

WorldVision

SUMMER 2009



HAUNTED *by* HUNGER

KENYAN CHILD FACES
FUTURE IN PERIL | 12

Also: Sponsorship Yields Harvest and Hope | 27

She's unlocking the future.

Poverty, discrimination, and exploitation keep millions of girls out of school. But thanks to her sponsor, 12-year-old Linh is in class—and excelling. Her studies will give her the potential to earn better wages, raise healthier, educated children, and have a voice in her community. **Now that's a bright future.**

"I feel very excited when I write to my sponsor... they are so nice to give me a chance to go to school."

—Linh, sponsored girl in Vietnam

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Birthdate 12/17/01
ID 170929-2305



Katumu, Sierra Leone
Birthdate 8/1/01
ID 181740-2850

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SOURCE: 1298161

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- Latin America Africa Asia
 Eastern Europe/Middle East where needed most

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I authorize World Vision to charge my \$30 monthly sponsorship gift to my credit/debit card each month:

- VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Card number

Expiration date

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City

State

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» ON THE COVER

Ekidor, 8, lives in Turkana, a drought-stricken food-scarce district of Kenya. By spending five days living with Ekidor and her family a World Vision magazine team gained new insights on hunger.

Photograph by Jon Warren.

World Vision, a free quarterly publication, affirms people responding to God's call to care for the poor by providing information, inspiration, and opportunities for action, linking them with children and families in nearly 100 countries where World Vision ministers. In an effort to be careful stewards of our resources, this publication costs less than 46 cents a copy to produce.

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 Building a better world for children
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FIVE DAYS OF HUNGER »

What does hunger really feel like, and what is its impact on a family? A writer and photographer find out by briefly living with a family in drought-stricken Kenya.

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IN A PLACE OF PLENTY » People in Morulem, Kenya, once relied on food aid. Now, thanks to an irrigation project and child sponsorship, they have everything they need—and they're sharing with others.

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A boy in Mongolia finds his aim.



I Was Hungry »

Perhaps the quintessential image in our minds when we think of the poor is that of an emaciated child. Undoubtedly that picture has been seared into our minds over decades by the many appeals from aid agencies and the newscasts that seem to cover the poor only when there are graphic visuals and dire emergencies to report. No one who was an adult during the 1984–85 Ethiopia famine will forget the vivid images of death that sent shock waves around the world.

The unfortunate thing about most of the imagery of starvation is that it has caused most of us to think of poverty one-dimensionally. In essence: for many Americans, hunger equals poverty. Yet poverty is a complex condition caused by a web of interwoven factors. Hunger is but one symptom of this underlying condition.

Most of us have never been truly hungry. Oh, we say things like, “I’m starving,” or “I’m famished,” but few of us have gone even one day without food. So it is very difficult to understand what hunger really means for the poor. Its cascading impact goes far beyond just the pangs and physical discomfort that accompany it. Hunger also affects the human spirit.

Perhaps most destructive of all is the desperation felt by parents who know that there will be no food today, and likely none tomorrow, to satisfy their hungry children. This horror gnaws at the heart, perhaps even more than it gnaws at the stomach, and it colors every other aspect of life. Each day becomes a struggle to survive. Everything else must be pushed aside: productive work; education; family and community projects; even social interactions, celebrations, and play—all tabled in favor of the quest for food.

“He who is dying of hunger must be fed rather than taught.” —SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

Malnutrition compromises the human body in shocking ways. The body, in an attempt to conserve energy, compensates by slowing down physical and mental processes. A hungry mind cannot focus. A starving person does not have the strength to labor. And a child who hungers loses the ability to learn and even the desire to play. Undernourished women are more likely to die in childbirth or have underweight children that are malnourished from birth. Mothers who survive the birthing process often fail to produce enough milk to sustain their infants for more than three to six months.

Malnutrition in children stunts brain development and can leave children mentally impaired for life, producing a whole generation



The cycle is vicious—the poor are hungry, and their hunger keeps them poor.

of adults with compromised mental abilities. It stunts physical growth as well and impairs the body’s immune system, making children and adults alike more vulnerable to the legion of diseases usually present among the poor: malaria, measles, worms and other parasites, tuberculosis, cholera, yellow fever, dengue fever, diarrhea, and dysentery. Vitamin and mineral deficiencies harm young bodies in myriad ways, diminishing every facet of a child’s potential.

The world can and does produce enough food to feed all of its 6.7 billion inhabitants. The problem is that both the food and the capacity to produce it are unequally distributed. Actually, the underlying causes of food shortages are many. Climate, drought, and natural disasters are major contributors to both chronic and short-term food shortages. War, displacement of people, and political corruption are other major contributors. Additional causes include a lack of technical expertise and agricultural infrastructure in poor countries where the need is greatest.

The cycle is vicious—the poor are hungry, and their hunger keeps them poor. ■



Excerpted from *The Hole in Our Gospel* by Rich Stearns, © 2009, World Vision, Inc. Reprinted with permission from Thomas Nelson. See related stories on hunger starting on page 12.

