukui Maunakea-Forth demonstrate in their community. Most importantly, Gary and Kukui instill this leadership in the youth who work with them on the farm. In fact, MA'O's true strength derives from its focus on youth empowerment, which has created a ripple effect in the community, promoting an awareness of a need for broader self-sufficiency and local empowerment. Although Gary and Kukui serve as the inspiration, the youth are the engine that drive MA'O's vision for a healthier, more cohesive and more secure community.

## Food Insecurity and Social Issues in Wai'anae

Wai'anae, a town in West Oahu, is a community in dire need of initiatives to promote youth empowerment, youth employment and food security. Among the least developed areas on the island of Oahu, it remains one of the more affordable locations for Native Hawaiian communities to live, but only in a relative sense. Increasing residential development and a corresponding scarcity of agricultural land threaten the ability of these resi-

dents to enjoy a reasonable standard of living and pursue a traditional 'aina-based (land-based) lifestyle.

According to the 2000 United States Census, nearly half of the greater Wai'anae community, which has one of the state's highest proportions of Native Hawaiian residents (40%), lives in poverty. Aside from this economic pressure, the community is rife with entrenched social problems such as rampant drug use (especially crystal methamphetamine or “ice”), poor nutrition, homelessness, obesity and domestic violence. There are relatively few opportunities for employment or post-high-school education, although youth make up close to half of the area's population (about 45% are under 25 years of age), and school dropout and illiteracy rates are among the highest in the state of Hawaii.

The lack of food security is another critical problem. In fact, about 33% of Wai'anae's residents suffer from chronic food insecurity (the highest rate among Hawaiian communities and over 50% above the state average), with less than 25% receiving any food stamp benefits. Such food insecurity has been linked with higher rates of physical and mental health, obesity, diabetes and arthritis.

## The Mala'Ai'Opio Community Food Security Initiative

### *Origins and History*

The *Mala'Ai'Opio* Food Security Initiative (MA'O) has provided a bright ray of hope in the Wai'anae community. Its story began in 2001 when Gary Maunakea-Forth and his wife Kukui – who is from an established Nanakuli family – decided to form an organization to achieve two fundamental community goals: (i) to reverse social decline by reclaiming community identity through traditional Hawaiian agricultural practices; and (ii) to provide at-risk Wai'anae youth with training in entrepreneurial and leadership skills. A related third goal was to serve the local community by providing them with nutritious food at reasonable prices. With support from the Wai'anae Community Re-Development Corporation, Gary and Kukui began the *Mala'Ai'Opio* Community Food Security Initiative in October 2001.

## Mission, Vision & Activities

The mission of MA‘O is to:

*develop a comprehensive and living local food system, to fight hunger, improve nutrition, strengthen local food security, and empower low-income families to move towards self-sufficiency.*

Through what I call an ‘*aina-based community development*’ (‘ABCD’) approach, MA‘O aims to increase food security by reviving traditional Hawaiian agricultural practices and supporting organic farming efforts in the local community. Essentially, ‘ABCD’ employs three key principles for community economic development: (i) land as a source of economic opportunity; (ii) local knowledge as a foundation for innovative and locally appropriate initiatives; and (iii) culture as a resource for stabilizing and revitalizing local economies.

MA‘O has an inspiring vision:

*a community living by values and customs firmly embedded in the rural landscape, the coastal shore land, the ocean waters, the forested mountains, the diversity of cultures, the warmth of family and friends, and the Wai‘anae traditions of independence, country living and aloha.*

They strive to realize this vision through the following types of activities and outcomes:

- Creation of new jobs, access to training, advancement and ownership options
- Promotion of community-based small businesses in value-added food production
- Participation of children, youth and families in activities that encourage healthy lifestyles and communities
- Partnerships with higher education and industry to benefit the entire community
- Sale of healthy, organic fruits and vegetables that support youth opportunities
- A community food system to support an environment of love, respect and work

MA‘O is divided into two phases with three main goals: (i) expansion of organic agriculture; (ii) youth entrepreneurship and leadership development; and (iii) promotion of community health and food security. Phase I, which has already been completed, involved an integrated multi-pronged approach including:

*MA‘O Youth Leadership Training* – A paid work experience internship in organic farming production and business development for low-income out-of-school youth.

*MA‘O Organic Farm* – A five-acre farm co-managed by youth to produce and sell organic fruits and vegetables and reinforce youth training, empowerment and ownership. Deliveries are made to stores and restaurants in the community, and in Honolulu.

*Local Community Farmers Markets* – Five venues in Wai‘anae and Honolulu where youth sell organic produce and educate the community about nutrition and food preparation.

*Aloha ‘Aina Café and Natural Foods* – A gathering place for sharing healthy prepared food (from the farm and other sources) and nutritional information with the community.

*Wai‘anae Organic Agricultural Center* – A partnership with Leeward Community College to expand local organic agriculture through support and training as well as creation of a community-based agricultural education and processing center.

Youth leader Kanoe Burgess checks off another item on a delivery order.

Photo by Elizabeth “Cedar” Louis





*'Ai Pohaku Workshop* – A program to nurture youth and strengthen families through traditional Hawaiian practices centered around the culture, traditions and values surrounding the kalo (taro) plant.

Phase II of MA'O's activities, called "*'Aina Pulapula: Growing New Leaders*," builds upon the Phase I activities described above to expand organic food production and increase educational outreach through school-based programs conducted by the youth currently working with MA'O Farms. As of 2006, MA'O was in transition from Phase I to Phase II.

The glue that makes MA'O stick is its emphasis on combining youth leadership training with economic development in order to prepare future leaders for Wai'anae who will spread awareness to the broader



MA'O Co-founder Gary Maunakea-Forth holds regular meetings with youth at the farm.

Photo courtesy of MA'O Farms

community. This focus on youth leadership and empowerment, combined with MA'O's entrepreneurial bent, creates the potential for widespread impacts on social and economic development in Wai'anae. MA'O also makes sense from a business perspective, since the market for organic produce in Hawaii is underdeveloped, with only a few organic farms on Oahu. Indeed, up to 80% of all organic produce consumed in Hawaii is imported from the continental United States.

## Profile of MA'O's Leaders

Gary and Kukui Maunakea-Forth are a dynamic duo with a vision of social and economic renewal for Wai'anae. They want to see the people get "back to the land" and strongly believe that the local youth should be the leaders of this movement. Gary is an energetic, animated fellow, a 40 year old grandfather, and a father figure to many of MA'O's youth. Born in New Zealand, he came to Hawaii in the 1980s with a passion for playing rugby and drinking beer. After earning a degree in political science at the University of Hawaii, he worked several jobs in the economic development arena before he and Kukui envisioned MA'O farms. He says that there was an obvious need for such a project and they scraped together the resources to get something going, leasing land from a local church, getting some initial grant money, and mobilizing the community's human capital, including *kupuna* William Aila Sr., a local farmer and long-time Wai'anae resident.

Gary's experience in economic development and his acute business acumen has served as a real asset to MA'O's growth, helping them secure and manage funds effectively. He feels that one of the most important aspects of MA'O's work is transferring entrepreneurial skills to the youth by giving them a stake in the running and promotion of the business. For instance, Kanoe Burgess, among the first batch of youth to be involved in the leadership training program and to work on the farm, was sent to present at a prestigious nationwide nonprofit business plan competition at Yale University, where MA'O won second prize.

Kukui is more soft-spoken, a woman of few words with a calm demeanor who is constantly at the books in the office, whether checking over the finances or preparing a new grant proposal. However, Gary admits she is really the one who keeps the kids in line, with firm reminders of their responsibilities, and she deals with many issues in the day-to-day running of the farm.



MA'O Co-founder Gary Maunakea-Forth driving two youth leaders into the field for work.

Photo courtesy of MA'O Farms

## Our Project

### *Conception*

In 2006, during my internship, MA'O was undergoing a period of significant transition. In their fifth year, they were facing some of the challenges that young non-profits typically face, including fundraising issues and how to scale up their impact. One of the biggest needs that MA'O perceived was to document the impact they were having on youth in a qualitative way. They felt that such information would be used in a variety of ways to promote their activities and business. Thus, they decided that they would like us to tell the story of the youth that were currently working at the farm and share the perspectives of some key community members and MA'O graduates.

Gary and Kukui's rationale for the project was to develop a means for sharing the stories of their youth with past, present and potential future donors. They also wanted to develop a marketing tool to help attract customers at farmers markets and tell the story of the work and potential of MA'O and the Wai'anae community. They wanted to really capture the life stories of the youth and their experience at the farm in order to show the true impact of MA'O on both youth and organic agriculture. With these objectives in mind, the specific products we agreed upon for our project were: (i) creating of a booklet with stories of the youth; (ii) design of a poster showing what MA'O grows, with pictures of both the youth working at the farm and the vegetables they produce; and

(iii) development of website content to enhance their internet presence with the stories of the youth. We agreed that the content of the website and the profiles in the booklet would be identical, while the poster design would also be used as a cover for the booklet.

Gary and Kukui felt that these materials would allow them to demonstrate the impact of MA'O farms on the youth and their community in a storytelling format.

### *Methodology and Project Implementation*

During our first visit to MA'O, we met with Gary and Kukui as well as Manny, one of the four full-time youth staff, who in 2006 held the positions of Youth Mentor and Assistant Farm Manager. We were also introduced to some of the other youth working at the farm. All were busy preparing for a delivery and for the Saturday farmers market at Kapiolani Community College.

During this first meeting, we agreed that, for the first few weeks, we would spend our time working and talking with the youth in order to build a good rapport with them while gaining a better sense of their involvement and responsibilities at MA'O. Thus, for about a month, we visited MA'O weekly, working alongside the youth and just "talking story" with them. During these first few visits, we also brought some food to share to help break the ice. These informal interactions laid a crucial foundation for our work. They helped build rapport with the youth, making a big difference in how comfortable they felt around us and, thus, how willing they were to share their personal stories and views.

After a month of working and interacting with the youth informally, we began the interviews, conducting two or three each week and transcribing them as we went. This was very rewarding, as we learned more about the personal histories of each of these remarkable youth and about their experiences and perspectives on MA'O. We all agreed that Manny, one of the senior youth leaders, was a good starting point and contact for our interviews. He could recall how the farm had developed and knew most of the people who had worked with MA'O in the past. We decided to conduct our interviews at the farm, at the MA'O Aloha 'Aina Café, and at the weekly farmers markets.

### *Feedback from and Contribution to MA'O*

Although Gary and Kukui were often very busy during our visits to the farm, they did take time to give us some im-



portant feedback about our work. Overall, they seemed very satisfied with our progress and work. As the youth became increasingly comfortable having us around, they spoke more and more freely about their lives, their views and their dreams. Aside from the actual outcomes from our project, they expressed that they were very pleased with our “friendliness, modesty and willingness to share personal stories, lives, food,” sharing that, “These are things we place considerable value on – these are very simple values that we have not generally seen in UH interns and we are very happy to be working together.” Overall, we developed a very strong working relationship with Gary, Kukui and the youth, as expressed in the following quote from Kukui, which she wrote to us following one of our weekly visits to MA’O Farms:



MA’O youth working in the taro patch.

Photo courtesy of MA’O Farms

*Aloha kakou... I wanted to mention to you that in the 1960's a group of students from UH East-West Center stayed with my grandmother to do a social/anthropological narrative of the people of Nanakuli. One of the students, a woman named Kajorn, fell in love with my family and my family with her. She sort of adopted my mother who already had three children; she would come and baby-sit or just visit with the family. When I was born, she became my godmother and I think often of her even though I've not seen her since my high school graduation. The point of the story sort of relates to the feeling of mutual respect and sharing that I sense from you folks and I really wanted to thank you for that. It seems that true learning is taking place between us and good friendships are taking root.*

After completing some of the narratives, we shared them with the youth and with Gary and Kukui. They told us what they liked and didn't like and asked us to change a few things but, overall, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The following week, Gary shared that he had read a couple of them at one of MA’O’s board meetings and that some of the members were in tears, especially after hearing the story of Ted, one of the most recent youth to join the farm. Of course, we were thrilled to have such a positive response to our efforts, but I almost wish

that Gary and Kukui had given us some more constructive criticism about our work.

At first, it was difficult to envision how our specific project could contribute to MA’O’s overall mission. However, MA’O felt that we made a valuable contribution to their work. They said that, with the hectic pace of their day-to-day operations and their focus on meeting their triple bottom line (financial sustainability, social empowerment through education of youth and community members and ecological sustainability through the spread of organic farming), they had little time for their own self-evaluations. They therefore really appreciated our role in bringing outsider’s perspective. According to Gary and Kukui: “This project fulfills a need we have discussed many times but have never been able to implement, and it needed experience and commitment to be done well – we are happy that this project is meeting our goals.”

### Reflections and Leadership Lessons

My primary goal for the internship was to help support and learn more about a local grassroots initiative for community economic development and empowerment. I wanted to experience first-hand a project that was focusing on mobilizing local community assets, especially youth, to promote broad-based community development. I

was also curious about the lives of the youth and how their work at MA'O was affecting them.

In addition to learning more about innovative strategies for promoting youth leadership and community food security while working with MA'O, I gained a broader understanding of the challenges faced by the community and youth with respect to health and economic opportunity. At the same time, my participation in this project gave me faith in the power of local-level initiatives to make big changes, and I am excited to share their story. This experience opened my eyes to how a small group of dedicated individuals can have a tremendous impact and ripple effect on their surrounding community. It was not without challenges, but it gave me an appreciation for the power of servant leadership to transform both individuals



Manny Miles, MA'O Farms Youth Mentor and Assistant Farm Manager, manages sales at one of their weekly farmers markets.

Photo courtesy of MA'O Farms

and organizations and to change communities, nations and the world in the process.

There are many leadership lessons that can be drawn from our experience with MA'O. First, looking at MA'O as an organization, it is easy to see how Gary and Kukui's vision and dynamic leadership style has been instrumental in their success. Their clear, positive vision of a prosperous future for Wai'anae with active engagement by youth, along with their extensive research on the feasibility and need for a youth-run organic farm as the center of a broad community food security initiative, have helped them to build an effective organization. They first identified a need and clear objectives and then went about assessing and mobilizing all of the necessary assets to make them happen.

Aside from the leadership training, Gary maintains high expectations of the youth, and this has really driven them

to do their best and take on increasing responsibilities. Some of the youth felt that Gary was very strict with them but, for the most part, they appreciated his honesty and forthrightness even during difficult and conflicting situations. I could also see differences in leadership styles and capacities among the youth. Some were clearly more independent than others and were well respected by Gary, Kukui and the other youth. However, the overall environment was one of collaboration, where people seemed eager to help one another and share responsibilities more or less evenly.

An essential part of leadership is the ability to see the bigger picture, and this is something that MA'O has done well and instilled in the youth. However, effective leadership also requires an acute awareness of what is right under your nose: local assets, vulnerabilities and challenges; the mundane day-to-day details of running an effective organization; the importance of connection and commitment to the immediate community; the need for local partnerships; and the crucial importance of sharing a positive vision for the future. All of these factors blend together in an effective leader and often take years of practice to perfect.

Of course, a natural ability for inspiring others – what I call contagious leadership – is also important, as is the ability to foster a shared sense of identity, pride and responsibility within a community. These are all things that Gary and Kukui have done well within both the smaller MA'O community and the broader Wai'anae community.

Probably the most exciting thing about working with MA'O (aside from the free organic greens!) was being able to see how the youth were being transformed into potential future leaders of Wai'anae. I am especially impressed by how MA'O seems to have contributed to their education as world citizens, promoting an expanded awareness of their community in Wai'anae and its relationship to the outside world. This awareness, and the skills that MA'O is building in the youth – especially their growing sense of how they might help to better their own community – has helped them to embrace MA'O's vision for a more vibrant, sustainable future. Many of the youth admitted that, before coming to MA'O, they didn't see any future in Wai'anae and had often thought about leaving the community. But after working on the farm and participating in the leadership training, they became committed to forging a better future with more opportunities for both themselves and their community.



# Nobel Laureate, Professor Muhammad Yunus

## Micro-Credit Pioneer

by Mohammad Shahinur Rahman

The opening paragraph of Muhammad Yunus's autobiography *Banker to the Poor* starts with the following note:

*My experience working in the Grameen Bank has given me faith; an unshakeable faith in the creativity of human beings. It leads me to believe that humans are not born to suffer the misery of hunger and poverty. They suffer now as they did in the past because we turn our heads away from this issue.<sup>1</sup>*

This prologue accurately portrays Yunus's vision and philosophy of working with the poor.

Shortly after he was awarded the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize, I had the fortunate opportunity to engage in a phone interview with Professor Yunus. In this paper, I will share this insightful conversation with you along with the story of his struggle to start Grameen Bank and to build it into a successful micro-credit organization.

### Background

Professor Muhammad Yunus was born on June 29, 1940 in Chittagong, Bangladesh, as the third child of nine surviving children. In 1965, he received a Fulbright Scholarship and studied for a PhD from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. He became an assistant professor of economics at Middle Tennessee State University and eventually returned to Bangladesh in 1972 to become a member of the national Planning Commission.<sup>2</sup> He eventually resigned to become Department Chair of the Economics Department at Chittagong University, Bangladesh.

It all started when Yunus encountered Ms. Sufia Begum, a 21-year-old woman from Jobra village who, desperate to support herself, had borrowed about 25 cents from moneylenders and was paying an exorbitant interest rate of 10 percent a day. Yunus found 42 people in Jobra who were in a similar poverty trap, and initially lent them small amounts of money at reasonable rates. He lent a total of \$27, or 62 cents per borrower. To his pleasant surprise, all borrowers repaid their loans, convincing him that this method of micro-credit could be replicated across Bangladesh. This event marked the beginning of his journey toward huge success in the micro-credit arena.

After researching how other loan programs worked, Yunus decided to do "exactly the opposite" of traditional banks by setting up a credit program to give loans to the poor without collateral. In 1979, he took a two-year leave of absence from teaching to officially launch the Grameen Bank Project. In 1983, Grameen Bank obtained formal approval from the government to operate as a fully-fledged private bank.

Grameen's model of micro-credit was so successful in Bangladesh that it was replicated in other parts of the world. In 1985 it was implemented in the US, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and named the Good Faith Fund with the support of then-governor Bill Clinton. In 1987, a Grameen pilot program was established in Malaysia. Three other programs were launched in the Philippines, followed by programs in India, Nepal, Vietnam, China, Latin America and Africa.

Muhammad Yunus was awarded the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize along with Grameen Bank for "their efforts to create economic and social development from below." Professor Yunus and the Grameen Bank have also received numerous other national and international awards.

In an interview with *AsiaSource*, Professor Yunus talked about the difference between Grameen's model of micro-credit and other forms of money-lending:

*First, it's addressed to the poor. It doesn't rely on collateral, because collateral is the thing which brings a wall between financial institutions and poor people. It is something that is designed to be friendly to poor people, particularly poor women. Its basic principle is that people should not come to the bank. The bank should go to the people. So it makes it enormously easy for women to do business with someone in the home, rather than going to the office. The office is a threatening institution for a poor person to hang around and try to find a place to get connected. Also, the repayments are designed in such a way that they are tiny installments. You can pay back your loan over a long period. So, all of this together is micro-credit. Small loans for incoming-generating activity, addressed to the poorest, without collateral.<sup>3</sup>*

This conversation states the simple but well articulated working methods of Grameen Bank.

## An Interview with Dr. Muhammad Yunus

As mentioned earlier, I had the opportunity to conduct a telephone interview with Professor Muhammad Yunus. Despite his busy schedule, he was kind enough to give me a few minutes to talk with him. He was very eloquent and candid during our interview.