Compiled by James Addis

Food for Thought

AS THE GLOBAL FOOD crisis deepens, pressure mounts to maximize food production in under-developed regions and lift the standard of living for the rural poor. This requires new and innovative thinking.

In the village of Scanteia, in one of the poorest parts of Romania, World Vision is helping farmers find markets for their produce, improve the quality of their production, and negotiate for European Union agricultural development grants.

Four-year-old Naomi Apetre and her family are among those to benefit. Watching her water tomatoes in her family's flourishing greenhouse, it's hard to imagine that there is any food crisis at all. ■

TO LEARN MORE about the global food crisis and World Vision's response, visit www.worldvision.org.



GAZA (AMIR WAEL ALATTAR)

JUDY MOORE/WORLD VISION

GAZA | HEARTBREAK OF WAR » During the three weeks of fighting between Hamas and Israeli forces late last year, more than 1,300 Palestinians were killed and some 50,000 people fled their homes. More than 4,000 children registered in World Vision sponsorship programs were affected—some losing relatives in the violence. Tanks and bulldozers overran farmland and severed irrigation lines. About 70 percent of the greenhouses in a World Vision agricultural project were destroyed, along with 100 metric tons of tomatoes. World Vision responded by distributing food vouchers, blankets, hygiene items, and flyers warning of the dangers of unexploded ordnance. Staff also provided 2,200 children with recreational activities and counseling to help them deal emotionally with the violence and death they witnessed. World Vision aims to reach 100,000 people with relief and recovery assistance, including emergency job creation, agricultural rehabilitation, and psychosocial care for children.



- » More than 50 percent of families live below the poverty line.
- » 50,000 children are malnourished.
- » World Vision has worked in the Holy Land since 1975 serving the poor, especially children.

WORLD WATCH

GAZA | ONE CHILD'S STORY » **Amir Wael Alattar**, 9, *World Vision-sponsored child* Amir (pictured above) and his family hid in a neighbor's house as F-16s flew overhead. When Amir's father looked outside and saw that his brother had been hit by helicopter gunship fire, he and Amir's uncle ran out to rescue him, only to be shot dead. Meanwhile, Amir's house collapsed when a bomb landed on it. The family fled from the neighbor's house, through the field where Amir's father and uncle lay. Amir looked at one of the bodies and thought he recognized the shoes—he couldn't recognize the face as there wasn't one. His mother pulled him along, saying, "Lots of men have shoes like Daddy's." Later, his mother admitted that the boy's father was dead and that his grandfather had buried him. A distressed Amir rushed out and dug into his father's grave with his bare hands.



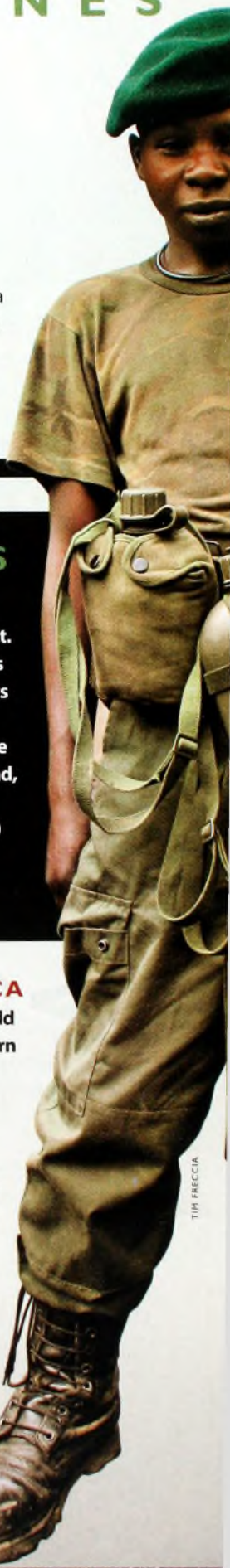


WORLD VISION STAFF

ON THE GROUND

Instance Smith is a health and nutrition manager for World Vision in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Since the conflict intensified, many more children are vulnerable to malnutrition and disease. As a Canadian married to a Congolese pastor, I often feel the tension between these two worlds. In one part, I am employed to be part of the response to the catastrophic crisis and its effects on the most vulnerable. In the other—my family life—I am in intimate contact with those whom we serve. My husband often reminds me, when I feel insecure, 'in Congo, we have a God.' I am constantly inspired by people's hope and faith. They keep planning for a better future, regardless of their circumstances." ■



TIM FRECCIA



ASHLEY CLEMENTS/WORLD VISION

MYANMAR

HALT CHILD SOLDIERS

One of President Bush's last acts in office was to sign the Child Soldier Prevention Act. World Vision initiated the bill and served as a key advisor in its drafting. The act restricts U.S. military assistance to governments using child soldiers. Countries that could be immediately affected are Afghanistan, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Uganda. An estimated 250,000 children serve as soldiers in government and rebel armies around the world. ■

MYANMAR | AFTER THE STORM » More than 2,000 families still reeling from the effects of cyclone Nargis received agricultural supplies and fishing boats from World Vision to restore their livelihoods. The supplies included paddy-threshing machines—essential for the next harvest. More than 80,000 people died in the 2008 cyclone, the worst disaster in the country's history.

SRI LANKA | ON THE ROAD AGAIN » Torrential rains in northern parts of the country caused unprecedented flooding and displaced more than 100,000 people late last year. Many of those forced to evacuate had previously fled the 2004 Asia tsunami and fighting in the region. World Vision worked with UNICEF and UNHCR to distribute relief items to more than 1,500 families.



DAVID DU CHERIN/WORLD VISION

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTHERN AFRICA WATER FOR ALL » World Vision launched the Southern Africa Water Initiative, a multi-million-dollar water project to be implemented in Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Lesotho. More than 160,000 people will benefit in Zambia alone. In addition to providing access to clean water, the project will bolster sanitation facilities and enable communities to maintain the systems themselves. ■



Curtains for Malaria

Almost 800,000 children die every year from malaria after being bitten by a mosquito, most in sub-Saharan Africa. World Vision is part of the growing global movement to combat the disease. The organization's recently appointed infectious disease specialist, Dr. Mark Maire, explains why malaria can now be beaten.

Why did you join World Vision's anti-malaria campaign?

My passion and calling is child survival, and malaria kills a lot of children. Right now, we can make a difference—there are tools that mean you can make progress. It's increasingly an exciting field to be in.

One new tool that is causing excitement is the long-lasting, insecticidal-treated net (LLIN). How does it work?

The mosquito senses you lying under the net and will come after you. After it hits the net, it's exposed to the insecticide, which kills the mosquito. If you have enough nets, it will knock down the mosquito population and protect the whole community. If you have 80 percent of the population sleeping under LLINs, you can decrease malaria prevalence by up to 50 percent.

What strengths does World Vision bring to the table?

World Vision has "boots on the ground" in affected communities. We have people who can deliver nets to a household, hang them up, educate people on their use, and follow up to make sure they are being used properly. That's much better than a mass distribution where someone takes a net home but it could easily be slipped under the bed and forgotten.

Can malaria be eradicated?

With the present tools, it's unlikely to be eradicated, but it can be brought under control. World Vision, working alongside others in the field, has a goal of 75 percent reduction in malaria infections in project areas and close to zero malaria child deaths in project areas by 2015. ■

» **TO PROVIDE** an insecticide-treated bed net for a child in need, go to www.endmalaria.org.

COURTESY MARK MAIRE

CHANGEAGENT

Mary Ella Herr, 87

Home » Lancaster, Pa.

Occupation » Retired

Program » Gift Planning

Buzz » Mary has sponsored children with World Vision for more than 50 years and still gets a thrill writing them

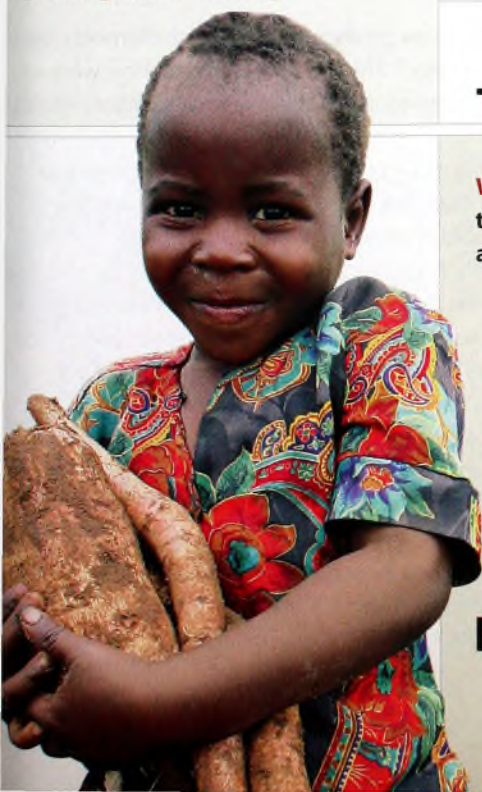
notes and receiving their drawings. She stays home and family commitments made it impossible for her to go out to the mission field, but sponsoring is allowed her to be a missionary from home. Mary wants to keep on giving even after her lifetime, so she has named World Vision the beneficiary of her gift annuity. ■

World Vision has been such a part of my life. I believe they are doing such a great job helping children and families.

—MARY ELLA HERR

» TO FIND OUT HOW

You can include World Vision in your estate plan, call 1.866.952.4453 or e-mail ftplanning@worldvision.org.



WHAT CAN I DO?

Ways to develop your world vision.