My first question to Professor Yunus was how he evaluated the success of Grameen Bank. In response to my question Yunus replied:

*The success is immense. When we started giving out tiny loans under a system which later became known as the Grameen Bank, we never imagined that one day we would be reaching hundreds of thousands, let alone five million, borrowers. There are now more than two dozen organizations within the Grameen family of enterprises. These include the replication and research activities of Grameen Trust, handloom enterprises of Grameen Uddog and fisheries pond management by Grameen Motsho, or the Fisheries Foundation.*

I asked him to talk about the difficulties during the early days. He faced considerable opposition from bankers and economists who argued that micro-credit could not foster true economic growth. Conservative religious groups in the country also opposed Grameen because its programs were mainly aimed at empowering women to improve their quality of life.

*The journey was not really easy. Frankly speaking, the path was very zigzag in the sense that we started from nowhere. By nowhere I mean, we started with very limited resources, in regards of both financial and human resources. As a result, it took a while to establish the foundation of Grameen Bank.*

He took many personal risks to set up Grameen and gave up a comfortable job as a professor at a public university.

*I could easily live a trouble free life with my family and friends. But I didn't choose the easy path of life. Rather, the path I have chosen was very uncertain. However, as you can see, in the long run, my decision was right. I have chosen the path for the well-being of people, for the happiness of people, so I am very happy when I see my borrowers are doing something positive in their life.*

When asked about the importance of leadership skills for the success of Grameen, Yunus replied:

*We also helped to nourish grass-root level leadership by empowering poor people, by giving them a position in our Boards of Directors. Our training was simple, 'to nourish leadership from the bottom-up.' First we trained our employees. We trained them how to deal with uneducated people. Then our employees conveyed these skills to the borrowers by teaching them how to utilize the funds. Eventually, we have rewarded outstanding borrowers by asking them to join as a director. This kind of initiative has a huge effect in the community. These grass-root level borrowers, who are working as decision-makers in Grameen by virtue of their diligence, are role models in their community.*

Lastly, I asked him if he had any suggestions or for the next generation of leaders who wanted to work in the micro-credit or poverty alleviation arena. He replied:

*There is not a single magic bullet for success. It is very easy to be carried away. The young generation should be very committed and goal-oriented to face the different pressures of globalization and economic ups and downs. They will have to navigate their organization like a motivated sailor towards the destinations of success. They will have to have the ability to adjust with failures and uncertainties. Young leaders should listen first, then try to respond to the need. They will have to have values which are rooted in their culture and history. They will have to have the tenacity to digest various criticisms to be successful in the long run.*

## Muhammad Yunus as a Leader

There is no doubt that professor Yunus is one of the greatest leaders in the history of micro-credit. As Kouzes and Posner argue in their book *The Leadership Challenge*, leaders inspire a vision in their followers.<sup>4</sup> This is a distinguishing trait of Muhammad Yunus, who states in *Bankers to the Poor* that,

*Poverty is not created by the poor. It is created by the structures of the society and policies pursued by society. Change the structure as we are doing in Bangladesh through Grameen Bank, and you will see the poor change their lives. Our experience shows that, given the support or financial capital, however small, the poor are capable of bringing about an incredible change in their lives.*

Yunus' vision is very simple: to help people lift themselves out of the downward spiral of poverty. He has applied the practices of exemplary leadership as discussed in Kouzes and Posner's book *Leadership* in a systematic way. His pioneering endeavor to help people to overcome socio-economic crises is a unique model that shows a way out of poverty for millions of people not only in Bangladesh but also all over the world. He has invented a path toward self-sufficiency through the Grameen Bank. His belief in self-

reliance resonated with the the poor in rural and urban Bangladesh and in other areas of the world. In doing so, Yunus has set an example that aligns actions with shared values.

Professor Yunus inspired rural women to stand up to a patriarchal society by motivating them to use their funds in ways that enable them to achieve better futures. Prior to this, rural women were helpless and vulnerable to natural disasters and oppression. Now, borrowers work as a group to utilize their money in the best possible way for both individual and collective gain.

Yunus surely challenged the process of traditional banking. He also challenged international donor agencies by establishing and running Grameen Bank without any foreign grants from the organizations like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In a traditional banking system, a borrower must have a certain amount of collateral to be eligible for a loan. However, Yunus challenged this system of banking and sanctioned loans to people in poverty who had nothing for collateral. He was overwhelmingly successful with this venture. The recovery rate for Grameen loans is more than 98%, which is an astounding record in the banking sector. He took huge risks by ignoring foreign aid and distributing local resources among the poor. It was a challenge to sanction loans to rural women, most of whom were illiterate. However, these borrowers were smart enough to help Yunus to capitalize his dream towards the eradication of poverty.

The biggest challenge Grameen faced was to earn the trust of the very group that it was trying to help in the first place, impoverished men and women. As mentioned earlier, government initiatives to provide credit to the poor were routinely usurped by the rich and the powerful, while poor rural women rarely received any credit at all. When Grameen arrived on the scene, the poor could not believe that a government-sponsored bank could be seriously interested in their welfare and would provide credit especially to poor women who did not have traditional forms of collateral.<sup>5</sup> Grameen Bank enabled the poor to act, to fight against poverty and social stereotypes and pioneered the creation of bridges, of social capital, which promoted collaboration through pursuing cooperative goals and building trust among borrowers.

## Conclusion

A 2005 study by World Bank economist Shahid Khandker suggests that micro-finance contributes to poverty reduction, especially for female participants, and to overall poverty reduction at the village level in Bangladesh. Micro-finance thus helps not only poor participants but also the local economy. Grameen Bank's own internal surveys,

based on 10 objective indicators, show that 55% of its members have already crossed the poverty line.

Yunus's ultimate dream is a world without poverty. As he said in his book, *Banker to the Poor*:

*Whenever I mention to people about world without poverty, I see a half-smile often masking their obvious cynicism or doubts. Even supporters of micro-credit sometimes view this as an 'impossible dream' which we use to motivate ourselves and our workers.*



Professor Muhammad Yunus  
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 2006

Source: <http://www.scholarsbangladesh.com/images/yunus.jpg>

Statistics show that Grameen is contributing in many ways to uplift people all over the world above the poverty level.

Yunus changed the attitudes of people through his innovative leadership, created the new term 'micro-finance' and transformed the world with his enlightened vision of a poverty-free future.

- <sup>1</sup> Yunus M., and Jolis A. 2003. *Bankers to the Poor*. London: Aurum. p. i.
- <sup>2</sup> A central government organization that deals with socio-economic planning and implementation.
- <sup>3</sup> *AsiaSource*. [http://www.asiasource.org/news/special\\_reports/yunus.cfm](http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/yunus.cfm)
- <sup>4</sup> Kouzes, J.M. and Posner, B.Z., 2002. *Leadership Challenge*. New York: Jossey-Bass / Wiley. pp. 16-17.
- <sup>5</sup> Dowla, A., 2005. In credit we trust: Building social capital by Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, *The Journal of Socio-Economics* 35 (2006) 102-122.

# Wangari Maathai

## A Transformational Leader

by Elizabeth "Cedar" Louis

*As for me, I've made a choice.*

~ Green Belt Movement Slogan

Wangari Muta Maathai, founder of the Green Belt Movement, was awarded the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for her life's work on sustainable development, democracy and peace in her native Kenya. What started with the simple act of planting trees led to transformation for both Maathai and the lives of rural women in her country.

Maathai has been compared to leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Mohandas Gandhi for her ability to successfully lead nonviolent resistance to an oppressive regime and a grassroots environmental movement that empowered poor rural women. Like Mandela and Gandhi, her fight for democracy against the dictatorship of Kenyan President Arap Moi was fraught with difficulty, disappointments and personal danger. She was jailed and beaten, exiled from her nation and divorced by her husband, but in the end her activism helped topple the dictatorship. In free elections in Kenya, she was chosen as deputy minister of the environment.

In this essay, I use Maathai's autobiography *Unbowed* as well as interviews and media profiles to portray her extraordinary leadership qualities and achievements.

### Childhood Experiences and Influences

Wangari Maathai was born in 1940 in Nyeri, in the Central Highlands of British Kenya, the third of six children and the oldest daughter in her family. She belonged to the Kikuyu tribe, the largest ethnic group in Kenya. In *Unbowed*, she reminisces about the green and fertile land that used to surround her village, where the soil was a rich dark red-brown and hunger was unknown. People lived off the soil and grew maize, beans, wheat and vegetables, kept cattle, goats and sheep and lived in traditional mud-walled houses with no electricity or running water. Although she wore no shoes and worked all day helping her mother both in the fields and at home raising her younger siblings, she remembers a life filled with abundance. This abundance, however, disappeared in a relatively short period of time due to the unsustainable agricultural policies adopted during the British colonial rule. Subsequent civil war between tribes and government-supported

militia led to further environmental degradation and poverty.

In *Unbowed*, she shares a touching story of the degradation she witnessed in her village on returning home after several years of studying in the United States.

*When I was a young person, I grew up in a land that was green, a land that was very pure, a land that was clean. And I remember going to a small stream very close to our homestead to fetch water and bring it to my mother. We used to drink that water straight from the river. I had this fascination with what I saw in the river. Sometimes I would see literally thousands of what looked like glass beads. I would put my little fingers around them in the hope that I would pick them and put them around my neck. But every time I tried to pick them, they disappeared. I would be there literally for hours desperately trying to pick these beads, without success.*

*Weeks later I would come back, and there would be these thousands of little tadpoles. They are beautiful, pitch black, and in that water they would be energetically flying around and I would try to get them. You can't hold them, they are wiggling and they are very slippery. They eventually disappeared and then the frogs came.*

*I never realized that the glass beads were jelly sacks of eggs or understood the three stages of frogs until I went to college and learned biology. Once I had all this knowledge about the miracle of science I came home from college to discover that the creek had dried up and my homeland was suffering much environmental damage.<sup>1</sup>*

From very early on, Wangari Maathai's life was different from those of her Kenyan sisters. Her mother, at the insistence of her older brother Ndreitu, agreed to send her to school at the age of 10, when it was not the norm for village girls to be educated. She continued in missionary boarding schools and was one of 600 Kenyans selected to study in American universities. She went on to earn a masters degree from the University of Pittsburgh and her PhD from University of Nairobi. She was the first woman to receive a doctorate in all of Central and East Africa.<sup>2</sup>



An environmental activist, Maathai had a formative experience as a young girl that later helped her understand the long-term effects of Western-led development on the environment. When she was around six or seven years old, the British colonial government clear-cut and burned the indigenous forests to establish commercial pine and eucalyptus plantations. When Maathai went with her mother and aunt into the forest for firewood, she would see the charred remains of the trees and ashes on the ground. All of this was presented to her as “development.” Twenty years later, while conducting research, she became aware of the effects of this deforestation when she witnessed massive erosion and previously clear rivers running brown with silt.<sup>3</sup>

## Why Plant Trees?

In the mid-1970s, when Maathai became an officer in the National Council of Women of Kenya, she talked with rural women about the problems they were facing. Their issues included lack of firewood, lack of clean drinking water, and malnutrition. Many farmers had switched from subsistence agriculture to international cash crops like coffee and tea. Listening to these women, she understood the linkage between environmental degradation and decreasing resources for community livelihoods.

This spurred her on to start a small indigenous tree nursery at her home and distribute saplings to women for planting. It seemed like a reasonable way to start, since the women could easily dig a hole, plant a tree and water it. “Something wonderful happens when you plant a seed. Trees provide a source of fuel. They provide material for building and fencing, fruits, fodder, shade, and aesthetic beauty,” Maathai states.<sup>4</sup> In addition, trees guaranteed a source of water because in Kenya, water comes from the forested mountains. This endeavor came to be the Green Belt Movement which in addition to planting trees, educated rural women about the negative impacts of defoliation and deforestation which led to the disappearance of topsoil and water, and the degradation and drying-up of rivers.<sup>5</sup>

Even though the Green Belt Movement was very successful, the international response to Maathai’s 2004 Nobel Peace Prize award was muted because few understood why an environmental activist should win an award that is usually associated with political activism. But she did not win the award for planting trees; she won it “for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy, and peace.”<sup>6</sup> In an interview with Sierra Magazine, Maathai highlighted the political implications of her work:

*If a clean and healthy environment is a right, you cannot gain this right unless you have a democratic government that respects and acknowledges rights. If we do not have citizens who acknowledge these rights, and also assume their responsibilities, we’re not going to have a clean and good environment.<sup>7</sup>*

Maathai strongly believes that peace and the environment

are linked, because struggles over scarce resources often lead to conflicts. Using an analogy of the traditional three-legged African stool, she explains that one leg represents good management of natural resources with accountable and equitable distribution, another leg represents democratic government with human dignity, and the third represents peace. She believes that, “if you try to do development where you have no legs, or where you have two legs or one leg, the base is out of balance. It is unsustainable.”<sup>8</sup>

Making a case for grassroots development and community-based management, Maathai argues that bottom-up development produces results, and that the solutions to African problems should come from Africans. Most health and environmental development programs initiated in Africa by Western aid organizations have not been very successful. Maathai attributes these failures to an approach where people from the outside assume that they know what Africans want: “Working with local organizations is important. Because what you want to do is empower people. In the Green Belt Movement, if I don’t have local people involved, I don’t do anything. Part of the heritage of the aid culture is that many people are quick to embrace anybody who comes with a bag of money.”<sup>9</sup>

She believes that the Nobel Peace Prize is recognition of work done at the grassroots level by women of Africa and the world. It also recognizes pro-democracy movements and advocates for peace.<sup>10</sup> Maathai’s movement is remarkable in erasing distinctions between environmentalism, feminism, democracy and human rights.

## Democracy and the Green Belt Movement

When asked how tree-planting led to pro-democracy action, Maathai replied that people would blame the government for all their problems, so the Green Belt Movement started educating women about their civil rights and duty to demand better governance. The government felt threatened by this because the Green Belt Movement blamed the disappearance of trees on the overexploitation of forests by the government and by President Arap Moi’s business associates.

Although planting trees is its primary focus, the Green Belt Movement also became a vehicle for social change. From 1989 to 1999, the movement took on the Moi government’s plans to build a huge multistory complex in Nairobi’s “Central Park,” Uhuru Park, the lungs of the city and one of the few places where city dwellers could enjoy some greenery. Moi’s multi-billion dollar plans to develop this complex included investors from the United States and Europe. In opposing the construction project, Maathai exposed a system that had become very exploitive of its own people and resources. Kenya had a huge debt burden that fell on the shoulders of the poor, and those opposed to the project felt that Kenya should pay down its debt instead. After fighting the government for ten years, they were

successful in stopping the building of the complex. However, President Moi grew even more uncompromising against any opposition and held a personal vendetta against Maathai. Fortunately, Maathai had gained an international reputation and supporters including then Vice-President of the United States Al Gore. She had also received many international awards in recognition of her leadership and work, including the Right Livelihood Award in 1984 and the Woman of the World Award in 1989.

Maathai depended on the international press and her friends to her keep the pro-democracy movement alive and Moi's oppressive government in check. With the help of the international press, Maathai was able to expose Moi's human rights violations including torture, police brutality and unconstitutional arrests. "I knew whatever we tried to do, it wouldn't go anywhere unless we changed the political system," she states in her autobiography. Once, when she was arrested for peacefully protesting the arrests of political prisoners, Al Gore called President Moi and personally wrote a letter from the White House asking the Kenyan government to justify their charges or let her go. "When a letter like that lands in the office of the Attorney General," she points out, "rather than explain, they just let you go."

### On Being a Woman and an Activist

Wangari Maathai paid a heavy price for her involvement in politics and environmental activism. Her husband could not deal with her independence and divorced her after seven years of marriage, leaving her alone with three young children. He described her as "too educated, too strong, too successful, too stubborn and too hard to control."<sup>11</sup> She spoke of the divorce as one of her most trying times and a turning point in her life. If he had not left, she would probably have avoided controversial issues since her husband was a member of parliament.<sup>12</sup>

In *Unbowed*, Maathai makes several references to the low status of women in Kenya's patriarchal society. As a female professor, she was denied benefits because she was not considered the "head of the household." Other women stayed away from her because they were fearful of associating with someone who openly challenged the unfair treatment of women, unthinkable in Kenyan society.

It was only after winning election in 2002 and receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 that women in Kenya openly congratulated her and displayed pride in her achievements. In an interview with the Baltimore Sun, she shared what it is like to be an educated woman in Kenya:

*I think that because I was a woman, I was vulnerable. It was easy to persecute me without people feeling ashamed. It was easy to vilify me and project me as a woman who was not following the tradition of a "good African woman" and as a highly educated elitist who was trying to show innocent African women ways of doing things that were not acceptable to African men. It was easy for me to be ridiculed and for both men and women to perceive that maybe I'm a bit crazy because I'm educated in the West*

*and I have lost some of my basic decency as an African woman—as if being educated was something bad. That is something I had seen for a very long time: When people can't use you, they ridicule what you represent. I was lucky that I understood that, because when one does not understand that, it is very easy to be broken and to be subdued.*<sup>13</sup>

### Conclusion

Today, increasingly, voices like that of Wangari Maathai are being heard and respected. Her work, which has won the highest international recognition, raises the issue of the relationship between environmental degradation, poverty, gender discrimination and democracy. In doing so, it has also turned global attention towards Africa's long-ignored wars and genocide, starvation and environmental degradation.

As a leader, her leadership has been exceptional. James MacGregor Burns, the father of leadership theory, describes transformational leadership as moral leadership in that it raises the "level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led and thus it has a transforming effect on both."<sup>14</sup> Leaders are transformational when they offer followers a purpose and vision that transcends short-term goals and focuses on higher intrinsic needs. Burns' notion of transformational leadership is embodied in the leadership of Wangari Maathai. By planting trees, she taught women the importance of protecting neighboring forests and started confronting illegal and corrupt exploitation of national forests. The movement eventually led to the fall of Moi's dictatorship and the rise of democracy in Kenya. Maathai, a true transformational leader, enabled rural women to make informed choices and take responsibility for their own lives. She identified a very basic need – the need for trees as fuel, fodder, fertilizer and aquifer shields – and showed rural Kenyan women how to meet this need in their own communities.

<sup>1</sup> Maathai, Wangari 2006. *Unbowed: A Memoir*. New York: Knopf.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> MacDonald, Mia 2005. "Something Wonderful Happens When You Plant a Seed". *Sierra Magazine*, February 10, 2005. [www.sierraclub.org/sierra/200503/interview.asp](http://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/200503/interview.asp)

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* note 1.

<sup>6</sup> Lappé, Frances Moore 2004. "The Genius of Wangari Maathai". *International Herald Tribune*, October 10, 2004. [greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=24](http://greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=24)

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* note 4.

<sup>8</sup> Lappé, Frances Moore 2004. "Oslo Diary: Maathai's Lesson". *Guerrilla News Network*, December 13, 2004. [greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=48](http://greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=48)

<sup>9</sup> Fuller, Alexandra 2005. "The Giving Tree". [www.greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=66](http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=66)

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Baltimore Sun 2006. "A Commitment to Peaceful Change". <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/ideas/bal-id.qampa19nov19,0,6513612.story?page=2&coll=bal-ideas-headlines>

<sup>14</sup> Burns, James MacGregor 1978. *Leadership*, Harper and Row.