TEENS » Do the 30 Hour Famine—fight hunger by going without food. www.30hourfamine.org

CHILD SPONSORS » Present the joys of child sponsorship to your church. www.worldvision.org/achildiswaiting

TEACHERS » Help Christian youth learn about world poverty through global education materials. www.worldvisionresources.com

PASTORS » See the impact of AIDS in Africa firsthand. www.worldvision.org/c2c

ATHLETES » Join Team World Vision and raise funds for vulnerable children through sports events. www.teamworldvision.org ■

HEIDI LENSEN/WORLD VISION



VISIT WORLDVISION

Planning to visit the Seattle area this summer? Stop in at World Vision's Federal Way headquarters to tour our interactive Visitors Center. See compelling displays about World Vision's history and impact in children's lives. The center is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, please call (866) 952-4453. ■



QUOTABLE » "Every gun that is made, every warship

launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed." —DWIGHT EISENHOWER



THANKS TO YOU

World Vision and our generous supporters continue to stand in the gap for the world's poorest people. Together—and with God's grace—here's what was achieved in fiscal 2008:

- » 3.6 million children registered in child sponsorship programs worldwide
- » 11 million people affected by emergencies aided through approximately 75 relief operations around the globe
- » \$400 million in small business loans helped 600,000 entrepreneurs transform their lives
- » 2.2 million children and adults in the U.S. provided access to basic necessities like warm clothing, building materials, and school supplies
- » \$1.1 billion in revenue, an increase of 16 percent over 2007 income ■

» **TO SEE** the 2008 Annual Review, visit www.worldvision.org/AR.



Writing a Wrong

A church's confession whips up a storm.

Keith Stewart
with the
explosive ad.

When Springcreek Church of Garland, Texas, ran a full-page ad in *The Dallas Morning News* headlined, "We Were Wrong," the vigorous reaction shattered expectations.

The local TV station sent a camera, *The Dallas Morning News* ran a story, TV director and author David Burchett blogged, and fiery AIDS activist David Miller called to congratulate the church.

So what was the big deal? Underneath the headline, the ad copy ran: "We live in the land of plenty, denying ourselves nothing, while ignoring our neighbors who actually have nothing. We sat on the sidelines doing nothing while AIDS ravaged Africa."

Springcreek senior pastor Keith Stewart says the line about Africa was prompted after church members joined a World Vision trip to Katito—an AIDS-devastated region in central Kenya. Afterward, church members were so moved that they began sponsoring more than 500 children in the community to improve their nutrition, health, and education.

The church also became more active locally in the high-crime, low-income neighborhood of Glynnhill, assisting elderly people and single moms and cleaning up rubbish-strewn parks and alleyways.

Despite the good works, Keith says he felt God prompting him to apologize for former times when the church was preoccupied with serving itself rather than others. "Jesus said the gospel is first and foremost good news to the poor. We were not that," he says.

"I really felt the ad was the best way to tell the community we were wrong, because the people we have hurt are all outside the church."

In response, one blogger wrote: "I wish more churches and their congregations would think this way, then maybe the wounded sheep (including myself) would venture back in."

There were some negative reactions, mostly from Christians complaining about wasting money on the ad. But Keith says that had the church spent the money on a self-serving promotion, nobody would have objected.

He feels the ad touched a raw nerve because Springcreek has not been alone in its neglect of the poor. "When something gets close enough to convict, then people either confess it or find a way to invalidate it," he says. ■

"Jesus said the gospel is first and foremost good news to the poor. We were not that."

— KEITH STEWART, *Springcreek Senior Pastor*

WORLD VISION EXPERIENCE » AIDS—NATIONAL TOUR



Emmanuel, UGANDA

Babirye, UGANDA



Kombo, KENYA



Mathabo, LESOTHO

Four children

walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Will you walk with them?

» TO LEARN MORE

For more details, visit www.worldvisionexperience.org.



JAMES ADDIS/WORLD VISION

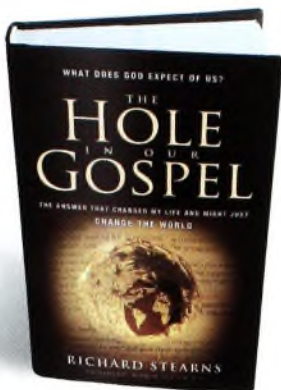
KITCOUNT

185,655

Number of Caregiver Kits assembled by U.S. churches, businesses, and community groups to equip World Vision volunteers caring for those living with AIDS. Help grow this number by getting your group to assemble kits. Visit www.worldvision.org/carekits.

THE HOLE IN OUR GOSPEL

Read the book by World Vision President Richard Stearns that's earning high praise from Christian leaders and thinkers. "An urgent, powerful summons to live like Jesus," says John Piper, president of Evangelicals for Social Action. "Stearns weaves solid theology, moving stories, and his own journey of faith into a compelling call to live the whole gospel. Highly recommended!" After you read *The Hole in Our Gospel*, visit www.theholeinourgospel.com to see how others are heeding Christ's call to care for their neighbors in need—here or around the globe. And share your own story. ■



The Hole in Our Gospel, published by Thomas Nelson, is available everywhere.