# Profiling Olin Lagon

by Krishna Subba

*Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.*

~ Peter F. Drucker

Businesses encourage their management to employ practices that maximize profits through efficiency. In today's world, most corporations are concerned only with this bottom line rather than the wise use of social, environmental and cultural resources. Nonetheless, a ray of hope for corporate social responsibility shines from an emerging group of leaders called "social entrepreneurs." This new class of executives persistently and creatively leverages marketplace opportunities while working to achieve sustainable social change.

In this brief profile of Olin Lagon, social entrepreneur and chief operating officer of the internet startup company ChipIn, I would like to elaborate on the personal traits that make Olin a true leader. In doing so, I will analyze how his life has informed his values, which in turn have led to success in social entrepreneurial ventures.

## Olin's Story

Olin Lagon was the youngest of four children raised by his mother in Honolulu, Hawaii. Growing up in a single-parent household and low-income housing, he faced challenges during his education and changed schools several times before completing high school. He enrolled in a community college and, eventually, graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a perfect 4.0 grade point average and a double major in international entrepreneurship and accounting. Olin completed the international management program at the Pacific Asian Management Institute, was awarded a fellowship at the East-West Center and studied abroad in five different countries.

In 1996, Olin helped to start up a new information management company called WorldPoint. The venture produced award-winning software that was adopted by Nike, Kodak, FedEx, Disney and MIT. Within six years, the firm employed more than a hundred people in offices spanning five countries.

Still in his early twenties, Olin realized that entrepreneurship could focus on contributing to the public good as the first priority. With this in mind, he volunteered for the Peace Corps and served for more than two years in Russia. There, he was challenged by the need to master a difficult language and teach business skills to students in a climate inhospitable to entrepreneurship. Olin motivated his students by working with them to start Verbioso, an online Russian translation business that now sells online Russian language tools to customers in dozens of countries.

After returning to Hawaii, in January 2003 Olin started Hawaiian Homestead Technology, Inc. (HHT), a local technology company with a highly social mission. HHT is an initiative of the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement intended primarily for job creation and community capacity building. Its mission is to create and sustain living-wage technology jobs in economically challenged Native Hawaiian communities and to transfer technological and managerial skills to Native Hawaiian non-profits. The company opened its first facility on Hawaiian Homestead land in Anahola, Kauai, with 12 employees, of whom most had no previous computer skills and half had been unemployed. They were trained in computer skills at the local community college and in-house classes, going from having no computer experience to being able to create and edit SGML files.

By late 2006, thanks to strategic alliances with American Indian, Native Alaskan and Native Hawaiian IT companies, HHT had turned into a successful federal contractor business with \$5 million in booked projects.

Olin's latest venture, ChipIn, is a web-based business that facilitates collaborative funding of user projects. For example, ChipIn enables bloggers to create an interactive widget to raise money directly through blogs and other social media. After covering their operating costs, ChipIn donates most of its profits to social causes. The company also supports fundraising efforts of other non-profits by connecting them to a distributed network of potential supporters.



Olin Lagon and  
Krishna Subba

Photo courtesy of  
Krishna Subba

## Defining Olin as a Leader

With excellent communication skills, Olin is able to listen carefully and create a comfortable resonance with the people he speaks to. He has an amazing way of getting his point across by relating it to a story or parable. This storytelling technique helps to create bonds between himself and the person with whom he is communicating. Thus, Olin exemplifies resonant leadership as an emotionally intelligent leader in line with the concept of primal leadership.<sup>1</sup> Olin also believes that, as a leader, it is important to be determined and informed but also to take time for self reflection, as this provides an opportunity for self-improvement.

Olin believes that vision comes down to actions of the leader.<sup>2</sup> Leaders are judged by whether their actions are aligned with their stated core values. Although vision statements and tactical plans are often seen as a necessary part of business leadership, Olin eschews such pen-and-paper approaches in favor of inspiring others to share the vision they see in his actions. The saying that “talk is cheap, and actions speak louder than words” is a core part of this method of leadership by example.

Directly enacting a personal vision through actions is crucial to leadership because it builds credibility. In their book *The Leadership Challenge*, Kouzes and Posner argue that credibility is central to maintaining positive employee attitudes and behavior and building loyalty and productivity.<sup>3</sup> The secret of his successful business ventures, Olin suggests, is that they are the result of focusing

on the process of achieving the goal rather than simply on the ends themselves.

## Conclusion

What sets Olin apart as a leader is that he has found a resonant way to make a difference in the lives of those involved in his ventures. At HHT, hiring and training workers who had struggled with unemployment empowers them to make a difference in their own communities. Although the business operates on an international scale, its purpose is solidly rooted in helping local people by providing them with employment and economic stability. With ChipIn, the business model is centered around empowering non-profit fundraising and other collaboratively funded projects.

Social entrepreneurship is a way for the business world to gain back the public trust. Even though not all social entrepreneurs will have success stories, the emergence of this trend is exciting because it symbolizes how businesses can realize their responsibilities as social entities. While doing things right, they also do the right thing.

<sup>1</sup> Goleman, Daniel. *Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence*.

<sup>2</sup> Olin Lagon, Video Interview, November 7<sup>th</sup> 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*.

# Tin Myaing Thein And Her Leadership

by Sarabibi "Sara" Thuzarwin Mayet

This is a life overview of an exceptional Burmese woman who has changed the lives of many people in her community. Tin Myaing Thein, a 64 year old Burmese-American, is currently the Executive Director of the Pacific Gateway Center and a true example of an authentic leader. She shows true passion for her career, aiming to:

*help immigrants, refugees and low-income residents of Hawaii get access to opportunities and services through the skill-building that lead to self-sufficiency while respecting the cultural diversity.<sup>1</sup>*

In an interview that I conducted with her in November 2006, she stated that, "I realized that I was doing volunteer and professional work...it was where my heart was." With more than 40 years of professional experience, she has received numerous awards including in 2006 the Hawaii Community Foundation's Hookele Award.

Born in Shwe Bo, a central region of Myanmar, Tin Myaing Thein received her bachelor's degree in psychology from Yangon (Rangoon) University. In 1962, after a military coup, the government informed her that she would pursue a major in microbiology despite her lack of background in the field. In 1963, she came to Hawaii and obtained a second bachelor's degree, this time in microbiology at the University of Hawaii through the East-West Center.

During her stay at the East-West Center, she met an influential figure in her life, Jack Reynolds, who is now her husband. Upon graduating from the University of Hawaii in 1966, Myaing headed home to Myanmar with a stopover in Bangkok, where she and Jack got married. Because she married a foreigner and failed to return to Myanmar in accordance with her obligation, she was exiled from her country. The couple returned to the United States to continue their education. She completed a masters degree in public health in Pittsburgh and a PhD in medical sociology from Columbia University.

Having earned an MPH and PhD in medical sociology, Myaing felt it was normal to start working in the field of public health. However, she also felt a strong desire to change careers. During our interview, she spoke of how women face a high degree of discrimination at the work place, and how

difficult it is for women to receive good paying jobs or promotions and to be taken seriously by their bosses. Inspired by these issues, she decided to change careers to focus on activism, with the belief that women must take action themselves to solve their own problems.

In 1970, Tin Myaing Thein started working on creative solutions to women's issues. She founded the National Network of Asia Pacific Island Women and was the first woman appointed by President Jimmy Carter as a member of the President's Advisory Committee for Women. In 1979, she received the Human Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association. Later, the Pacific Asia America Women Bay Area Coalition provided her with a Women Warrior Award for fighting for women's rights. Gradually, she became engaged in international development and contributed her services to the community in both Myanmar and Hawaii.

Her involvement with international development occurred during Myanmar's democratic reforms, which were led by Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize winner and one of Myaing's friends. By 1990, the Burmese government had loosened its tight restrictions, and Tin Myaing Thein was able to return to Myanmar and contribute to her country's development as a representative of Save the Children.<sup>2</sup> She has raised money for projects relating to orphans and children and given scholarships to needy students in Myanmar. Her latest achievement was organizing a Medical Mission to Myanmar to perform surgeries and provide medical care to those in need. Myaing said that she wishes to contribute more to her country. She mentioned, "I could see where there were vast ways to improve the system, but I was not in a position to do anything about it. My coping mechanism was to accept what I could not do and realize what I could do".

This resonates with Henry Kissinger's notion on the topic of the essential skills of presidents as mentioned in Warren Bennis' book *On Becoming a Leader*: "Presidents don't do great things by dwelling on their limitation, but by focusing on their possibilities."<sup>3</sup> Myaing decided to focus on how she could provide a sound financial basis for the projects that she was leading.



In 1988, Tin Myaing Thein joined the Pacific Gateway Center (PGC). PGC offers micro-loan programs for entrepreneurs who want to start or expand a business. Services such as emergency housing, food allowances, translation, childcare, and other forms of support are also available.

Some obstacles she faced at the PGC emerged during the post 9/11 era, when slow economic growth caused many people in Hawaii to face financial difficulty. This gave rise to increased demand on social services. She led the PGC during that critical period and created employment opportunities through small businesses to help Hawaii recover from its slow economic growth. Myaing said, “we view our agency as a one-stop shop for individuals or families who are seeking routes to achieve self-sufficiency. We provide them shelter and basic needs, give them job training and employment services, and help them open their own businesses. We are very proud of our successful clients, and it is the most wonderful thing to see our clients finally achieve self-sufficiency. Some of their businesses have grown so big they no longer need us.”<sup>4</sup>



Myaing has spent almost a decade with PGC. She is so passionate with her career that she does not see her job as work. As she puts it, “I know I am helping people. I see the result in getting people jobs and housing or filling out forms that they do not understand—it’s very tangible. To help people toward self-sufficiency keeps us going.”<sup>5</sup> She feels their pain, their wants, and their needs, and she is richly endowed with empathy.

She believes in a bottom-up approach to leadership and listens carefully to her staff’s views and perspectives before making any major decisions. She states that, “my biggest challenge as a leader is trying to listen to different points of view and then making the right decision or at least what I hope is the right decision.” Most importantly, she never forgets to express genuine appreciation for her team members’ contributions to the success of the organization.

PGC has responded to the urgent needs of Hawaii very effectively. Myaing, along with her team, has found alternative ways to serve Hawaiians and helped the state’s im-

migrant community recover from socioeconomic depression. Being a former immigrant herself, she models the way for others while proving that immigrants too can become successful leaders and social activists in Hawaii.

Her exemplary intercultural marriage is truly inspiring. Jack serves as her role model and mentor while giving her full support throughout her educational and professional career. As she mentioned in her interview with me,

*I came from the jungles and didn't know much in theory or implementation of the projects. I had to prove myself more than others that I knew. I did this by being more efficient, meeting deadlines and producing more than quality work and focusing entirely on my work. On a personal level, there were cultural barriers that I faced. But I was able to acculturate into the environment. I had a lot of help from my husband who helped me understand the life and the culture here.*

She also said in the interview that, “the success of our marriage cannot be summed up in one word. We worked to make it successful. Early in our marriage, we sat down to discuss what we wanted out of life, what we wanted to achieve and what was important to us. We listed them and agreed to help each other to achieve our goals. Then, every five years, we went on a mini vacation (two days) and had an evaluation of our marriage: what we liked, what we didn't like and how we could compromise. I think that was one of the major reasons why we are successful in our marriage. This is important because you cannot be successful in your professional career if you have trouble at home and things are not going smoothly. So what I have achieved professionally is due in part to the relationship with my husband.”

Myaing came from Myanmar, where socialism was practiced for 26 years and nobody dared to express their opinion. Listening and agreeing with the government without any argument was the way of public response. Despite not being able to choose her field of study, she intelligently adapted to the circumstances and completed her education. Though she was exiled from Myanmar, she did not give up on her country and its people. Her adaptive capacity, in addition to her willingness to learn from others by listening to their opinions and her encouragement of others to act, have empowered her to become a successful leader.

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- 3 Bennis, W. 2003. *On Becoming a Leader*. Cambridge: Basic Books.
- 4 Tin Myaing Thein and Suryaatmadja, C. 2001. Action Taken In a Post 9-11 Economy. *Hawaii Together* <http://hawaiiitogether.hawaii.edu/perspectives.asp>
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# The University of Hawaii

## A Center for Sustainability

by R. Don Peel

Civilization, under the threat of climate change, is being forced to consider radical changes in its approach to economic development. Service learning and servant leadership facilitate strong links between all sectors to instigate these necessary changes. The United Nations has formulated an action plan entitled *Agenda 21*<sup>1</sup> which, together with the large-scale international consensus around the *Earth Charter*,<sup>2</sup> calls for international collaboration to tackle the issues involved in changing over to sustainable development. Because these plans have been met with mixed levels of commitment, their intended results are not yet visible.

The University of Hawaii (UH) could be instrumental in catapulting the world into the paradigm of sustainability by becoming a service learning and servant leadership center for the accreditation of educators, researchers and practitioners in the field of sustainable development.

One of the biggest obstacles to sustainability is the lack of widely recognized assessment or enforcement agencies to ensure that research initiatives for sustainable development are coordinated, professional and ethical. No institution exists for educators and researchers to obtain reliable and up-to-the-minute data in the sea of information that is being generated. A lead coordination agency could build a curriculum that stimulates holistic approaches to ecological systems while discouraging work that promotes sustainability only in name. At the same time, it could serve as a central depository for best practices in accredited sustainable development research and protect related intellectual property rights.

### A Center for Sustainability Studies

Improving our quality of life implies a change in our methods of education. Because it is a catalyst to leadership, education can be a motor for social change.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, the United Nations launched the “UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development – 2005-2014,” for which it developed an International Implemen-

tation Scheme through extensive consultation. It states that:

*Seven interlinked strategies are proposed for the Decade: advocacy and vision building; consultation and ownership; partnership and networks; capacity building and training; research and innovation; information and communication technologies; monitoring and evaluation. Together they form a coherent approach to the incremental increase over the Decade of the promotion and implementation of ESD [Education for Sustainable Development]. They will ensure that change in public attitudes and educational approaches keep pace with the evolving challenges of sustainable development.*<sup>4</sup>

Interdisciplinary studies at UH can nurture holistic approaches to social problems and empower students to forge new cross-disciplinary links by creating their own curricula according to their passions. Professors at UH can also facilitate this democratically by ensuring that classes provide equitable student engagement and participation.

The East-West Center, located at the UH campus, has also shown initiative in taking a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural approach by founding the International Forum for Education 2020, which addresses the need for new educational paradigms in responding to economic, social and cultural changes. The East-West Center’s strength lies in its grassroots approach to merging Eastern and Western thought through a diverse cultural exchange of knowledge, shared experiences and community-building opportunities.

### A Center for Sustainability Accreditation

It is nearly impossible to keep abreast of advancements and ensure credible information in sustainability studies. Although the United Nations Commission of Sustainable Development (UNCSD) administers a wealth of information on sustainable development,<sup>5</sup> there is also a deluge of initiatives that generate information from many other sources.

In many other fields of study, professional associations set standards that can hold practitioners accountable to their work. Because sustainability studies is omnidisciplinary, however, this new field calls for new levels of collaboration between educators, practitioners and researchers. As more and more professionals and researchers address the problems arising in our complex and highly interrelated world, there is a growing need for professional accountability, especially for the sustainable protection of intellectual property including indigenous rights.

There is a need for an institution that could set sustainable development accreditation standards for educational programs, global research and practitioner methodology. UH should fill this role.

### **A Center for Indigenous Knowledge**

The *Earth Charter* and *Agenda 21* highlight the need to engage the voices of women, youth, and indigenous peoples in sustainable development. One example of the central role of Hawaiian indigenous knowledge in sustainability issues is the *ahupua'a* system, the traditional land use system of the ancient Hawaiians, which is now recognized for its importance in sound ecological management.<sup>6</sup>

It is crucial that the rights to such traditional intellectual property must not be stripped from the indigenous populations in a manner similar to the historical process of colonization.<sup>7</sup> As aboriginal cultures revive their once-banned rituals and traditional practices, they empower themselves to re-engage in public discourse. This revival of indigenous culture should be promoted, and the transmission of knowledge from elders aids the process.

The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development has conducted hundreds of research studies on indigenous intellectual property rights and knowledge transmission, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada is testing the claims of the Harvard Project's research.<sup>8</sup> The Canadian Institute of Health Research has also drafted its *Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal Peoples*, which states that:

*The scientific community came to realize that Indigenous peoples held unique knowledge within complex knowledge systems and efforts to protect Indigenous knowledge were initiated. It also came to be more widely known that Indigenous research had existed for generations even though it had not been defined or openly accepted in academic contexts.<sup>9</sup>*

Research protocols are still being drafted to address the issue of the protection of intellectual property, as

deep consultation appears to be the key aspect of this area of research, and the corresponding legal issues will likely evolve with time.

The urgency of indigenous intellectual property rights protection calls out for international collaboration. An association based at UH, such as that being proposed, would expedite the formulation of protocols for indigenous rights protection.

### **Role and Advantages of UH**

Hawaii's location in the mid-Pacific has many advantages. The tropical paradise attracts millions of tourists and conference attendees annually. Many international students are drawn to attend UH, and the East West Center is instrumental in attracting hundreds of Asian scholars to the UH Manoa campus. Therefore, UH is an appropriate place for a central hub of east-west-north-south knowledge generation.

In addition, the Hawaiian islands are a model for the global ecosystem as their population grows and resources such as water and land reach their limits. As such, it provides a good testing ground for new sustainable development practices. The UH Office of Sustainability describes the role of the university as follows:

*The University can serve as a working model of sustainability for the state, nation, Asia-Pacific region and the world. This is because Hawaii is a microcosm of the world, in which the physical environment is being polluted and depleted, and traditional ways of life are not being honored. Our state is typical in its struggle to conserve dwindling resources while continuing to develop, yet unique in possessing a biological and sociological heritage found nowhere else on Earth.<sup>10</sup>*

The above quote comes from an 83-page report entitled *University of Hawaii at Manoa Sustainability Retreat*, which includes many action plans towards steering the campus into sustainable practices. The joint vision set forth in this report – a vision shared by students, faculty, administrative staff and the Chancellor – shows that the university is already committed to a path towards sustainability. Establishing a center for sustainability studies at UH would further empower our campus community to realize this vision.

Another key advantage is Hawaii's vacation setting, which can attract the fastest growing demographic groups of potential students, namely, retiring baby-boomers and young cultural creatives. These groups

could stimulate a unique mentoring program within the university's curriculum.

## Conclusion

The concept of UH becoming the headquarters of an association for the accreditation of sustainability studies educators, practitioners and researchers would add momentum toward attaining a sustainable campus and world. Education and research by motivated faculty and students can steer our civilization towards a sustainable future. Having all the right ingredients on campus already, UH has reached a critical mass of faculty and students who could be further motivated by formally establishing a curriculum for sustainability studies that promotes holistic thinking about ecological systems. With the cultural context of a Hawaiian host culture, the UH community also has an opportunity to incorporate indigenous rights into its model of sustainability. UH could contribute to global sustainability studies by certifying all sustainable development educators, practitioners and researchers and keeping them current with the latest developments in sustainability studies.

To further advance this concept, this proposal should be formally added to the sustainability initiatives that UH is undertaking. Dialogue of this proposal should be continued at all levels throughout the campus and community. Moreover, the East-West Center's International Forum for Education 2020 can draw further international attention to this proposal.

A cost-benefit analysis of this proposed venture could outline how the concept would advance the knowledge being generated in the area of sustainable development. As James Michener stated in his novel *Hawaii*,

*There was then, as there is now, no place known on earth that even began to compete with these islands in their capacity to encourage natural life to develop freely and radically up to its own best potential.*<sup>11</sup>

Where else then but at UH would one establish a center to incubate the future leaders of a sustainable civilization?