Why I love BEING A CHILD SPONSOR



RIION SANDERS/GENESIS PHOTOS

Cyndi Baker, Great Falls, Mont.

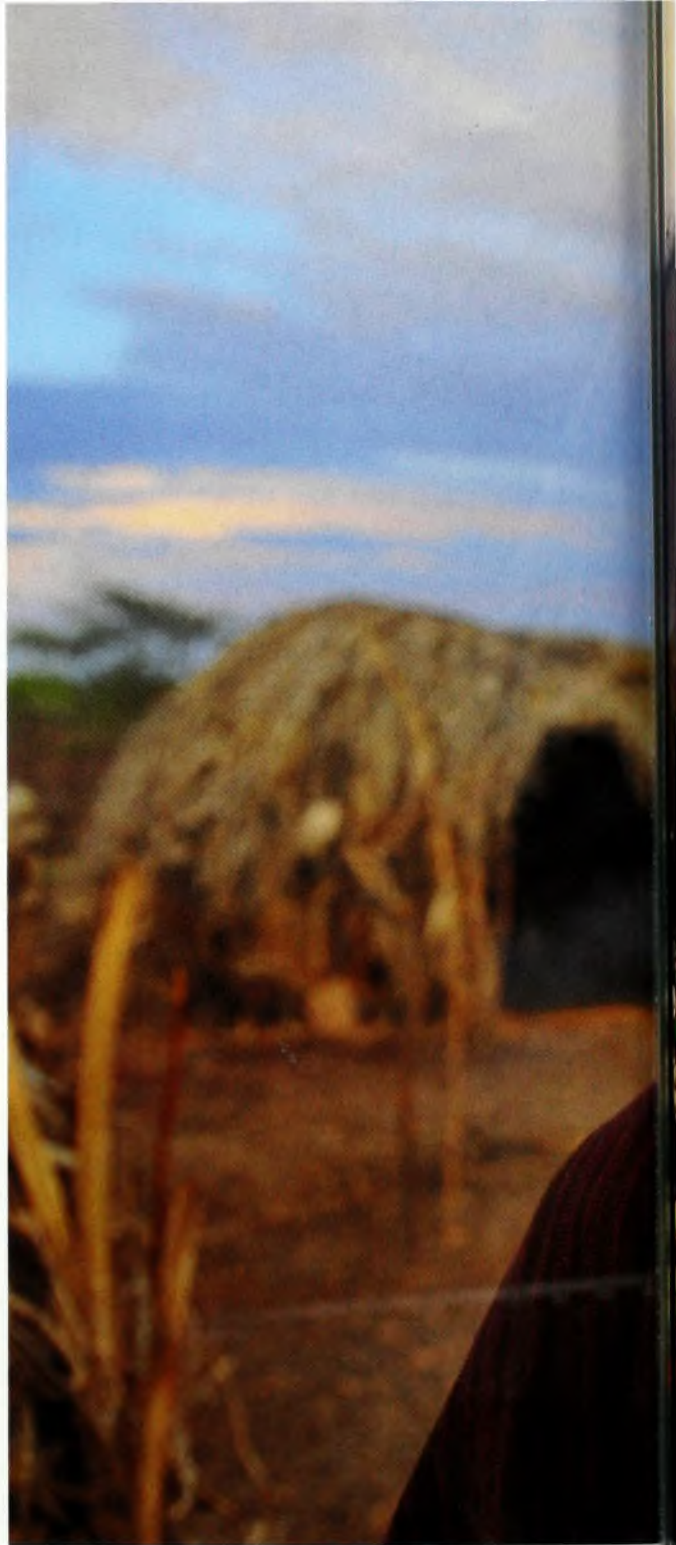
I became a child sponsor when my oldest child, now 21, was just 4 months old. Having a daughter of my own opened my eyes to how young mothers must feel when they are not able to properly care for and feed their own precious bundles. Even though I quit work to stay home with my daughter and significantly reduced our income, I knew we were living at a higher standard than most of the world's population. I felt a strong commitment to alleviate the hardship of at least one child in this world.

Over the course of those 21 years, lots of changes took place in our lives—more children, job layoffs, and finally, single motherhood to three teenage daughters. Never once did I waver in my commitment to sponsor a child. I know that had my sponsored child's family seen our circumstances, no matter how bleak they appeared to us sometimes, it would have seemed to them a life of privilege. ■

» TELL US YOUR STORY

Why do you love being a child sponsor? Write the editors at wvmagazine@worldvision.org.

FIVE DAYS *of* HUNGER



To understand the global food crisis in a more personal way, writer Kari Costanza and photographer Jon Warren lived for a few days with a family in Turkana, a drought-stricken district in northwestern Kenya—eating only what the family ate. While getting just a taste of what nearly 1 billion people experience every day, they observed the resilience of a family's love despite chronic hunger.

BY KARI COSTANZA PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON WARREN



Ekamol Amodoi opened her home to the *World Vision* magazine team. Ekamol lives with her sons, Peter and Ekomoli, their wives, and her 10 grandchildren. All survive on World Vision food distributions.





DAY ONE MOVING IN

Jon and I travel south from Lodwar, the Turkana district capital, to Kerkorisogol, a village named for the river that runs through it. But the Kerkorisogol River hasn't flowed in a year and a half. Years of drought, a livestock disease, and increasingly vicious raids on herds have left people here without food and in danger of losing their primary assets—their animals.

The situation in Turkana is worsening, says Daniel Muhinja, World Vision's nutrition manager. "Last year [the malnutrition rate] was 14.6 percent," he tells us. "This year it is 22.5 percent." And in Kerkorisogol, malnutrition rates are even higher. One out of every four children is malnourished.

We arrive on the day of World Vision's monthly food distribution. There's been a delay, due to rain. But the people joyfully praise God for it. This is only the second day it has rained in the last 18 months.

At the distribution, we meet the woman we will live with: Ekomol Amodoi, who is loved and respected by her entire community. She has received food for herself and her four grandchildren—114 pounds of corn, 11 pounds of yellow peas, 12 cups of vegetable oil, and 13.5 pounds of a nutritious corn soy blend. It seems like a lot of food, but I will come to find out that it doesn't last.

World Vision workers help us carry our gear to Ekomol's home, a hut made of palms. Its curved inner walls are sparsely decorated with household items—water jugs, milk jugs, rolled-up goatskins, harnesses for camels to carry big loads, and a small trunk. A big cowhide covers the dirt floor. Ekomol drags this outside and motions for us to sit down. I sit with Celine Achuku, 23, a World Vision food monitor. Having grown up in Turkana, she will be our translator and will help us get by in a place with no electricity, safe water, or bathrooms.

Ekomol, who doesn't know her age but may be in her 60s, lives next to her two sons, Peter, 43, and Ekomoli, 31. Peter has six children; Ekomoli has four. Today Ekomoli is off grazing the family's livestock. Like many Turkana families, Ekomol and her sons are nomadic pastoralists, grazing their animals throughout northwestern Kenya. But with little rain, there is practically nothing for the animals



ABOVE » Ekomol, with her youngest grandchild, Amodoi, waits at the food distribution. **COUNTER-CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** » Hunger is evident in Kerkorisogol's children. Ekomol's granddaughter, Kamaret, weak with hunger, waits for food. Corn and other food is distributed to families. Lowosa, Ekomol's granddaughter, finds water in a dry riverbed.

to eat here. Yet grazing in other areas is increasingly perilous. Ekomoli's recent eight-month trip in search of greener pastures led to disaster.

Iyanae, Ekomoli's wife, pauses her cooking to tell me the story. "We were moving with the animals," she says. "The raiders came. They shot two children and took the camels and the goats." One of the teen boys died and the other was wounded as they tried to warn the adults.

Ekomol and Iyanae were wiped out, their "animal 401(k)" losing 97.5 percent of its value overnight. In all, they lost 312 goats, 38 camels, and 10 donkeys. The fam-

ily's herd had already been hit hard earlier in 2008 by contagious virus that kills livestock. Now, they have just seven goats and two camels.

Iyanae, who is in her 20s, goes back to preparing the evening meal—the family's first in days. Her 3-year-old daughter, Kamaret, rests on Ekomol's lap while the food cooks. The girl is limp with hunger. "I want the porridge," she tells her grandmother.

"It is very hot," says her grandmother kindly, cradling the little girl.

—continued on page 1





MAIN PHOTO » Ekomol in her hut with her grandchildren: from left, Lowosa, Kamaret, and Ekidor, holding Amodoi. **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** » Ekidor, with an older cousin, contemplates her future. Wild fruit, once mainly fed to the livestock, is sometimes the family's only food. Amodoi, sleeping in sister Ekidor's arms, was only 2 days old when his parents had to leave him behind to graze their flock. The grandchildren finish every drop of their dinner. Ekomol's son, Ekomoli, surveys the stars.



—continued from page 16

“Just bring it, and I will eat it slowly,” says Kamaret.

But when it is time to eat, Iyanae serves us first. Tonight’s meal, the corn soy blend, tastes a little like polenta when mixed with water. We each get one cup. It tastes delicious. Everyone eats slowly and deliberately. The children use their fingers to lick up every drop.

After dinner, the clouds take on a pink cast. Near the equator, night comes quickly. In the dusk, Celine helps me make my way across the rocky terrain, pointing out acacia thorns so sharp that one has already pierced through the rubber sole of my shoe like a needle through cloth. She directs me to a tree that provides a little privacy from the huts—my bathroom for the next five days.

We make our way back to the hut and lie down. I smell the goatskins hanging from the walls and the cattle skin underneath me.

Peter pokes his head into the hut. He’s worried that I will be lonely, even though Celine is sleeping next to me. He plans to tell me a story after he eats his dinner. But when he comes back, I’ve already fallen into a sound sleep.