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<sup>1</sup> UNCED. 1992. Agenda 21. United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21toc.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Earth Charter Initiative. 2003. The earth charter. <http://www.earthcharter.org/files/charter/charter.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO. 2005. The DESD (Decade of Education for Sustainable Development) at a glance. [unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001416/141629c.pdf](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001416/141629c.pdf)

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- <sup>9</sup> CIHR. 2005. CIHR Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal Peoples. Draft Version 1.8 Sept. 2005. <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29134.html>
- <sup>10</sup> Office of Sustainability. 2005. Creating a Sustainable University of Hawaii. <http://www.hawaii.edu/sustain/>
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# White Man's Burden No More

## A Call for a Changed Mentality in International Aid

by 2nd Lieutenant Travis Gramkowski, USAF

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government

During the Cold War, economic aid was one of the most important aspects of the relationship between developed and developing countries. The leaders of the latter group received financial means by which to raise standards of living for their people or to line their own pockets. The former also benefited from the relationship, purchasing political concessions and filling contracts for sponsored projects. The Cold War ended nearly two decades ago, but the continuing pattern of paternalistic aid relationships works to the detriment of all parties.

The field of economic aid is dominated by a model of operations that I characterize as "Hierarchic Economic Lift Programs, Focused on Objective Results" (the "Help-For" model). This pattern has emerged from the assumption that developed countries ought to direct the progress of their less successful neighbors since they have trod the same path before. However, it tends to remove affected populations from the decision-making process and, since the Help-For mentality frequently gives birth to large infrastructure projects, recipients remain dependent on continued assistance from outside their community to sustain their development.

Clearly, this is not a sustainable pattern.

In order to enact truly beneficial assistance programs, it is necessary to change the mentality of donor states and multilateral organizations. An alternative model for aid relationships would be a "Hybrid Empowering Leadership Programs With Integrated Team Helmsmanship" (the "Help-With" model). Equitable cooperation characterizes the Help-With relationship. It is an aid model that engages donor agencies as well as any intermediaries together with the direct recipients. The hybrid composition of the project's leadership replaces the hierarchic structure of Help-For with equal representation by all stakeholders to address objective and subjective results of the project at all levels.

The Help-With model also proposes a hybrid board of directors, which would serve as a check against corruption by any single party, since each is responsible to the others too. In light of the fact that

providers of economic assistance often claim an intention to facilitate democratic transitions, this model initiates that process by example.

In order to understand the significance of the transformation from the Help-For to the Help-With paradigm, it is important to review the present situation. Examples of both Help-For and Help-With projects will reveal the problem and support the validity of the latter approach.

A primary example of the hierarchic Help-For model is the World Bank's role in funding India's Narmada Dam irrigation and power generation project between 1985 and 1992. As a counterpoint, the Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) program's work in rural areas of the Philippines provides an identifiable example of the Help-With model. Each of these cases highlights the significance of the shift in aid mentality and demonstrate the capability of the Help-With model to address a variety of issues with individually tailored programs to achieve the same aims that aid agencies currently pursue under the Help-For approach.

### The Help-For Philosophy

The "Hierarchic Economic Lift Program, Focused on Objective Results" (Help-For) aid mentality is an evolution of Rudyard Kipling's 1899 poem "The White Man's Burden," which reflects the ideology of the imperial age. Kipling's poem appears to advocate a model based on service to the less privileged when he describes the role of the colonialist as, "No tawdry rule of kings, /But toil of serf and sweeper,"<sup>1</sup> However, the poem carries a pervading tone of superiority. Like the poem, the Help-For model places the donor, loan, or aid agency above the recipients of its aid. These agencies, like Kipling, see themselves as the benefactors of "those [they] better."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Help-For model does not allow for input from aid recipients but rather facilitates the issuance of directives and requirements for recipient groups to follow the ideologies and plans of donors.



## Inadequacy of the Help-For Model

The World Bank's involvement in India's Narmada Dam project provides an example of the shortcomings of the Help-For aid mentality. The World Bank granted a loan to the Indian government in 1985 to construct the Sardar Sarovar Dam, which is the capstone of the series of dams on the Narmada River.<sup>3</sup> This project was to produce important objective results: irrigation of over 4 million acres of land and provision of electricity for several communities in the area.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the loan, the World Bank provided a set of requirements, including the need for an environmental assessment and adequate relocation of the families whose lands would be submerged by the reservoir.<sup>5</sup> Once it had issued these demands, however, the Bank remained aloof until rising protests brought the project's true practices to light.

A report by an independent commission appointed by the World Bank showed that, in the absence of positive leadership, the Indian government had proceeded in single-minded pursuit of the project's objective ends. One item of particular note was the relocation and rehabilitation program for affected families. The World Bank knew from its assessments that 200,000 people from 245 villages would be displaced by the project, and had assurances from the Indian government that these people would be adequately rehabilitated.<sup>6</sup> The commission discovered, however, that during the relocation process villagers were being deceived into accepting worthless land for relocation and were provided no rehabilitation assistance. Moreover, the environmental impact statement had been crafted as a mere formality to appease the World Bank.<sup>7</sup> Based on this report, the World Bank declared that, "the resettlement and environmental aspects of the project were not being handled in accordance with Bank policies," and withdrew within a year.<sup>8</sup> This rapid withdrawal, following the path of least resistance, highlights the failure of the Help-For model.

The Narmada example shows that the relationship between a Help-For aid agency and its recipients is primarily an economic one. Agencies such as the World Bank provide loans to support specific projects. These loans provide an economic lift to the recipient communities to elevate them to an objective standard without regard for the potential side effects. Focusing on the economic aspect of the relationship – including the agency's eventual profit from the loan – these programs frequently ignore environmental and social outcomes. Thus, this hierarchic economic relationship elevates aid agencies and distances them from the direct results of their programs while inhibiting interaction between donors and recipients.

The underlying philosophy of the Help-For model can be summed up in its acronym. Like Kipling's call to "Seek another's profit, /And work another's gain," the Help-For mentality focuses on *providing* assistance to another community.<sup>9</sup> Help-For aid providers do not incorporate

members of affected communities in their planning process, nor do they engage with those communities to achieve mutually satisfactory results. This perspective reflects the arrogance expressed in Kipling's poem and an imaginary need to provide for those who are seen as being unable to help themselves. With this mentality, aid agencies provide money and requirements to intermediary organizations or national governments to reach specific objective goals without becoming engaged with recipient communities or the social and environmental outcomes of the project.

Unfortunately, Narmada is a typical example of external aid agency operations. James Bovard, a critic of United States foreign aid, writes, "The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has dotted [Africa, Asia, and Latin America] with . . . idle cement plants, near-empty convention centers, [and] abandoned roads."<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Shivani Chaudry, a writer who conducted a fact-finding mission in the areas affected by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, writes that although relief efforts did quantitatively provide shelter for hundreds of thousands of victims, these shelters consisted of lines of adjoining, windowless shanties of tar sheeting that were "worse than cattle sheds."<sup>11</sup> In her article, Chaudry asks why local communities were not involved in the design of the structures.

## Help-With: A Desirable Alternative

The consultation that Chaudry desires is an integral part of the "Hybrid Empowering Leadership Program With Integrated Team Helmsmanship" (Help-With) mentality, which provides an alternative to the current Help-For model. Equal participation between parties characterizes the democratic Help-With relationship. It is an aid model that engages donor agencies in projects together with intermediary organizations and direct recipients.

The hybrid composition of the project's leadership replaces the hierarchic structure of Help-For with a board of directors that has equal representation by these three parties (viz. donors, intermediaries and recipients) to address the objective and subjective results of the project at all levels. The hybrid board also serves as a check against corruption of any single party since each is responsible to the other two.

An example of a project conducted with a Help-With mentality is the Training Services Enhancement Project for Rural Life Improvement (TSEP-RLI), a grassroots-level aid project funded under Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) program in the Philippines. TSEP-RLI is progressive in its level of detachment from direct Japanese economic interests. The initiative incorporates local leadership to determine community needs and jointly develop sustainable improvements in villagers' quality of life. Individual TSEP-RLI projects vary from community to community according to local perceptions of need, but they

share the characteristic of being designed to sustain themselves without further dependence on Japan for support.<sup>12</sup>

Although unlike the World Bank loan and many other aid attempts, this program is not tied to a direct Japanese economic interest, it still profits the donor country because it promotes a general condition of development that is favorable for future trade that could benefit Japan.<sup>13</sup>

In contrast to the failure of the World Bank and the Narmada Dam project under the Help-For aid mentality, the Japanese government's ODA program provides an example of how an aid program can succeed with the Help-With paradigm. ODA is Japan's vehicle for providing foreign aid to "Contribute to the peace and development of the international community and thereby to help ensure Japan's own security and prosperity."<sup>14</sup> The Japanese government recognizes that it will profit indirectly from assisting countries in need and, thus, it has a stake in the success of each project regardless of immediate profit. In its policies and implementation directives, this ODA project meets the general description of the Help-With paradigm.

However, sustainable grassroots aid projects in line with the Help-With model represent only a small percentage of foreign aid distribution by Japan and other international donors.

In the Help-With model, donor agencies exercise leadership to empower intermediaries, usually national governments, and affected communities. This model acknowledges that popular participation in government is non-existent in some areas and uses a hybrid board to empower communities with opportunities to provide input that might otherwise not be afforded to them. Donors must empower communities that will have to make sacrifices for a particular project. They must also oversee the interaction between these groups as well as intermediaries to develop qualitative goals that incorporate the subjective needs of communities as well as the objective, quantitative desires of other parties.

The Help-With model is not without its drawbacks. Projects engineered under this mentality will probably be smaller and less prestigious. They will not provide for direct contributions to donor country's private sector as large infrastructure projects usually do. However, if these two criteria are truly critical to the donors, then the very definition of "foreign aid" needs revision.

As regards the conduct of assistance programs, the increased involvement necessary at all levels of the Help-With model will increase the amount of input required from aid agencies. The direct supervision of Help-With projects requires aid agencies to dedicate personnel to each individual endeavor. As a result, the budget requirements of the agency are likely to increase as they take on additional staff. Because of the multi-party arrangement for planning and direction, Help-With projects may require

loans with longer terms, which could increase the risk assumed by aid agencies. Nonetheless, this could also lead to increased profits for lenders.

This model also has the potential to become trapped in bureaucratic deadlock because of conflicting interests. The aid agency's representatives, as joint helmsmen, must be prepared to mediate such conflicts and achieve compromises, which could involve more resources and time.

## Conclusion

As in the case of the Help-For model, the acronym Help-With embodies the philosophy behind the model. Rather than seeing itself as working for the recipient parties, the donor agency must work *with* aid recipients on equal footing. Facilitating cooperation among parties in this manner can avoid potential scandals, such as the Narmada Dam scandal in 1992, by keeping the aid agency fully involved and informed of the projects' progress. Working with the parties would also provide a check against deception and corruption.

In the Help-With model, the donor functions as a supporter and supervisor of an internally developed project that incorporates both intermediaries and affected communities to design tailored responses to the subjective situation of particular local areas. It allows for indigenously inspired, democratic development projects within the communities and states that receive international aid.

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- <sup>13</sup> Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2005). *Overview of Japan's Medium-Term Policy on Official Development Assistance*. Online report. [www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/mid-term/index.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/mid-term/index.html)
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# Coral Reefs

## What They Can Teach Us About Leadership

by Kelvin D. Gorospe

It is alarming that, within our lifetimes, there is the potential for unprecedented widespread environmental decline on a global-scale. By the year 2050, a quarter of the world's terrestrial species could be committed to extinction<sup>1</sup> and the Arctic Ocean could be ice-free, causing rising sea levels and altering global climate patterns.<sup>2</sup> In fact, we no longer have to wait for the effects of global climate change to manifest themselves. For example, the number of Category 4 and 5 hurricanes has doubled in the past 30 years.<sup>3</sup> At least 279 species of plants and animals are already responding by moving closer to the poles in an effort to escape the effects of global climate change.<sup>4</sup>

Scientists agree that human-related activities are at the root of global climate change. These activities – ranging from burning fossil fuels to clearing forests – are ingrained into our daily lives. We have been brought up in a culture of unsustainability – one where we believe that access to natural resources is infinite and where we forget our moral obligation to conserve for future generations the environment that we inherit.

Never before has humanity been threatened on such a global scale but, at the same time, never before have we been given an opportunity to work as a single human race in redefining our obligations to the environment and to future generations towards the creation of lasting and positive change.

What will it take to create a society that operates and thinks at a sustainable level? What changes are needed to incorporate sustainability into our daily lives? Ultimately, what will it take before societies begin to affect and embrace lasting changes? These are questions of leadership, and they are questions that should be seen as opportunities for inspiration, self-reflection, and activism.

The global nature and complexity of environmental degradation is such that only widespread, fundamental and institutional changes will adequately address these issues. Furthermore, these changes must take place on three levels: national, business, and individual. These three levels of change are described in Thomas Friedman's book, *The World is Flat*.<sup>5</sup> Throughout the history of the world, the "key agent of change" has transitioned

from national governments to transnational companies and, finally, to individuals. Although Friedman argues that individuals are currently emerging as the primary dynamic force to be reckoned with, all three forces continue to exist today and are simultaneously affecting change at a global scale.

For the purpose of this paper, I will focus attention on the global decline of coral reefs as an instructive case in leadership. Nonetheless, the reality is that human-related environmental degradation is a global phenomenon and the interconnectedness of all ecosystems means that natural resources at all levels – aquatic, marine, and terrestrial – are being threatened. The specific changes described here for coral reefs are meant to be applied on a broader level for all ecosystems.

### Coral Reef Decline and Climate Change

Although coral reefs only cover a small fraction of the earth's surface (~284,300 km<sup>2</sup>), they are the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world.<sup>6</sup> Serving as the breeding ground and habitat for countless species of fish, coral reefs are a major source of protein and food security, especially for many developing countries.

Coral reefs are also a lucrative source of income, not just in the tourism industry, but also for the biomedical industry. In fact, coral reefs are home to many organisms such as sponges, algae, corals and other organisms with unique biochemistries that have become a major subject of medical research. Therefore, coral reefs have become a gold mine for biochemical discovery, serving as a source of biochemical compounds that are being studied for the development of new medicines to treat cancer and other diseases. Finally, coral reefs can also abate the destructive effects of coastal hazards; According to Simon Scripps from World Wildlife Fund-International,

*Places that had healthy coral reefs and intact mangroves were far less badly hit than places where the reefs had been damaged and the mangroves ripped out and replaced by beach front hotels and prawn farms.<sup>7</sup>*

Thus, the benefits of coral reefs go well beyond that of commercial interests. Despite their importance to society, coral reefs are being degraded on a global scale. The first global assessment of coral reefs shows that 58 percent of the world's coral reefs are at risk due to overfishing, coastal development and other human activity.<sup>8</sup> A third of all reefs are threatened by over-exploitation, and a third also by coastal development. In Southeast Asia, more than 80 percent of the most species-rich coral reefs on earth are threatened by coastal development and fishing pressures, with over half at high risk.

The bigger picture is even bleaker. The accelerating decline of coral reef ecosystems is described in the latest global assessment of the *Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2000*.<sup>9</sup> By late 2000, 27% of the world's reefs have been effectively lost, with the largest single cause being the massive climate-related coral bleaching event triggered by the 1998 El Niño. Due to the rising sea temperatures caused by El Niño, 16% of the coral reefs of the world were destroyed in just a 9 month period. Furthermore, it is also possible that rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere may slow the growth rates of coral reefs by up to 10-20 percent in the next century.<sup>10</sup>

Coral reefs are often referred to as the rainforests of the ocean. These unique ecosystems harbor more species per unit area than any other marine environment, yet they continue to be threatened by human activities and degraded at an alarmingly rapid rate. The most alarming statistic of all is that, if nothing is done, 70% of the world's coral reefs will not survive the next 50 years.<sup>11</sup>

Replenishing coral is not like planting a tree. Growing just a few centimeters per year, coral stands cannot be "reforested" once lost. Therefore, it is imperative that action be taken to reverse the worldwide continued loss of coral reefs.

### **The Potential of National Governments**

To quote Al Gore, "The political systems around the world have held this [the issue of global warming] at arm's length because it's an inconvenient truth, because they don't want to accept that it's a moral imperative."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, national governments have been late to respond to the issue of global warming and the related threat of environmental degradation, though they harbor an enormous amount of potential to create broad sweeping policies that could avoid disaster.

The Kyoto Protocol's regulation of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution is an example of how some governments have decided to cooperate on an international level to confront a global environmental issue. Unfortunately, the lack of leadership from the United States federal government on this issue has made it difficult for the international community to move forward. Luckily, sev-

eral states and cities are taking steps to "ratify" the Kyoto Protocol locally and move forward without federal support. In fact, despite all the criticisms surrounding its effectiveness, Kyoto has led dozens of countries to adopt innovative emissions reductions programs.

Another Kyoto is due for our oceans.

National governments must also begin to direct more attention towards marine conservation. Although there are nearly 1,000 designated "marine protected areas" (MPAs) globally, supposedly restricting human activities on about 18.7% of the world's coral reefs,<sup>13</sup> lax enforcement has led to a situation where, in fact, only 2% of the world's coral reefs effectively protected by MPA-status. In other words, there is a major discrepancy between the quantity and quality of existing marine protected areas.

This problem is known to the conservation community as the creation of "paper parks" that exist only on paper and fail to meet the goals of sustainability. The moral of the story is that national governments must be willing to provide the necessary leadership and commitment towards managing their national resources. Otherwise, policies aimed at protecting the environment will only look good on paper.

### **The Potential of Multinationals**

Throughout human history, the vast expanse of our world's oceans created the impression that its bounty was limitless. But population growth, increasing wealth, and highly industrialized and unsustainable fishing techniques have pushed our marine natural resources to the limits. A recent scientific article published in the prestigious journal *Science* predicts that worldwide populations of fish will collapse by the year 2048 due to commercial overfishing.<sup>14</sup> These estimates include both oceanic and coastal reef fisheries.

The problem is that many fishing industries refuse to take notice. The National Fisheries Institute, a trade association for the seafood industry, does not share the researcher's alarm. "Fish stocks naturally fluctuate in population," the institute said in a statement. "By developing new technologies that capture target species more efficiently and result in less impact on other species or the environment, we are helping to ensure our industry does not adversely affect surrounding ecosystems or damage native species."<sup>15</sup>

While it may be true that technologies help to decrease some of the unwanted side effects of fishing on the environment, this still does not address the issue of overfishing. Below a certain threshold population size, fish populations will be doomed to long-term decline. A 2004 report by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (UN-FAO) estimates that 28% of fish stock worldwide are either

“overfished or nearing extinction,” while another 47% are “near the limits of sustainability”.<sup>16</sup>

In fact, illegal and destructive fishing activities abound. For example, in the Philippines and throughout Southeast Asia, destructive fishing practices such as dynamite and cyanide (using explosives and chemicals, respectively, to capture fish, while also destroying surrounding corals) continue to devastate coral reefs in the region.

Business, however, can be an action for change. J. Gregory Dees, director of the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University has said that, “increasingly, societies are realizing that private citizens, acting in entrepreneurial ways, blending business tools with relevant social expertise, are the best hope for finding those solutions [to social problems].”<sup>17</sup> One example of this is the international non-profit Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), which operates a model program for seafood products, targeting the giant commercial fishing industry.<sup>18</sup> While MSC has successfully worked with fishing companies that operate on open-ocean and temperate-zone fisheries, there is yet to be a coral reef fishery that meets the standards for MSC-certification.