DAY TWO PETER’S NATURE

I wake to strange noises. My stomach is growling loudly. Outside, goats and sheep are bleating, begging to leave their pen. Someone I don’t know appears in the doorway:

Under a starry sky, Ekomoli and his family prepare for bed, warming by the fire next to their hut. Kari Costanza stayed next door in Ekomoli’s hut.

Ekomoli, Ekomol’s youngest son, who returned with the animals after dark last night.

Ekomoli, with a smile that lights up the hut, tells us he wants to welcome us by slaughtering a goat to eat. A long, friendly debate ensues. Through Celine, I convince him that we want to eat like the family eats and not be treated as guests. “Then you will take something to remember us by,” he says.

The livestock raid is foremost on Ekomoli’s mind. He and Iyanae left to graze the animals two days after their son was born, in March 2008. “We left the [children] behind with the grandmother,” he says. “If all of us stay here, we will die of hunger. And we can’t take them with us. They can’t run away when the enemies come.”

He says, “This place is so dry. Why can’t we go to greener pastures in peace?”

Ekomoli recalls when his family settled in Kerkorisogol about 10 years ago. “We weren’t hungry all the time. We had animals,” he says. “Now we are dependent on relief food. I used to be strong. Now I lack energy.”

Ekomoli hates how hunger affects his children. “The children say, ‘Dad, we are so hungry that we can’t walk.’”

you see them keeping quiet. When they eat, they play.”
 Iyanae appears with tea made with camel’s milk. It
 tastes delicious. But by 10 a.m., I am hungry and tired.
 Peter takes us on a walk. He points out the different
 kinds of wild fruits his family eats. He shows us the grave
 of his grandfather; Peter will be buried here as well. He

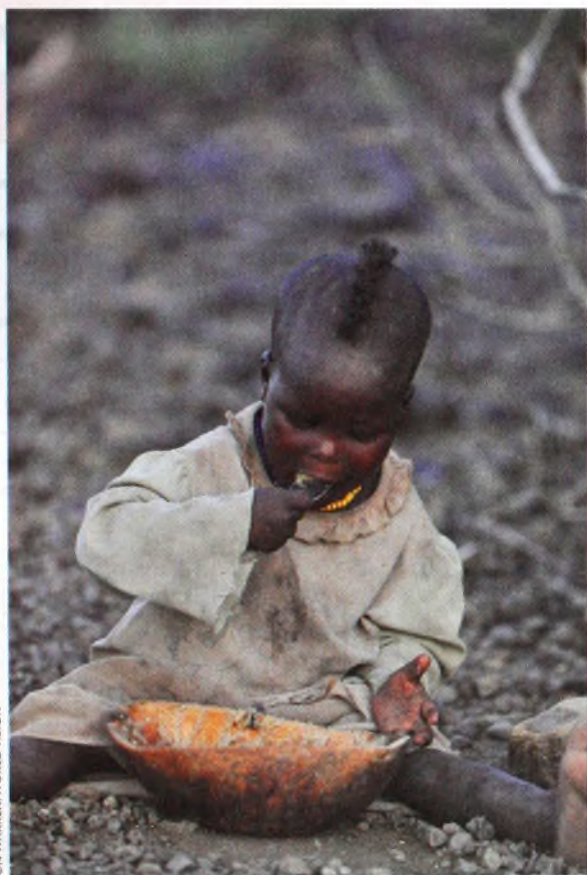
your fingers. We’d listen intently to these stories—and
 hope that someday we’d get a taste.

In the hut, I select the contents of each bite carefully,
 making my cupful last—I want to extend this meal as long
 as possible. I may not eat until the same time tomorrow, if
 at all. It occurs to me that when you don’t have food, you
 think about getting food. When you have plenty,
 you find ways to make it taste better.

Each day, the children crowd into the hut. The food
 brings them back to life. Now they are ready to talk
 to me for the first time seeming curious about the visi-
 tation, better, too, much more ready to interact.

Ekidor, the oldest grandchild, sits holding her
 youngest brother, Amodoi, patting his bare rump as he
 takes an afternoon nap in her lap. “When I feel hungry, I
 say Ekidor. “I can’t even carry the baby. I just

World Vision



JOH WARREN/WORLD VISION



Ekidor’s favorite granddaughter, sings softly to
 her. Her smile is bright, but her family doesn’t have the
 money to send her to school.



JOH WARREN/WORLD VISION



don't
 starve
 hunger

Help World Vision care for hungry children



—continued from page 16

“Just bring it, and I will eat it slowly,” says Kamaret.

But when it is time to eat, Iyanae serves us first. Tonight’s meal, the corn soy blend, tastes a little like polenta when mixed with water. We each get one cup. It tastes delicious. Everyone eats slowly and deliberately. The children use their fingers to lick up every drop.