## The Potential of Individuals

As Thomas Friedman argues in his book “The World is Flat,” the “individual” as opposed to institutions such as national governments and businesses is quickly emerging as the new driving force of change. What can individuals do to address global-scale problems such as coral reef degradation? A few suggestions from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for helping coral reefs survive the next century include:

- Conserve water.
- Only buy aquarium fish that you know have been collected in an ecologically sound manner. Look for the Marine Aquarium Council (MAC) stamp of approval.
- Be an informed consumer. Consider carefully the coral objects that you buy for your coffee table. Ask the store owner or manager whether or not the country of origin has a management plan to insure legal and sustainable coral harvests.
- Don't use chemically enhanced pesticides and fertilizers. These products end up in the watershed and may ultimately impact the waters that support coral.
- Learn more about coral reefs.<sup>19</sup>

The last point is particularly important. By becoming more aware and politically active, we can vote to encour-

age both governments and businesses to practice sustainable methods.

## Conclusion

However, governments, business and individuals must work interactively. Governments can help to create incentives for businesses and individuals to practice sustainable methods and lifestyles. Businesses can respond with innovative and efficient solutions that incorporate sustainability into long-term business plans. And most importantly, individuals can act as the regulators of both governments and businesses by voting with both their ballots and wallets. This is the beauty of the new era of globalization as described by Thomas Friedman and the reasoning behind the populist maxim that states that “if the people lead, the leaders will follow.”

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# Obstacles to Participation

## The Grassroots Politics of Planning

by Bunnarith Meng

In order to make grassroots participation in urban planning and development possible, all involved stakeholders – including government, planners, private-sector groups, and community organizations – must position themselves in the *societal* context. A city is ultimately identified with its people.<sup>1</sup> Social learning and mutual learning as advocated by John Friedmann, a well-respected planner and academic, is perhaps the most appropriate mechanism that these actors need to go through together for the creation of a city that serves all its citizens. Social learning may involve so-called change agents (for example, facilitators, planners, civil society groups) who encourage, guide and assist an actor (for example, community groups) in the process of changing reality. That is, these agents bring certain kinds of knowledge to the social practice of community groups. Mutual learning for understanding each other's needs could help shape effective institutions that perform urban development affairs more effectively and in a manner that is responsive to the needs of citizens and society at large.<sup>2</sup>

Participation in urban planning is not systematically addressed under Cambodian law. This continues to give rise to dilemmas as long as the governments at all levels act in a top-down manner. Therefore, community residents should be empowered at the grassroots level for effective participation in the planning process. This means that empowering them in a way that will allow for them to be politically effective is also a way of strengthening the political system of which the state is a part.<sup>3</sup>

Grassroots planning projects in Cambodia promote direct consultation and cooperation between low-income groups and local governments through the establishment of district-level community development management committees. If a community wants to participate in urban improvement programs of the municipality, it must have its own organization and representatives.<sup>4</sup> This has led to the creation of low-income com-

munity organizations, which provide not only an avenue to demand change from government agencies, but also a means to undertake initiatives and become partners with them.<sup>5</sup> These partnerships are important for two reasons. First, they support and encourage community groups to be involved in city government affairs. Second, they help change anti-poor attitudes among politicians and government officials.

However, civil society and community residents still face dilemmas of participation in urban development affairs, because civil society actors and local communities are not facilitated to overcome obstacles to participation.

### Impact of Politics on Urban Development

Governance reforms in Cambodia, combined with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia or 'UNTAC',<sup>6</sup> construction boom in the early 1990s, constitute two main influences on urban development. Economic and political reforms such as the changing of property rights in the late 1980s in Cambodia have brought about rapid urbanization and placed tremendous pressure on urban land, housing, services and infrastructure in major cities. The new market economy offers opportunities for the rural poor population to migrate to Phnom Penh for economic activities, constituting rapid urban population growth at the rate of about 5% annually.<sup>7</sup>

Combined with poor planning and weak institutions, both national and municipal governments are unable to provide people with affordable housing and basic needs. Instead, they are left to live on their own, thus leading to a rapid formation of slums and squatter settlements. The poor are forced to share existing dwellings, by occupying and buying land informally along roadsides, including public and private lands, rivers, railways, and even on the roofs of above existing buildings.<sup>8</sup>



Governance reforms have opened a new window for conceptualizing the structure of opportunities for individual and collective action outside the state. In other words, they give birth to civil society organizations and democratization in the country.<sup>9</sup> This coincides with similar trends in many countries across East and Southeast Asia in the global 'aid-speak' period.<sup>10</sup> This context is fundamental for understanding Cambodia's trajectory for promoting good governance, democracy and civil participation in planning and development.

## The Grassroots Politics of Planning

The incapability of the national and municipal governments to cope with urban problems calls for the involvement of civil society. Rapid urbanization has led to increased recognition of the roles that actors outside the state can play when working in the arena of shelter and service delivery.<sup>11</sup>

Urban poverty alleviation projects, however, are mainly managed by international agencies, such as UN-Habitat and United Nations Development Program.<sup>12</sup> However, the scope and potential success of any international agency's projects depend upon the quality and capacity of local implementation.<sup>13</sup> To empower local civil society actors, such as nongovernmental and community-based organizations, such dependent relationships should be avoided.<sup>14</sup>

Organized low-income groups in Phnom Penh have had an influence on the city government agencies at the project level and at the national level. For example, the Solidarity for the Urban Poor Federation (SUPF)<sup>15</sup> unifies low-income communities by encouraging them to pool their resources and work out their own solutions to problems of land security, houses, toilets, basic services, and access to credits for livelihood. Today, SUPF is active in more than half of the city's low-income communities. It also operates in ten other cities and towns and is currently working in 200 slums throughout Cambodia, mainly with community-based savings and credit initiatives.

However, although civil society organizations and community groups in Cambodia can forge relationships with the government, they are not formally and systematically integrated in urban policies or laws. Their partnerships with government organizations are almost exclusively based on project-based programs that are funded by international agencies. One should note



Angkor Wat on the Millenium Day Festival

Photo courtesy of Bunnarith Meng

that, without the conditions for partnership, there would be no funding for urban improvement programs in low-income communities. As such, partnership opportunities do not replace land development investments that are initiated by the government in a top-down manner.

Planning for citizen participation at the city level is not an easy task. While poor urban communities are generally faced with the pressure of land markets, they are also affected by the government's selling and leasing of state land to private developers for investments. Evictions and resettlements of community residents further reduce their living standards, and resettlement areas are not adequately serviced.<sup>16</sup> Thus, this approach creates new problems in new places aside from central urban areas. Indeed, many relocated residents return to the city to find new places to secure an economic livelihood.

Hence, obstacles to community participation in Cambodian city planning are often associated with economic haggling over lucrative land sites. Most often, the term 'community participation' is used only on paper to decorate the political landscape and, in fact, the decisions for such sites are non-negotiable. For example, a recent eviction of urban poor communities in Phnom Penh's Bassac community, in which about 1,400 families were living, was countered by intervention actions involving about a hundred civil society groups, including national and international advocacy groups and human rights organizations as well as community protests, but they did not achieve their intended goals.

More recently, Boeng Kak Lake,<sup>17</sup> the only remaining lake in the heart of the city with a size of 133 hectares, was recently given to a local company for development on a 99-year lease. This project will consume almost three-fourths of the lake's original size for physical construction. The lease even contradicts existing land law. It will undoubtedly lead to the displacement of more than 4,000 families and hundreds of businesses that occupy the land around the lake.<sup>18</sup> What is astonishing is the fact that the plan for development was not revealed publicly, nor were the local residents aware of the issue. The development will not only adversely affect the residents, but also the city's resources as a whole. Once lost, this valuable resource will not return.

## Conclusion

Although civil society and local communities can influence the government policies to some extent, their relationship with the government cannot be sustained. Participation in planning has not been systematically addressed in any law with clear objectives, even in the face of governance reforms.

Mobilization and empowerment of community residents is necessary. To a greater extent, civil society organizations need to play a more proactive role in helping local communities and households in order to press the government to change its culture of public-policy and decision making.

<sup>1</sup> Friedmann, J. 2002. *The Prospect of the City*. Minneapolis, USA: University of Minnesota.

<sup>2</sup> Friedmann, J. 1987. *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Friedmann, J. 1992. *Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell

<sup>4</sup> Forbes, D., and Lindfield, M. 1997. *Urbanization in Asia: Lessons Learned and Innovative Responses*. Canberra, Australia: AusAID.

<sup>5</sup> Asian Coalition for Housing Rights. 2005. *Understanding Asian Cities*. Bangkok, Thailand.

<sup>6</sup> Abbreviation for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. This body was mandated by the 1991 Paris Agreements and supported by the United Nations Security Council. It was established to keep peace and organize Cambodia's 1993 elections.

<sup>7</sup> Royal Government of Cambodia. 2002. Second Socioeconomic Development Plan, 2001–2005: National Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Ministry of Planning.

<sup>8</sup> Meng, B. 2003. "The Struggle for Urban Development: Relocating Squatter Settlements as a Tentative Response to the Urban Growth in Phnom Penh, Cambodia." Masters dissertation, University of Sydney, Australia; Shatkin, G. 1998. 'Fourth world' cities in the global economy: The case of Phnom Penh, Cambodia. *International Journal for Urban and Regional Research* 22(3): 378–93; Davis, M. 2004. Planet of slum: Urban involution and informal proletariat. *New Left Review* 26: 5–33; Khemro, B.H.S. and Payne, G. 2004. Improving tenure security for the urban poor in Phnom Penh, Cambodia: An analytical case study. *Habitat International* 28: 181–201; and Payne, G. 2005. Getting ahead of the game: A twin-track approach to improving existing slums and reducing the need for future slums. *Environment and Urbanization* 1(1): 135–145.

<sup>9</sup> Devas, N. 1996. Shaping government at the local level in Cambodia: With an example of urban water supply in Battambang. *Public Administration and Development* 16(1): 31–41; Kao, K.. 1999. "Emerging Civil Society in Cambodia: Opportunities and Challenges." Conference Working Paper Series, No. 2, Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace; Kato, T. et al. 2000. *Cambodia: Enhancing Governance for Sustainable Development*. Manila, Philippines: Asian Development Bank; Hughes, C. 2003. *The Political Economy of Cambodia's Transition, 1991–2001*. London: Routledge; and Hughes, C. 2005. Candidate debate and equity news: International support for democratic deliberation in Cambodia. *Pacific Affairs* 78(1): 77–93

<sup>10</sup> Harpham, T., and Boateng, KA. 1997. Urban governance in relation to the operation of urban services in developing countries. *Habitat International* 21(1): 65–77; and *ibid.* note 9 (Hughes 2005).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, notes 2 and 9 (Devas 1996); Municipality of Phnom Penh. 1999. *Urban Poverty Reduction Strategy for Phnom Penh*. Phnom Penh, Cambodia; and Rosin, M. 2005. Reducing poverty in Cambodia: The role of NGOs and CSOs in the development policy process. *UN Chronicle* No. 2, p. 7–8.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, notes 2 and 9 (Kao 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Satterthwaite, D. 2002. "Reducing urban poverty: Constraints on the effectiveness of aid agencies and development banks and some suggestions for change." In *Realigning Actors in an Urbanizing World: Governance and Instructions from a Development Perspective*, edited by I.S.A. Baud and J. Post, 373–402. England: Ashgate. Hardoy, J.E. et al. 2001. *Environmental Problems in an Urbanizing World*. London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, note 11 (Rosin 2005).

<sup>15</sup> SUPF was established in 1994 by the urban poor in informal settlements in Phnom Penh and works jointly with a number of local and international organizations.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, notes 8 (Meng 2003, Khemro and Payne 2004, Payne 2005); Barton, C. 2007. "Life getting worse for City's eviction victims." *Phnom Penh Post*, Vol. 16, Issue 04, February 23–March 8.

<sup>17</sup> Boeng Kak was included in the Phnom Penh Master Plan as a major blue-green park of the city. In late 2003, it was the subject of international planning and design competition, at which I was awarded first prize. Residential and commercial investments by local companies are known for their inadequate design, planning, and quality of construction.

<sup>18</sup> Prak, Cl, and Welsh, J. 2007. "Firm lands 99-year lease on Boeng Kak Lake." *The Cambodia Daily*, Vol. 36, Issue 31, February 8; Hayman, A, and Sam, R. 2007a. "Boeng Kak lake latest city sell-off." *Phnom Penh Post*, Vol. 16, Issue 03, February 9–22; and 2007b. "Lake dwellers among thousands to be evicted." *Phnom Penh Post*, Vol. 16, Issue 04, February 23–March 8.



# Camel Jockeying and Child Trafficking

## The Need for Public Empowerment

by Asma Bashir

Child trafficking is a global problem. Although the trafficking of children for commercial labor is well documented, little attention is given to illicit trafficking for camel jockeying. In countries where this is practiced, trafficked children face horrible experiences merely for the amusement of an elite class. Camel racing in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is an old sport that has turned into a multimillion dollar business. There are estimated to be 14,000 active racing camels and about 15 racetracks throughout the UAE. Dubai, the center of this activity, has two main camel racing stadiums.<sup>1</sup>

In November 2000, the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly together with corresponding agreements, establishing international standards by which member states would take in-depth measures to combat smuggling of migrants and trafficking of women and children. This protocol is a first attempt to address trafficking in persons in a comprehensive and international manner.

However, failures of leadership have allowed child trafficking to continue in many countries. By empowering the groups of people vulnerable to becoming victims of child trafficking, effective solutions could be implemented from the bottom up. This paper uses Pakistan as a case study of such top-down failed leadership and opportunity for bottom-up reforms.

### Who are the Victims?

Camel racing is a sport that favors jockeys who are young, small and lightweight. Therefore, camel racers prefer to use children as camel jockeys. Usually, the victims of the camel racing trade are young boys between the ages of 4 to 13 years old. They are often trafficked from South Asian countries such as India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.<sup>2</sup>

Faced with poverty at home and lured by promises of good jobs, these victims fall prey to traffic

agents who convince parents to either sell or give up their children. In some cases, parents even pay money to traffickers hoping that, one day, the child will return with newfound wealth. Advance payments for the future career of a child are not uncommon in Pakistan, where child debt bondage often occurs in rural areas. Sometimes, children are kidnapped into servitude by trafficking rings.

### Reasons for Trafficking in Pakistan

In Pakistan, 25% of the total population of 160 million lives below the poverty line. Traffickers exploit this situation by offering the promise of money to victims' parents, who are attracted by the prospects of a lucrative job as a way out of abject poverty.

The income gap between rural and urban people and lack of rural employment opportunities are other reasons for the prevalence of camel jockey trafficking. Migration rates from rural to urban areas are very high, and internal and external migration are closely linked to the desire to seek employment.

Lack of information and education also plays an important role in leaving the poor vulnerable to victimization. The adult literacy rate in Pakistan was only 49.9% as of 2006.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the literacy rate in rural areas falls well below this average figure. With meager access to education and information, people are oblivious to the actual danger of fraud and exploitation when dealing with employment recruiters. Thus, when somebody comes and promises a good job in the Gulf States or in a developed country, the uneducated rural poor are taken advantage of.

Trafficking is also a profitable crime, since child traffickers face light penalties in comparison to those levied against drug or arms traffickers. Indeed, one child trafficker arrested in Karachi in 2000 showed no remorse for his crime, asking "we get money, the parents get money, the children get money, immigration officers get money, when everybody gets money, why be sorry?"<sup>4</sup>

Widespread police and judicial corruption provides further support and protection to the culprits of child trafficking. It is estimated that 8 to 10 well-coordinated and active child trafficking networks operate in Pakistan, with more than 300 agents and sub-agents who work both as private and government officials.<sup>5</sup>

According to a report issued by the United States Department of State in 2004, Pakistan is a country of origin, transit and destination for trafficking of girls from Nepal and Bangladesh for prostitution, as well as a transit place for children from Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka for use as camel jockeys.

### The Pakistani Camel Jockey Trade

Child trafficking for camel jockeys started in Pakistan in 1979. At that time, Arab sheiks hunting in the areas of Cholistan and Rahim Yar Khan (RYK) invested a great deal of money in building a modern hospital, school and houses for the local communities. Since children in the RYK desert are exposed at a young age to camel riding, they helped the sheiks in hunting. The sheiks rewarded these children and their parents with large sums of money and managed to motivate the parents to send their children to the UAE to serve as camel riders and grazers. Seeing visible changes in the lives of those who sent their children to the UAE, more and more parents agreed to send their kids as well.

Initially, deals were kept secret and transportation of the children was surreptitiously undertaken. Later, it became an open and “regular” business supported by local travel agents and government officials who receive kick-backs for furnishing travel documents. In 1982 to 1986, when the Pakistani government imposed restrictions on the issuance of passports to unaccompanied children, the business was curtailed for a few months. Now, however, traffickers have found a new way to run their business by sending the child with a fake family to deceive border officials.

### Life as a Camel Jockey

Camel races take place every year from October to April. Racing tracks stretch from 4 to 10 kilometers. After the race season, most of the children are either deported or retained for the following season.

After procurement, children are trained for weeks before sending them to the UAE to their “employers.” The camel jockeys work hard and long hours. They are generally allowed only 5 hours of sleep per day and are forced to sleep on the bare floor. The temperatures of their rooms are boiling during the day and freezing at night. Before each race, the child is strapped on the camel’s back but, having little control, are often at risk of falling off.

#### Stolen Future – Story of a child

A Pakistani boy who worked five years as a camel jockey, starting at age 4, remembers the race as noisy and dangerous, where more than 50 camels with screaming children strapped onto their backs would run. He personally saw about 20 children die, and more than a dozen injured every week. He recalls: “There was this one kid whose strap broke at the beginning of the race. His head was crushed between the legs of the running camel. Once the race has started it cannot stop.”

Source: “Camel Kids” [www.uaeprison.com](http://www.uaeprison.com)

It is a dangerous sport, and falls from camels often cause serious injury or even death. Thus it is a job only fit for foreign children: although children from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Sudan can be found at the race tracks, none of the camel riders come from the UAE itself. Children trapped in servitude as jockeys are not only abused, beaten, burned and tortured but also deprived of food and freedom of movement. These hardships make them vulnerable to kidney infections, sexual abnormalities and risk of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Apart from this, survivors of the camel jockey trade suffer from severe mental and psychological disabilities.

### Steps Taken by the Pakistani and UAE Governments to Combat Child Trafficking

In 2002, Pakistan was blacklisted by the United States Department of State along with 22 other nations due to their failure to adequately tackle trafficking issues. Although Pakistan’s name was removed from this list in 2005, much work remains to stamp out the child trafficking involved in the camel jockey trade.

After being blacklisted in 2002, the Pakistani government enacted a *Human Trafficking Ordinance* to fight this issue. In May 2004, the Punjab government also provided

legal protections for those whose lives have been ruined by child trafficking by approving the *Child Protection and Welfare Bureau Bill*, which carries a maximum of five years in jail for those who maim or otherwise exploit children for begging. Along this law, a pilot social welfare project was launched in the Punjab capital to provide accommodation and basic necessities of life to beggars as well as vocational education opportunities to disadvantaged children.

A recent positive development is that the Pakistan Navy has reportedly joined in the Coalition Forces Maritime Campaign Plan to monitor Pakistani waters for criminal activities, in particular human trafficking.

Nevertheless, as of 2006, the Pakistani government had yet to conduct an official inquiry on child trafficking in Pakistan. In 1992, Interior Minister Ch. Shujaat Hussain ordered such an inquiry on the basis of information provided by a senator in the upper house of the parliament, but the report was never published. It therefore remains doubtful whether the inquiry was actually conducted.

Pakistan and the UAE signed an agreement in 2004 on the taking of evidence and extra-judicial documents as well as recognition and enforcement of judgment in civil and commercial matters, which could also potentially lead to progress in curtailing child trafficking between these countries. In April 2004, the Prime Minister of Pakistan established an inter-ministerial committee on human trafficking, smuggling and illegal immigration that is charged with developing a comprehensive policy to combat trafficking. The UAE has also banned the use of children below 14 years of age or weighing less than 45 kg to serve as camel jockeys. However, media reports still show that camel jockeying remains in practice in the UAE despite all of these restrictions.

## Recommended Steps

Human trafficking has several dimensions, and it calls for a comprehensive approach including empowerment of those who would otherwise become victims of this crime. Simply enacting laws and patrolling borders will not curb this menace. Rehabilitation of the victims and survivors is also necessary.

According to the non-governmental Agha Khan Foundation, as of 2004, only eight non-governmental organizations were working in Pakistan to fight child trafficking. Funding for such organizations is limited, which is the

primary reason why only a few organizations work on this issue. Besides additional support for non-governmental organizations, however, public empowerment is also essential.

The following are a few recommendations for bottom-up initiatives to fight against child trafficking:

- Increase public awareness among the potential victims of child trafficking for the camel jockey trade.
- Increase literacy levels and access to quality education in order to reduce the vulnerability levels of potential victims.
- Consult with trafficked children, their parents during the formulation, implementation and monitoring of anti-child trafficking efforts.
- Ensure safe, voluntary and timely repatriation from UAE or any other country where children are trafficked.
- Provide training to government officials and non-governmental workers, especially at the local levels, to respond promptly and appropriately to the needs of vulnerable children and communities.

## Conclusion

The government cannot fight the problem of child trafficking by only enacting laws and policies. Other contributing factors must also be taken into account such as illiteracy, poverty, population and lack of awareness. The strongest solutions to these issues can be found at the community level, because traffickers have strong, deep links in affected communities. The public should be empowered to fight this issue to complement work done by governments. In this way, effective solutions can work to eliminate this devastating form of child slavery.

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<sup>1</sup> Walter, V. Dubai Ruler Sued in U.S over Enslaving small boys. *ABCNews.com*. September, 2006 [http://blogs.abcnews.com/theblotter/2006/09/dubai\\_ruler\\_sue.html](http://blogs.abcnews.com/theblotter/2006/09/dubai_ruler_sue.html)

<sup>2</sup> Combating Trafficking in Children for Labor Exploitation in South Asia: Report on South Asian Consultation, ILO-IPEC, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP Human Development Indicators: Country Facts Sheet. Human Development Report 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Anwar, M. 2004. Child Trafficking for Camel Races: A Perspective from Pakistan. Center for Research and Social Development.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*.

# Human Trafficking In the Globalization Process

by Ei Kalya Moore

The United Nations defines trafficking in persons as:

*[The] recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments and benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.<sup>1</sup>*

Trading and exploiting human beings is an evil crime and a human rights violation. Furthermore, it is a modern form of slavery because it involves the use of threats, violence, and other forms of coercion to force victims to work under exploitative conditions and millions of men, women, and children around the world are forced to lead lives as slaves.<sup>2</sup>

Trafficking in persons occurs as a multidimensional phenomenon in which legal, social, economic, labour, human rights, and security issues converge. Globalization is also a multidimensional phenomenon where the market economy, information and communication technology, transportation and tourism as well as social and cultural transformation meet. Although globalization and human trafficking are often viewed as separate issues, there are strong links and cause-effect relationships between the two phenomena.

This paper aims to give a view of how globalization has exacerbated human trafficking. To illustrate this, I provide several examples drawn from interviews that I have conducted with trafficking survivors.

Globalization creates a huge gap in wealth distribution between countries and increases the

viability of trafficking routes from poor to rich countries. It helps countries to develop economically and to alleviate poverty, but it has also increased disparities between countries, since there is no equal distribution of economic growth among countries. Larger benefits go to the countries that enjoy more capital and resources. As disparities increase in the course of globalization, rich countries therefore become richer and poor countries become poorer. Researchers and practitioners often overlook this growing wealth distribution gap as an unwanted effect of globalization and an important contributing factor to human trafficking.

Along with wealth disparity, globalization plays a catalytic role in fueling supply and demand for trafficking. Rich countries continue to provide the promise of job opportunities and better income, which serves to lure people into situations where they fall victim to trafficking. At the opposite end of the wealth gap, those living in poor countries continue to face economic hardship, low income and scarce job opportunities, factors that push victims into trafficking.

Globalization has triggered an increased degree of migration across international borders, and migrant populations are especially vulnerable to the risks of trafficking. Migration patterns usually flow from poor to rich countries. The combination of poverty with low education levels and lack of accessibility to appropriate information cause many people to choose illegal channels for migration. These illegal channels take the form of services provided by unscrupulous recruiters, brokers, and transporters who promise to get them across the border undetected by – or sometimes in collaboration with – border authorities. The illegality of such arrangements makes migrants especially vulnerable to exploitation and, hence, to becoming victims of human trafficking.

One 17-year-old girl trafficked from Myanmar into Thailand described her situation as a victim of illicit cross-border migration as follows:

*I came to work here because I wanted to help my parents pay back their debt. I asked permission from my parents to go with the broker when she came to my village. Every time she comes, she brings some people to work in Thailand. If we go by ourselves, we will get caught by Thai police. If we go with the brokers, border-crossing is no problem because they are friends with the police. She said she could help me get a housemaid job in Bangkok. During travel, she kept my identity card. When we arrived at a house, she received money from the owner [employer] and disappeared since then. I was never paid although I was told that I will be paid 2,000 Baht [about US\$50] monthly. Whenever I asked for my salary, the owner-couple told me that they had already given it to the broker. I was also scared to run away because my ID card was kept by the owner.<sup>3</sup>*

The improved communication technology that is associated with the globalization process also comprises a key factor in enabling clandestine human trafficking. For example, people in transnational organized crime networks are better positioned to expand and maintain their crime networks by using mobile phones and the internet.

Moreover, improvement in travel infrastructure such as the increased number of border-crossing roads and international flights also contribute to the growing incidence of trafficking. As a result, criminals can more efficiently profit from organized crimes such as child pornography, child kidnapping, false or forced marriages, sex slavery, and prostitution.

An 18-year-old girl who was trafficked into the sex industry in Malaysia explains how such crime rings operate:

*I went to Malaysia by crossing Thailand. I was in the group with three other girls. The broker who brought us from home to the border town was not a real broker. He told us we had to wait there until he got contact from his boss. After two nights, he said that his boss had arranged for our travel. He put us on a bus and said that the bus will take us to Bangkok, and that someone will pick us up there. We spent the whole night on the bus. In Bangkok, we were picked up by another man, and we had to stay one night. Then, we were put on the bus heading to Malaysia. We were told that a man will come and meet us there. When we arrived at Hat Yai, we were brought by a car to a house and we were locked up. The next day, the manager came and told us that we were here to do sex work. When I refused, he said I could go back if I could pay back for my travel costs and broker fee. I had no choice, because I did not have that large an amount of money.<sup>4</sup>*

Globalization brings market integration. This is also true in human trafficking markets. The trafficking of human beings is driven by global demand for cheap, illegal labor. The actors involved in these global markets – recruiters, agents, employers and traffickers – practice exploitation in various ways, ranging from low or no wages to unlimited working hours, bad and inhumane working conditions as well as bonded labor and debt bondage.

The International Labor Organization estimates that 12.3 million people are trafficked in forced labour, bonded labour, child labour, and sexual servitude across and within the national borders.<sup>5</sup> With an ever-growing global market economy, there is also an increasing demand for prostitution markets. At the country and community level, prostitution is often an issue that is suppressed socially, legally, and culturally. This mismatch between local attitudes and global demand brings about further vulnerabilities to the victims of sex trafficking. At the same time, global demand for prostitution plays into the pockets of pimps, brothel owners, and traffickers who excel in their lucrative business of sex slavery. According to estimates published by the United States government, between 600,000 and 800,000 men, women and children are trafficked across international borders each year – approximately 80 percent of these are women and girls, and 50 percent are minors – with the majority trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>6</sup>

A 21 years old girl trafficked into sex industry in Thailand reflects on her experience:

*I was 16 when I left my town. The brothel where the police arrested me was my second workplace here. The first place was at a beauty parlor in Bangkok. I agreed to come with the broker because I like doing make-up and cutting hair. I aimed to run a hair saloon on my own. But, in reality, my job was not just to massage the customers. I also had to give sex services if they wanted it. I was not allowed to refuse them. Sometimes I had to serve 10-15 men, from 5:00 pm to next morning. Most are foreign men. Local people usually cannot come because they cannot use that much money. After 3 years, the owner...sent me to her brother's brothel. I was not paid my wages. She said the money she used for my daily costs was more than my daily wages. I knew that was impossible. But I couldn't do anything. If I made a complaint, she would have sent me to the police.<sup>7</sup>*

While globalization benefits millions of people through increased trade and investment in international markets,



new technologies, better transportation, and expanding media and internet connections, we must not forget that it has a devastating impact on the victims of human trafficking. In fact, globalization serves as a catalyst to fuel this crime, which generates threats to general human security. According to the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation, in 2005, human trafficking generated an estimated \$9.5 billion in revenue and fueled other types of organized crime such as money laundering, drug trafficking, document forgery, and smuggling.<sup>8</sup>

The evidence presented here, and the voices of the trafficking victims, clearly indicate that globalization has a major impact on trafficking and has worsened the situation.

Governments, international organizations and the United Nations have been striving to abolish human trafficking under the guidance of a number of international instruments, including the *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, the *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Yet, human trafficking is still one of the most rapidly growing crimes worldwide. We, as a global community and as individuals, should not turn a blind eye to the human rights abuse that is modern-day slavery. I call for the world's attention and response to this devastating tragedy of human society.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 3 of the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*. Supplement to the United Nations *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Anti-Slavery International. <http://www.antislavery.org/homepage/antislavery/modern.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Interview conducted by the author in 2002 at Baan Kredtrakarn, a Government Shelter in Bangkok, Thailand, as the Trafficking Project Officer of Save the Children UK, Myanmar.

<sup>4</sup> Interview conducted by the author in 2005 as National Project Coordinator for Myanmar with the United Nations Inter-Agency Project (UNIAP) on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region.

<sup>5</sup> United States Department of State. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. June 2006.

<sup>6</sup> United States Department of State. *Trafficking in Persons Report*. June 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Interview conducted by the author in 2005 at Bann Kredtrakarn, a Government Shelter in Bangkok, Thailand, as National Project Coordinator for Myanmar with the United Nations Inter-Agency Project (UNIAP) on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, note 5

# Poverty in Developing Countries

## And Farm Subsidies in Industrialized Countries

by Hari Har Pant

People in Jamaica drink milk produced in Europe. Young children in Ghana enjoy bread made from the wheat grown in the United States, and women in Bolivia drink corn soup made from corn imported from the United States.

Reading the above passage, one may assume that the people in these countries have become so rich that they can afford to buy crops and agricultural products produced in developed countries. But the reality is quite a different story. People in developing nations are forced to buy these foods due to their artificially low prices as a result of subsidies given by governments to farmers in rich countries. By eating food made from the crops produced in industrial countries, people in developing nations become even poorer, perpetuating the vicious cycle of poverty.

### What are Farm Subsidies?

Farm subsidies are a form of governmental monetary support given to farmers. They are given either as domestic subsidies or farm payments. Domestic subsidies are provided to farmers to encourage them to produce certain types of crops and can be paid in many ways. Farm payments are usually cash payments or special loans made directly to farmers by the government. These payments are generally given only to producers of certain commodities like corn, wheat, soybeans, rice, upland cotton and oilseeds. In 2003, the United States government spent over \$11 billion on farm payments.

Conservation payments are a different type of subsidy given to farmers to encourage them to adopt sustainable agricultural practices. The total amount of this type of subsidy paid by the United States government to its farmers in 2003 was \$2 billion.

Disaster payments are also given to farmers to compensate them for low crop yields due to abnormal natural conditions. About \$2 billion was paid out to farmers as disaster payments in the United States in 2003.

Export subsidies are also provided as monetary benefits given to the farmers to encourage them to sell their products in overseas markets. These may

include such incentives as credit facilities or tax benefits.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) classifies subsidies according to three color boxes, as follows:

- *Amber Box:* These subsidies are deemed as having highly distortional influences on trade. They are given by governments to farmers to encourage trade exports and artificially lower international market prices. The goal of the WTO is to limit all amber-box subsidies to within 5% of total support for agricultural products.
- *Blue Box:* These types of subsidies are given by governments to limit production. They also distort trade since they artificially limit production and hence affect prices. Currently, there is no cap on this type of subsidy.
- *Green Box:* Subsidies which do not distort market prices are classified under the green box. Though there is no consensus among different members as to what specific types of subsidies should fall under this category, the ultimate goal of the WTO is to encourage its members to eventually give out only green-box subsidies.<sup>1</sup>

### Problems with Farm Subsidies

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood and employment for the majority of people in developing countries. Their livelihood is therefore directly affected by subsidies that are given by developed countries to their farmers.

The subsidies given by industrialized countries to their farmers encourage them to produce more agricultural goods. Unsubsidized farmers would not otherwise produce such great amounts, and overproduction of crops lowers their price in international markets due to excessive supply.

Farmers in developing countries cannot compete against the low prices of crops produced in developed countries, because they do not have the same support from their governments. Thus, farm subsidies create trade distortions and are very unfair to farmers in developing countries. Marginal farmers

are hit the hardest, since they cannot sell their meager surplus amounts at fair prices and must instead sell at a loss. This keeps them in the vicious cycle of poverty.

Low international prices for subsidized crops also mean that farmers in developing countries cannot export their surplus crops.

For example, the developing African country of Mozambique does not have enough capital or manpower to manufacture high-technology products. However, it has able and hardworking citizens and fertile land and weather suitable to produce sugarcane. It could potentially be one of the most efficient producers of the sugar in the world and an exporter of its surplus. This would not only increase employment rates locally but also generate foreign currency reserves that could be further used in the poverty alleviation. However, it cannot do so, because it can not compete with the sugarcane produced in Europe. Though Europeans are comparatively inefficient producers of sugarcane, they can still compete against African producers due to the farm subsidies they receive. Ironically, in 2001 European Union (EU) countries exported 770,000 and 150,000 tons of sugar to Algeria and Nigeria, respectively, which would never have been possible had the EU farmers not enjoyed subsidies. The export prices of wheat, powered milk and sugar in the EU are fixed at 34%, 50% and 75% of their respective production costs.

As another example, millions of dollars of resources were spent to develop infrastructure for the dairy industry in Jamaica. Thousands of local people had been employed in dairy farming, but they lost their jobs when the milk processing plant started using milk powder produced in Europe. Local dairy farmers could not compete against the low prices of subsidized milk powder from Europe and were forced to go out of business. This was very unfair for the local people, who lost their jobs due to farm subsidies.

India's "Operation Flood" program is a third example. This effort has been very successful in increasing milk production, and thousands of rural people have been employed in dairy farming. Although India is trying to export its milk powder and dairy products to other countries, including the Arab gulf countries, it is not able to compete against cheap European milk powder. If there were no farm subsidies for this product, India would most likely be able to export its milk powder abroad, and many more poor people would have gainful employment.

From 1995 to 2005, the US government distributed \$164.7 billion as farm subsidies.<sup>2</sup> The top five recipients of the subsidy during this period are shown in the table.<sup>3</sup> The subsidies for the company receiving the greatest amount, Riceland Foods, Inc. broke down into the following categories:

- rice subsidies: \$513 million
- soybean subsidies: \$20 million
- wheat subsidies: \$7 million
- corn subsidies: \$44 thousand

The Yahoo finance website describes this organization as follows [emphasis added]:

*Riceland Foods, Inc. is one of the world's leading millers of rice. It sells long-grain, brown, wild, flavored rices, and rice-based meal kits (under the Riceland name as well as private labels) to grocery, foodservice, and food manufacturing customers. It also sells edible oil and shortening products and processes soybeans, bran, edible oils, and lecithin. Riceland markets its products throughout the US, as well as in more than 75 countries internationally.*<sup>4</sup>

The total number of industrialized countries is, of course, much lower than 75. We can therefore conclude that Riceland exports to developing nations with the support of US tax payers' money.

Farmers in the State of Hawaii received farm subsidies equal to \$16 million from 1995 to 2005, ranking Hawaii 49<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states. The bulk of this money was received by industrial farm and ranch owners, and the top recipient of subsidies in Hawaii was Island Dairy, Inc., a company owned privately by two people.

## Effects of Subsidies

People living in developed countries are also negatively affected by farm subsidies. A few large, corporate farms receive the lion's share of this money. In the United States, more than two thirds of farmers do not receive any type of subsidy, while the top 10 percent of subsidy recipients get 68 percent of the funds.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from the direct tax burden due to farm subsidies, American tax payers have to bear the additional burden of

artificially high commodity prices, which occur due to barriers on the import of foreign crops. These high prices due to import restrictions are passed on to consumers.

According to the United States International Trade Commission, between 2000 and 2002, the average domestic price of nonfat dry milk was 23 percent higher than the world price, cheese 37 percent higher, and butter more than double. Trade policies also drive up prices for peanuts, cotton, beef, orange juice, canned tuna, and other products. In another study, it was estimated that United States consumers paid an additional \$16.2 billion in 2004, equivalent to an extra \$146 per household.<sup>6</sup> Since food is a basic necessity, low income people spend a higher percentage of their wealth on food than the rich. This amounts to a regressive tax that harms to the most vulnerable people.

Trade policies in Europe are equally harmful. The EU accounts for about 90% of the world's trade subsidies.<sup>7</sup> Developed countries have on paper signed agreements with the World Trade Organization (WTO) to reduce agricultural subsidies but, in fact, their actions are in precisely the opposite direction. According to Oxfam, an international non-profit organization, EU countries gave about US\$5 billion more in subsidies during the 1990s than a decade earlier, against their original commitment to the WTO. Oxfam's research found that the EU and the US broke the WTO's *Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures*, causing 38 developing countries to suffer from unfair competition.<sup>8</sup>

As in United States, most recipients of farm subsidies in Europe are large land owners. More than 78 percent of the total farmers in the EU receive less than US\$8,000 each as direct subsidies, but the top 2,000 of the total 4.5 million recipients receive a combined US\$1.8 billion dollars.

## Conclusion

Farm subsidies cause a double disadvantage to people in developing countries. They are not only denied access to internal markets but also to international markets.

If poverty is to be alleviated in developing countries, employment opportunities must be created. Current farm subsidy policies decrease employment opportunities in developing countries and hence contribute to poverty. It is vital to remove these subsidies, which distort

international trade, in order to alleviate poverty in developing countries.

All stakeholders in developing countries should be united and voice their opposition to trade injustice. Civil society organizations in developed countries should pressure their governments to remove these trade barriers and give the farmers of the developing world a level field on which to compete. Since trade subsidies affect the people of both developed and developing countries, it is time for global civic engagement, and citizens and civil society groups of all nations should work together to solve this global problem.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org)

<sup>2</sup> [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)

<sup>3</sup> [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)

<sup>4</sup> Yahoo finance website

<sup>5</sup> Six Reasons to Kill Farm Subsidies and Trade Barriers, *Reason Magazine*, Feb 2006

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Oxfam report. Stop the Dumping.

<sup>8</sup> Oxfam Press Release. 30 November 2005.

# Dengue Control in the Western Pacific Region Through Service Learning and Leadership

by James Kelley

The dengue virus, which causes mild dengue fever (DF), and sometimes a more severe dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) or dengue shock syndrome (DSS), is notorious for debilitating populations in countries across the Western Pacific Region (WPR). There are no vaccines or antiviral medicines available yet to prevent disease for the millions of people who are infected annually.

DF involves a sudden fever for 2-7 days accompanied by intense headache, anorexia, nausea, vomiting and rash.<sup>1</sup> DHF is a more life threatening illness, often associated with increased vascular permeability and decreased blood pressure, which can lead to shock and sometimes death. The dengue virus initially enters the human during a blood meal of an infected female *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, and epidemic cycles can occur every 2-5 years. Epidemics often affect a high percentage of the at-risk populations: in an unprecedented pandemic in 1998, 56 countries reported 1.2 million cases of DF and DHF.<sup>2</sup> Only a small percentage of those infected progress to DHF, and the biological mechanisms that lead to disease are not entirely clear.

Before falling ill from DF in Samoa as a Peace Corps volunteer, I knew little about this virus or its potential to cause disease. After having witnessed its debilitating effects in Samoa and throughout the WPR during my travels, however, I was determined to learn more about dengue. For this reason, I enrolled as a student of infectious diseases at Emory University, where service learning was emphasized as part of the Master's in Public Health degree.

A continued interest in malaria and other vector-borne diseases, including dengue, led me to Manila for a two-year stint at the World Health Organization's (WHO) Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) in the unit of Malaria, other Vector-borne, and Parasitic Diseases. There, I assisted with the implementation of region-wide dengue control activities focusing on dengue rapid diagnostic tests for point-of-care diagno-

ses. A specialized agency under the United Nations, WPRO offers service learning opportunities through internships and region-wide research programs.

Reduction of morbidity and mortality caused by DF and DHF/DSS will require committed and determined servant leaders who look first to the well-being of others before themselves. WPRO's Regional Director, Dr. Shigeru Omi, shows many characteristics of an authentic servant leader.

## Dengue Fever Control in a Flat World

From Thomas Friedman's point of view, the WHO exists in a flat world. He explains that, now that the world is flat, it is possible for more people than ever to collaborate and compete in real-time with many others on more equal footing than previously possible.<sup>3</sup> Knowledge centers, such as WHO country offices, are connected by a single global internet.

In essence, diseases have always persisted in a flat world: viruses transmit rapidly. The WHO was established by individuals who understood the nature of diseases, and the potential for pandemics, decades before Friedman coined the term "flat world." The internet allows the WHO, through its country offices, to monitor potential pandemics with methods approaching real-time analysis. For example, during the bird flu scare of 2004, WPRO reacted quickly and mitigated potential disaster by communicating with affected countries and implementing central activities as required.

## Dr. Omi as a Servant Leader

Servant leaders have the ability to cause others around them to grow. They succeed because they enjoy their work and because others are compelled by their passion. David Packard, a cofounder of the Hewlett-Packard company and



known for embracing servant leadership, once said, “we just did the things we loved to do and were so happy, that people wanted to join us.”<sup>4</sup> Dr. Omi has a passion for his work. During a short meeting with the Director when I began working at WPRO, Dr. Omi shared his experience of living in the South Pacific. We connected immediately due to our similar experiences while living on the islands. He talked about how much he enjoys his work and suggested that if I didn’t know already, I should figure out what I most enjoy in life and make that a career.



Ken Blanchard, an American businessman, describes the servant leader as “the person who makes clear goals and then rolls up his sleeves and does whatever it takes to help his people.”<sup>5</sup> Also, based on Greenleaf’s original writings, Larry Spears lists ten critical characteristics of a servant leader: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.<sup>6</sup> Whether or not he knows the definition of servant leader, Dr. Omi has adopted many of these characteristics. As a trained physician who shows heart and commitment, he has learned the value of serving others. It shows in his presence.

Because Dr. Omi supports interns and offers research opportunities, he has created an environment of service learning. Service learning and capacity building are integral to the WHO’s success and its ability to prevent and control dengue throughout the region. Education, such as community awareness about vector control and eventually cultural acceptance of vaccine usage, is critical to sustain dengue control and prevention efforts. David Packard defined good citizenship as making contributions to the community and to the institutions in our society which generate the environment in which we operate.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Omi has provided an environment of service learning, generated good citizenship, and adopted characteristics of servant leadership. Internships and research programs integrated into WPRO’s dengue control efforts allow in-



severe disease will be characterized, ultimately leading the way for better vaccines and antivirals. Servant leaders involved in antiviral and vaccine development processes can ensure that affordable products are available to those who need them most.

### Personal Servant Leadership

Bill George describes servant leaders as having a purpose, value, heart, relationship and self-discipline.<sup>8</sup> I believe that purpose can be defined as helping others with a passion to achieve their state of well-being and wholeness while achieving clearly established goals. Values may include achieving this purpose with integrity, honesty, character and love. Heart is defined as having compassion to encourage and bring hope to those served. Relationships include connected networks with clear, trans-

parent and honest communication. Self-discipline is the consistent and daily renewal of these characteristics while developing into a servant leader as a lifestyle. My purpose in meeting people's practical and spiritual needs is to help create a fullness of well-being by adding value to their lives. Helping to solve the regional dengue problem fits into my purpose.

### Conclusion

Dengue debilitates populations throughout the WPR. Currently, without vaccines or antivirals, public health initiatives for dengue prevention and control are limited to vector control and community awareness. As scientists gain insight into dengue pathogenesis and translate our knowledge of basic virology to useful medical applications, patients and those at-risk for infection will have an advantage.







Living in Samoa and Manila, I was able to see first hand dengue's potential and the need for therapies. Because dengue pathogenesis is complex, and development of an effective vaccine may take several years, organizations such as the WHO, must initiate dengue prevention through integrated and regional programs.

WPRO is involved in service learning activities and has a servant leader, Dr. Shigeru Omi, at the helm as its Director. Having a leader with quality characteristics such as honesty, integrity and self-discipline, the WHO will have a greater chance to achieve better health for all. Dr. Omi is a leader who brings value to others around him and puts those he serves first. With WHO's established support infrastructure, collaborations and partnerships, it is

best able to ensure regional control and strategies that minimize the burden of this disease.

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- 1 Heymann, D. 2004. *Control of Communicable Diseases Manual*, 18<sup>th</sup> edition. American Public Health Association.
  - 2 *Ibid.*
  - 3 Friedman, TL. 2005. *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. New York.
  - 4 Senge, P. 1998. *Afterward of Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. Paulist Press. New York.
  - 5 Kanuka, S. 2004. *Servant Leadership: A New Business Model in the Age of Globalization*. Coleman.
  - 6 Spears, L. and Greenleaf R. 2002. *Focus on Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
  - 7 Packard. *The HP Way*: 80.
  - 8 George, B. 2003. *Authentic Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

# Slow Food

## A Servant Leadership Approach to Healthier Communities

by Carl Polley

What if “eating on the run” meant picking some free raspberries off a hedge on your way to class or work instead of paying a few bucks to chomp down a value meal while waiting in gridlock? A broader variety of choices for convenient and healthy food would benefit Americans socially, economically and nutritionally. Only rarely do consumers consider the social effects of their dietary choices. Nonetheless, current American food production and consumption patterns are massively unsustainable, causing tremendous societal costs and health risks.

As one example of a healthy alternative to this system, the global “permaculture” movement advocates sustainable community agriculture. The idea is simple: stronger civic engagement through mindful local production of food using practices that are in harmony with nature. Permaculturists advocate a balanced diet not only for humans but also for the local ecology: shifting from one-crop intensive agriculture to multi-crop “layered agriculture” allows for an abundant and diverse variety of food where space is limited. Trees grow and produce fruit and nuts perennially with little care, while grain crops flourish at a middle layer and green leafy vegetables can grow in their shade.

The permaculture movement and its core values have led to successful social change in even the most disadvantaged of societies. At the University of Hawaii Manoa campus, and in many areas around the United States, permaculture projects could build civic engagement while improving community diets and lifestyles.

### **Fast Food Lifestyles: Massive Social Risk and Failed Accountability**

Only rarely do we consider food within the context of major social issues. When social problems do occur due to patterns of food production

and consumption, they are often “solved” by spending more money and generating more profits for other sectors of the economy.

For example, in the United States, malnutrition and unhealthy lifestyles are leading risk factors for heart disease, cancer and diabetes, which are three out of the four most common causes of death.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, a pharmaceutical and medical industry has rapidly developed to treat the symptoms – but not to change the root causes – of these lifestyles.

Unhealthy diets and increasingly sedentary lifestyles mean that it is easy for Americans to gain weight and hard for them to lose it. Any real solution to the social problems caused by unhealthy lifestyle choices must come from consumers themselves or, as a response to public demand, through broad social changes in the ways that our food is produced and consumed. Children and young adults at all education levels would benefit from effective programs that teach about the body’s nutritional needs and the nutritional content of various types of food, including junk food, as well as the health risks that arise from unhealthy diets and the various alternatives for fast and convenient food.

As a longer-term vision, programs that teach about food through direct civic engagement could have tremendous potential for improving people’s diets and the general social welfare. For example, participation in community gardens would give children and adults alike an opportunity for exercise and communication about diets and nutrition. By taking an active role in choosing and making their own food, people can take control of their own health.

Let’s consider an example of how such grassroots efforts have played out in other countries.

## The Slow Food Alternative: A Case Study in Servant Leadership

John Hunwick grew up on a farm in Australia. Throughout most of his life, he probably did not think of himself as someone who would effect great changes in society or be remembered as a leader. Nonetheless, the trajectory of his life has made a significant positive impact on people and communities in three African countries – Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda – through agricultural development and educational projects targeting orphans and disadvantaged children. Through his visionary leadership style and approach to solving social problems, Hunwick has contributed to the building of civic engagement and individual empowerment for some of the most impoverished citizens of our world.

After moving to Kenya to teach at an agricultural university in the early 1990s, Hunwick became interested in improving the lives of poor rural communities through sustainable agriculture projects. Around 1993, he moved to Uganda and founded a non-profit called Sustainable Agricultural Support for Orphans (SASO). Adopting servant leadership principles, such as focus on individual empowerment and collective problem-solving, SASO has worked with orphanages throughout Uganda to design, implement and maintain collective farms and gardens that are tended by orphans and their local communities. In 1994, SASO expanded its mission to include food relief and founding of new orphanages in the neighboring country of Rwanda, which at that time was in the midst of a bloody civil war.

Now, Hunwick continues to work as a member of World Challenge, a UK-based organization that coordinates international volunteer work for students, teachers and leaders. At World Challenge, Hunwick heads up projects to build educational infrastructure in rural Uganda.

When first coming to Uganda, Hunwick realized that many international non-profits arrived intending to give local people money or equipment for specific projects that had already been fully planned in the donor's home country. Often, volunteers working for these organizations would have little direct contact with local communities. In some cases, when an organization arrived with charitable relief for an orphanage, it would strictly control the distribution of materials and resources so as to benefit orphans exclusively while ignoring the needs of the rest of a community. This would often lead to resentment and further prejudice against the orphans.

Hunwick understood that coming into a community with a cookie-cutter plan and imposing it on a targeted population without feedback or direct engagement would lead to few tangible results. In an interview in 1995 for *Permaculture Magazine*, he pointed out that the Ugandan people needed “practical teaching to improve their food production, not just money thrown at them by big organizations.”<sup>2</sup> With this in mind, Hunwick and SASO selected projects that would build civic engagement, such that the aid agency would work closely with the community it served in order to ensure that its projects met genuine needs in ways that could be appreciated immediately.

When working with orphanages to design community gardens, SASO would first survey the land available and determine what types of crops would be most appropriate given the local conditions. In most cases, crops were chosen for their ease of cultivation given the local ecology. For example, only plants requiring no fertilization or chemical protection against weeds and insects were introduced to local gardens and farms. Efficient use of space was a second consideration: building upon traditional Ugandan farming practices, smaller crops such as beans and peanuts grew under taller crops like maize, which could in turn grow under banana and other fruit trees.

Having designed a community garden for an orphanage, SASO would then coordinate between international volunteers and the members of the community surrounding the orphanage to prepare the land for planting. In some cases, local and international military assistance was even required to clear a field of land mines. Once the land was prepared, the orphans and local community could plant, tend and harvest their crops.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to providing sustainable nourishment for the orphanages and communities, SASO improved the psychological health of the people whom they assisted. Recalling the establishment of an orphanage and community garden in Rwanda, Hunwick said, “this was a massive boost to the children’s spirits. They were very excited and willing partners in the harvest. It seemed [to give them] a sense that they were participating, in every way, in their future.”<sup>4</sup>

Having provided orphanages throughout Uganda with resources to support their children’s nutritional needs, Hunwick has now moved on to work on the development of basic educational infrastructure in underdeveloped rural villages. He has led the establish-



ment of more than 11 permanent school facilities in remote communities. One of these cases, Lubbe Primary School, formerly had 381 students and, lacking adequate shelter, classes were conducted under the trees.<sup>5</sup> By coordinating international students<sup>6</sup> who wished to engage in international volunteer work, Hunwick oversaw the erection of buildings and establishment of basic facilities, such as water and electrical resources, for these schools. At Lubbe Primary School, as of 2005, enrollment had increased to 506 total students and classes were held in sheltered areas.<sup>7</sup>

Hunwick's accomplishments are a testament to the civic engagement and productivity that can be created through mindful and value-driven community planning. And it all starts with food.

## Conclusion

The Hawaiian word *kama'aina* means "people of the land" or "local people." SASO and World Challenge's models for social change, as well as Hunwick's personal accomplishments, are an inspiration for greater involvement in and support for volunteer and social projects initiated by *kama'aina* in our own community.

Some of the same methods that Hunwick adopted could easily translate to similar initiatives on our islands. For example, since land is scarce in Hawaii, communities could employ layered growing techniques and agricultural/residential flexible zoning policies to establish gardens and farms on school campuses, in parks and other public areas.

At the University of Hawaii at Manoa campus, there are already two community projects that offer slow food alternatives for those who are interested: the Sustainability Courtyard and the Hale Kuahine Community Garden. Each of these is open to volunteer participation. Together, they are an important first step toward building spaces for civic engagement through production of healthy food.

In light of the success of Hunwick's value-driven work, it may be beneficial for those involved with the Sustainability Courtyard and Hale Kuahine Community Garden, as well as other similar projects in our community, to incorporate value- and goal-based collective planning into their models for social change. By engaging individuals and working toward goals that participants

formulate, there can be solid motivation to drive these projects toward success.

Despite the cultural and economic differences that exist between Africa and Hawaii, the psychological principles and service leadership values that Hunwick employed apply universally. By adopting his model of selecting projects that work directly with community members to select meaningful goals, build community involvement through participatory activities and produce tangible results that can be enjoyed by those participating, we can find the right mixture of ingredients for successful volunteer projects here in our own community.

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<sup>1</sup> National Vital Statistics Report, Vol. 50, No. 15, 16 September 2002. and The Doctors Lounge.Net. CDC: Obesity Approaching Tobacco as Top Preventable Cause of Death, 5 April 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Harland, M. A Permaculturist in Rwanda, *Permaculture Magazine* No. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Hunwick, J. Permaculture Training Centre, Uganda and Sustainable Agricultural Support for Orphans, Rwanda, *Conference Proceedings for IPC6 – Designing for a Sustainable Future*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Birungi, H. Volunteers Transform Rural Schools, *Financial Times*, June 6, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Mainly British high school graduates in their "gap year" prior to college.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* note 5.

# Disadvantaged Youth in Indonesia

## Empowerment Through Alternative Education

by Dian Mitrayani

Poverty is the most important issue in Indonesia's economic development. After decades of decreasing poverty during the New Order Period (1970-1996), the number of people living below the poverty line has continued to increase to almost 18% (a staggering 40 million people) as of March 2006.<sup>1</sup>

Indonesia's current policies allow for a range of formal and informal means of access to education. These policies, discussed in more detail below, do not place enough emphasis on the empowerment of disadvantaged youth through education. Indonesian educational policy should be driven by the principles of servant leadership, building relationships and trust between youth and educational organizations.

In his discussion on servant leadership, Steven Covey mentions four dimensions of moral authority which are also the core of servant leadership. They consist of (i) sacrifice of one's self to a higher purpose, (ii) commitment, (iii) inseparability of ends and means, and (iv) interconnected relationships.<sup>2</sup> By changing from an autocratic approach to interdependent education of disadvantaged youth, empowering children to become leaders, educational policies would have lasting effects in alleviating poverty in Indonesia.

By teaching Covey's leadership roles of modeling, visioning, aligning and empowering<sup>3</sup> directly to youth in Indonesia, educators can become role models for children to become involved in and eventually lead community organizations. After

educators embrace these principles, they can pass them on to their students.

### Effects of Poverty on Education

Poverty is a significant factor that prevents youth in Indonesia from obtaining an education. In 1994, Indonesia adopted a policy of nine-year universal education to lift disadvantaged youth out of poverty. With this and other reforms since the 1970s, the enrollment rate of 7- to 12-year-old school children has increased to almost 95% (see Table). Nonetheless, there are still 17.5 million Indonesian youth who do not attend school each year.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, dire economic circumstances are correlated with high dropout rates, as impoverished children face increased risk of dropping out as they progress into higher grades of education (see Figure, next page).<sup>5</sup>

The primary reason for high dropout rates is the impact of educational costs on poor families. Poor families cannot afford educational costs for the children so they must drop out.<sup>6</sup> It is estimated that there are 11 million school-age youth in Indonesia who drop out from school. Less than 6 million of these dropouts enter the workforce.<sup>7</sup>

### Education of Disadvantaged Youth: Current Strategies

The Indonesian government, in cooperation with NGOs, has adopted both formal and informal strategies for increasing education opportunities for disadvantaged youth.

Table: Elementary School (7- to 12-Years Old) Net Enrollment, 1968-1995

Year	Policy	Net Enrollment (%)
1968		58.38
1973	establishment of public elementary schools	66.88
1978		79.73
1983		88.56
1988	6-year compulsory education	89.91
1993		93.53
1994	9-year universal education	94.71
1995		94.77

Source: Irwanto *et al.* 2001 (note 4).

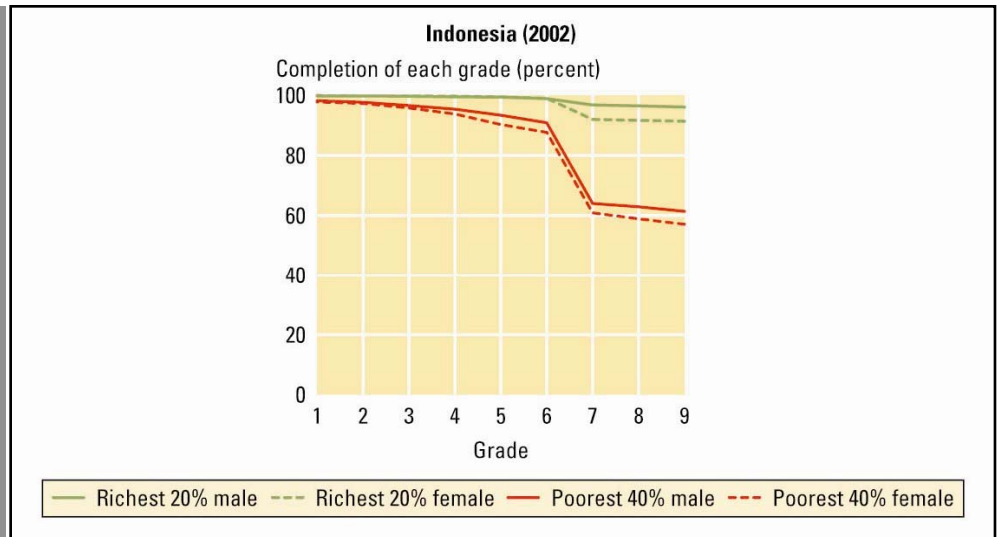
For example, formal policies are directed by the Government in Regulation No. 73/1993, which enable school dropouts to obtain academic certification for elementary, junior secondary and senior high school levels. The purpose of this reform is to assist Indonesian youth to receive adequate access to basic education, potentially decreasing their overall economic vulnerability.

*Constructed Literacy Programs.* These programs, specially constructed by NGOs, provide tailor-made literacy modules for working youth and street youth. These programs are very flexible and adopt learning materials that are designed to be relevant to the life context of the students.

**Figure: The transition to secondary school is a stumbling block for many young people.**

Kaplan-Meier estimates based on nationally representative samples of 10- to 19-year-olds. Richest 20% and poorest 40% thresholds derived from an index of assets and housing characteristics. Secondary school typically starts at grade 7.

Source: The World Bank 2006 (note 5).



Informal approaches outside of the institutionalized educational system have been adopted as alternative opportunities for disadvantaged youth. Direct interactions between educators and their students without a schoolroom setting can provide a comprehensive education. This approach with basic literacy training may progress to vocational skill courses.

*Embedded Literacy Programs.* These programs, also constructed by NGOs, are designed without a specified curriculum. This type of program is tailor-made to empower children to increase their own basic reading and mathematics skills.

Some of the programs adopted as alternatives to formal education include:<sup>8</sup>

**Relevance of Servant Leadership Values**

*Visiting Teacher Model.* Created by the government to reach isolated rural communities, where the number of households is too small to establish an elementary school (i.e., twenty or fewer households).

One of the most successful examples of youth empowerment through education in Indonesia is the work of the Humana Foundation in Yogyakarta, Central Java. Humana was established in 1988 to empower street children with dignity and self-respect. By acknowledging the value of street children, Humana demarginalizes them, allowing them to see themselves as worthy of respect just like any other human being.<sup>9</sup>

*Open Junior Secondary School (OJSS).* This semi-formal arrangement, based on the 1994 National Curriculum, allows for locally recruited tutors to teach 13- to 15-year-olds under limited supervision. A certified teacher meets with the OJSS tutors and students face-to-face once per month.

Humana’s approach to youth education shows many parallel concepts with servant leadership as reflected in the writings of Larry Spears. Spears argues that traditional, autocratic, and hierarchical modes of leadership should shift to newer models that are based on teamwork and community. These newer servant leadership models also seek to involve others in decision making, using ethical and caring behavior to enhance personal growth.<sup>10</sup>

*Vocational Training.* Established by both the government and NGOs, these programs develop basic skills of applied knowledge for specific types of work.

One of Humana's empowerment programs is a monthly magazine called *Jejak Malioboro*, in which street children are encouraged to express their feelings, experiences and aspirations through writing and drawings. Minimal editing is done to children's works before publication. The magazine is a tool to increase the children's self-esteem and the literacy rate.

By facilitating education without an autocratic approach, Humana shows a caring way to enhance personal growth with servant leadership.

Humana has also established a training house at Ploso Kuning as a place for youth vocational training and holds regular exhibitions that display the artwork of street children. These exhibitions are useful both as a source of income for young artists and as a means of creating room for public dialogue on the problems that street children face.

Another successful example of youth empowerment is the Lembaga Karya Dharma Organization (LKDO), which works in Surabaya, East Java. LKDO is a social organization that specializes in community and health services for marginalized people in urban areas. It was established on 1 September 1963 by Bishop J.A.M. Kloster as the representative of the Catholic diocese of Surabaya. LKDO creates mentoring programs for disadvantaged youth without consideration of racial, ethnic or religious affiliation.

There are a number of similarities between the characteristics of servant leadership<sup>11</sup> and the principles of the LKDO mentoring program values, including: (i) listening and understanding, (ii) acceptance and empathy, (iii) knowing the unknowable, and (iv) healing and serving.

The last two of these points are crucial to working successfully with disadvantaged youth, who often tend to mask their true feelings by closing themselves off from their mentors. Mentors must be able to understand underlying problems to successfully help young students. By healing and serving, mentors also help disadvantaged youth to raise their self-esteem and feel empowered as equals to "normal" youth.

LKDO also focuses on the implications of its work. This is the most important part of the mentoring program from a servant leadership perspective. LKDO mentors serve as both teachers and role models for disadvantaged youth. Thus, mentors create future servant leaders through hu-

man capacity building, not only in education but also through transmission of basic moral values. Because the disadvantaged youth who participate in LKDO programs rarely have role models, mentors play a significant role in setting positive examples.

## Conclusion

The empowerment of disadvantaged youth cannot rely on an autocratic education system. Instead, disadvantaged youth must develop their ability to become independent members of society. Because impoverished youth are highly vulnerable, they require special education programs that can increase their self-esteem and consciousness toward the importance of education so that they can build and maintain resilience.

Therefore, the future of disadvantaged youth relies on the effective use of alternative educational methods that are flexible and sensitive to individual needs. By first listening to what disadvantaged youth desire themselves, the Indonesian government and socially focused NGOs can be more successful in implementing youth empowerment programs.

The principles of servant leadership can catalyze and build a bridge between youth and their society. By being servant leaders, educators and educational officials can better serve disadvantaged youth in their communities.

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<sup>1</sup> *Berita Resmi Statistik* (Statistic Official News) No. 47 / IX / 1 September 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Covey, S. R. 2002. Foreword. In Greenleaf, R., *Servant Leadership*. New Jersey: Paulist Press. pp. 6-10.

<sup>3</sup> Covey, S.R. 2001. Servant leadership and community leadership in the twenty-first century. In *Focus on Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, Spears, L.C. (ed.). New York: Wiley.

<sup>4</sup> Irwanto, Herdriati.A., Hestyanti. Y. R. 2001. Alternative education for disadvantaged youth in Indonesia. Paris: IIEP/ UNESCO. p. 24

<sup>5</sup> The World Bank. 2006. World Development Report 2007: Development and the next generation. Washington DC: The World Bank. p 69.

<sup>6</sup> Putus Sekolah, Lalu Bekerja. *Republika* Newspaper. 13 May 2001. Quoting Basri Hasanuddin, Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare and Poverty Eradication.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* note 4. pp. 41-46, 61-64, 74-78.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 89- 91

<sup>10</sup> Spears, L.C. 2001. Introduction: Tracing the past, present and future of servant leadership. In *Focus on Leadership: Servant-Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, Spears, L.C. (ed.). New York: Wiley. pp. 9- 10.

<sup>11</sup> Greenleaf, R. 2002. Servant leadership: a journey into the nature of legitimate power & greatness (pp. 30-61). New Jersey: Paulist Press.

# Alternative Dispute Resolution and Judicial Reform Bangladesh as a Case Study

by Shinichi Nozaki

Popi Rani Dash, a practicing nurse in Northern Bangladesh, turned down a marriage proposal because her family lacked the financial capacity to pay the dowry demands of her bride groom's family. The breakup resulted in what was to be the most devastating incident in her life. The alleged bride groom, for retaliatory purposes, threw a bucket full of acid onto her. As a result, she has sustained severe facial disfigurement. She lost both self esteem and her career. The incident was reported to the police, and the suspect was arrested. He was imprisoned but was released on bail. He never showed up at his trial; thus, justice was never served.

Acid throwing is a good example that illustrates the ill relationship between ineffective law enforcement and judicial corruption in Bangladesh. A survey performed by Transparency International reported that the people of Bangladesh have lost faith in their judicial system, which is the cornerstone of effective law enforcement and the protector of citizens' rights.<sup>1</sup>

Articles 8 and 10 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* recognize that procedural due process rights, such as access to fair and public hearings sponsored by a competent and impartial tribunal established by law, are fundamental and universal human rights.<sup>2</sup> Many developing nations struggle to establish cost-efficient and competent judicial forums. Typically, these countries face severe budgetary constraints to finance the costs of building and running a competent judicial forum, because they have other needs that need to be addressed.<sup>3</sup>

Fortunately, a creative solution to this judicial problem is available: Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). This method has been proven to be a powerful tool in resolving civil disputes outside the traditional judicial tribunal. As a result, many developed nations, including the United States, have increasingly relied on ADR. NGOs are providing direct assistance to developing countries by designing an ADR process that is specifically tailored to such countries' needs, by executing the process, and by monitoring its performance.

Robert A. Greenleaf defines servant leadership as "[a] practical philosophy which supports people who choose to serve first, and then lead as a way of expanding service to individuals and institutions."<sup>4</sup>

Rather than adopting a traditional top-down approach to leadership, a servant leader aspires to serve others and emphasizes the values of collaboration, trust, empathy, empowerment and ethical use of power.

This paper examines Bangladesh as a case study of ADR services in the developing world and highlights how servant leadership principles are being incorporated into the process.

## Historical Context

ADR, as a dispute resolution tool, has been recognized since ancient times. For example, Greek mythology and the Bible mention ADR practices. Nevertheless, the recognition of ADR as an alternative tribunal to promote resolution of civil disputes has been only a recent trend. For example, the United States witnessed its own proliferation of ADR only from the early 1970s.<sup>5</sup>

Numerous factors have contributed to this proliferation. First, the 1960s, being an era characterized by civil strife and conflict, made the American people litigation-oriented in resolving disputes. Second, as Americans became less and less civic-minded, the social capital upon which strong communities were built eroded away,<sup>6</sup> causing traditional institutions for dispute mediation – family, church, social clubs, and the greater community – to lose their once prominent role in mediating disputes. As a result, the United States has become a litigious society.

State and federal courts were unable to keep up with this new trend. Faced with an increasing backlog of cases, delay of cases has become a routine aspect of the American judicial system, making the process cost-prohibitive for the poor in America. Thus, judicial reform was an immediate need. In response to these changing social circumstances, the judiciary launched the ADR movement. Now, both state and federal courts provide a variety of ADR services through court-annexed conflict resolution centers.

## ADR Models: Mediation and Arbitration

Generally speaking, ADR models can be classified into two types: mediation and arbitration.



Mediation involves three parties, the parties and the mediator. The role of the mediator is to facilitate discussions between the disputing parties. The mediator possesses no final authority to enter binding decisions. Rigid rules applicable to court proceedings do not apply to the mediation process, so as not to disrupt the discussion process. When parties reach an agreement, they tend to be specifically tailored to the circumstances of the parties. Thus, the key advantage of mediation is its flexibility and creativity. The disadvantage is its inability to make final binding decisions when the parties' discussion enters into a deadlock. Even then, the mediation process still provides the benefit of allowing parties to come together to a discussion table and be vocal about their grievances.

Arbitration also involves three parties, the parties and the arbitrator. The arbitrator can be either a judge or a neutral third party designated by those involved in the dispute. A key difference between mediation and arbitration is the role of the arbitrator. Instead of facilitating discussions, the role of the arbitrator is to control the proceeding systematically, as if it were a court proceeding. Thus, rules that bind court proceedings also are applicable to arbitration. However, they are more relaxed than are the roles of procedure for court cases. In the end, the arbitrator, in light of the evidence presented, enters a resolution based on broad principles of equity rather than law. Such resolutions are mere suggestions. The parties can either agree to be bound or alternatively file a new lawsuit. However, if the parties had preliminarily agreed to waive their rights to file a new lawsuit, the decision of the arbitrator becomes the binding solution to the dispute.<sup>7</sup>

## ADR and the Developing World

Over the past decade, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has supported programs that promote the establishment of rule of law within developing countries.<sup>8</sup> Over the past decade, USAID has taken a great interest in promoting ADR as a catalyst in achieving numerous development objectives including social justice for politically and socially disadvantaged groups as well as equitable economic development.

Drawing on empirical case studies from Bangladesh, Bolivia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Ukraine, a USAID study concluded that ADR has exerted a positive impact upon the overall development objectives of such countries, especially in providing streamlined and cost effective proceedings, increasing disputants' overall satisfaction, and empowering socially disadvantaged groups.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, USAID does recognize certain limitations to what can be achieved by ADR, such as its inability to establish legal norms and national standards<sup>10</sup> and its ineffectiveness in situations where extreme power imbalances exist between the conflicting parties.<sup>11</sup>

## Case Study: ADR in Bangladesh

The Bangladeshi term *shalish* refers to an indigenous informal practice where "village elders and concerned parties, exclusively male, [gather] for the resolution of local disputes." A wide range of civil issues are handled by the shalish, some even having criminal implications. They include matters concerning violence against women, inheritances, dowries, polygamy, divorce cases, as well as spousal and child support. Disputing parties have the option to choose arbitration or mediation in reaching a solution, but the preferred method is arbitration.<sup>12</sup>

Although the shalish has been credited for providing a time- and cost-efficient forum in resolving legal disputes, the process has nevertheless been observed to have numerous flaws. Often, powerful members of a village or community force disputing parties to agree to arbitrary solutions "based less on civil or other law than on subjective judgments designed to ensure the continuity of their leadership, to strengthen relational alliances, or to uphold the perceived cultural norms and biases."<sup>13</sup> The outcome of a shalish proceeding is thus vulnerable to corruption, where village elders and other persons of authority solicit bribes from disputing parties.<sup>14</sup> Women who are involved in the shalish process are often subject to harsh solutions and severe punishments, as the decision making bodies are male dominated.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the opportunities for women to even gain access to a shalish proceeding are limited due to the social and power inequities that exist between men and women.

NGOs stationed in Bangladesh have adopted and modified the traditional shalish forum so that credible ADR serves can be offered. In order to ensure that disputing parties reach a mutually satisfactory solution, NGO-sponsored shalish typically practice mediation rather than arbitration. NGOs also play a vital role in the selection and training of members who sit on shalish panels. Training regimens involve educating members about relevant laws as well as tips on how to conduct effective mediation. Perhaps the biggest difference between traditional and NGO-sponsored shalish is that women are encouraged to participate and be vocal in the NGO shalish process. Women can also be selected to sit on the shalish panel.<sup>16</sup> Such NGOs also pursue integrated legal services by sponsoring information sessions that provide general legal information to the public and cooperate with numerous development organizations that aim to alleviate the underlying social imbalances of power.<sup>17</sup>

Banchte Shekha is a NGO based in Bangladesh that offers services incorporating many of the characteristics mentioned above. Established in 1982, the organization aims for the improvement and betterment of Bangladeshi women's social status by offering them health education, non-formal education, income generation opportunities, voter education and credit.<sup>18</sup> In doing so, Banchte Shekha

emphasizes the importance of legal education and establishing fair dispute resolution services to achieve its community development objectives.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in its attempts to empower women by raising their confidence and capacity, the organization affords women access into the dispute resolution process.

In terms of actual strategy, Banchte Shekha forms various community level women's groups.<sup>20</sup> These groups constitute a hub where informal legal education and other educational sessions are sponsored.<sup>21</sup> When organizing shalish committees, this NGO takes every measure to ensure that the majority of committee members are female, and seven out of eleven committee members are typically reported to be female.<sup>22</sup> Women paralegals trained by other NGO organizations provide assistance, so that smooth proceedings can be facilitated.<sup>23</sup> To counter gender-based power disparities, threats of litigation are used against non-cooperating parties.<sup>24</sup>

Empirical studies suggest that NGO-administered shalish are more effective in terms of delivering substantive justice when compared to traditional shalish. Positive results achieved by NGO administered shalish include:

*Modification of an (often biased, arbitrary and harsh) process; cost effective delivery of justice; enhanced community knowledge of the law; women's participation in the decision-making process; greater gender equity and justice; and more generally, greater negotiating strength for the disadvantaged; and a gradual sustainability of these changes over time.*<sup>25</sup>

In addition, growing public access to NGO-administered shalish and general legal knowledge has brought about gradual changes in social behavior such as reduction of child marriages, dowry demands, polygamy, spousal violence and arbitrary divorce.<sup>26</sup>

## Conclusion

As mentioned above, the servant leadership philosophy emphasizes the importance of serving rather than leading by authority. By doing so, an effective servant leader is able to persuade and empower others to follow his or her path. If this process is repeated, this causes a chain reaction for social change.

The NGO-administered shalish movement is a good example of how servant leadership principles can be a guide toward social change. By preferring mediation over arbitration, the NGO-administered shalish enables disputing parties to reach solutions that are mutually satisfactory. By operating an ADR program known for its integrity and credibility, and by engaging in selfless efforts to educate the public about their legal rights, these NGOs are also able to persuade the general public to conform their actions to standards set by the NGOs.

Moreover, by incorporating women into a process that was traditionally dominated by men, and by educating women about their legal rights, this process empowers a social class that was traditionally subject to oppression. Such NGO efforts are creating a chain reaction within Bangladeshi society towards positive change, as demonstrated by changing the social behavior of its constituents.

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- <sup>1</sup> Transparency International Canada Inc., Corruption in Bangladesh surveys: Overview <http://www.transparency.ca/Readings/TI-F01.htm>
  - <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>3</sup> United Nations Office for Drug Control. Strengthening Judicial Integrity Against Corruption <http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/gpacpublications/cicp10.pdf>
  - <sup>4</sup> Greenleaf, Center for Leadership. <http://www.green.leaf.org/leadership/servant-leadership/What-is-Servant-Leadership.html>.
  - <sup>5</sup> Goldberg, Green and Sander, 1985. *Dispute Resolution* Boston: Little Brown and Co., pp. 3-7.
  - <sup>6</sup> Putnam, R.D. 2001. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* New York: Simon & Schuster.
  - <sup>7</sup> Keare, S. Reducing the Costs of Civil Litigation <http://w3.uchastings.edu/plri/fal95tex/adr.html#6>; and Ordovery, A.P., with Flores G.M. and Doneff A., 1993. *Alternatives to Litigation: Mediation, Arbitration, and the Art of Dispute Resolution*, National Institute for Trial Advocacy. pp. 3-11.
  - <sup>8</sup> United States Agency for International Development. Alternative Dispute Resolution Practitioners' Guide. March 1998 [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/democracy\\_and\\_governance/publications/pdfs/pnacb895.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/pdfs/pnacb895.pdf)
  - <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.
  - <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.
  - <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.
  - <sup>12</sup> Golub, S., Non-state Justice Systems in Bangladesh and the Philippines, January 2003 <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/law/pdfs/golub.pdf>
  - <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9, quoting a 2002 report published by the Asia Foundation.
  - <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
  - <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.
  - <sup>18</sup> Asian Development Bank, Legal Empowerment: Advancing Good Governance and Poverty Reduction: Appendix 2: The Impact of Legal Empowerment on Selected Aspects of Knowledge, Poverty, and Governance in Bangladesh: A Study of Three NGOs. [http://www.adb.org/documents/others/law\\_adb/lpr\\_2001\\_Appendix2.pdf#search='Madaripur%20Legal%20Aid%20Association'](http://www.adb.org/documents/others/law_adb/lpr_2001_Appendix2.pdf#search='Madaripur%20Legal%20Aid%20Association')
  - <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.
  - <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.
  - <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*
  - <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, note 12, p. 10.
  - <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

Stuart Coleman and East-West Center students restore Makiki Stream during a service project with Habitat for Humanity.

Photo by Constantinos Vrakas.





Youth harvest at sunset in a field of famous MA'O greens, Wai'anae, Hawaii.

Photo courtesy of MA'O Farms