After dinner, the clouds take on a pink cast. Near the equator, night comes quickly. In the dusk, Celine helps me make my way across the rocky terrain, pointing out acacia thorns so sharp that one has already pierced through the rubber sole of my shoe like a needle through cloth. She directs me to a tree that provides a little privacy from the huts—my bathroom for the next five days.

We make our way back to the hut and lie down. I smell the goatskins hanging from the walls and the cattle skin underneath me.

Peter pokes his head into the hut. He’s worried that I will be lonely, even though Celine is sleeping next to me. He plans to tell me a story after he eats his dinner. But when he comes back, I’ve already fallen into a sound sleep.

DAY TWO PETER’S NATURE

I wake to strange noises. My stomach is growling loudly. Outside, goats and sheep are bleating, begging to leave their pen. Someone I don’t know appears in the doorway

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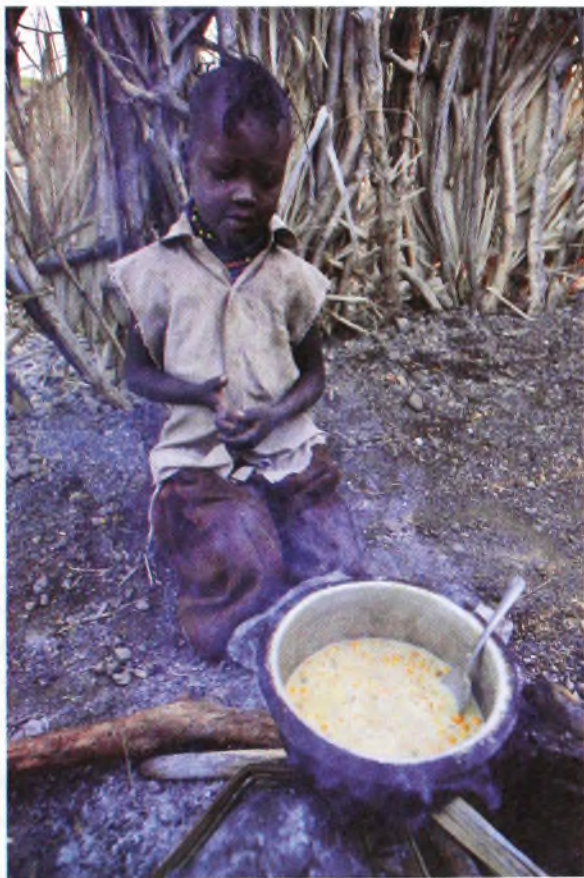
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you see them keeping quiet. When they eat, they play.”
 Iyanae appears with tea made with camel’s milk. It
 tastes delicious. But by 10 a.m., I am hungry and tired.
 Peter takes us on a walk. He points out the different
 kinds of wild fruits his family eats. He shows us the grave
 of his grandfather; Peter will be buried here as well. He

your fingers. We’d listen intently to these stories—and
 hope that someday we’d get a taste.

In the hut, I select the contents of each bite carefully,
 making my cupful last—I want to extend this meal as long
 as possible. I may not eat until the same time tomorrow, if
 at all. It occurs to me that when you don’t have food, you
 think about getting food. When you have plenty,
 you find ways to make it taste better.
 Finally, the children crowd into the hut. The food
 brings them back to life. Now they are ready to talk
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Ekidor, the oldest grandchild, sits holding her
 youngest brother, Amodoi, patting his bare rump as he
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Millions of children around the world don’t have enough
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—continued from page 16

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We make our way back to the hut and lie down on the goatskins hanging from the walls and the floor underneath me.

Peter pokes his head into the hut. He’s worried he will be lonely, even though Celine is sleeping next to him. He plans to tell me a story after he eats his dinner. But when he comes back, I’ve already fallen into a sound sleep.

DAY TWO PETER’S NATURE

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Lyanae appears with tea made with camel’s milk. It
tastes delicious. But by 10 a.m., I am hungry and tired.

Peter takes us on a walk. He points out the different
kinds of wild fruits his family eats. He shows us the grave
of his grandfather; Peter will be buried here as well. He
points out his property lines and explains how people
acquire land here. The chief decides, he says, based on how
long your family has lived on the land and how well you
are taking care of your children.

We come to a shallow river that formed after the rain.
I walk in with my shoes still on. It feels so good to splash
water over my arms and face.

When we get back from our walk, we find Kamaret
using a sharp stone to peel wild fruit so the family can eat
—a daily task for the 3-year-old.

I go into the hut. Every minute seems doubled in the
heat. I feel bad that I am not helping Kamaret, but I don’t
want to go back into the sun, and I have no energy. This is
not like me. At home, I can perform a multitude of activi-
ties at once, especially when getting my children ready for
school in the morning—make their breakfasts, read the
newspaper, take out the recycling, proofread homework,
power, and get dressed in less than an hour.

For lunch, we have a cup of yellow peas with corn soy
blend. It is amazing. It tastes like the split-pea soup I tried
on a family vacation to California when I was little.

I remember many of our family occasions by the food
we ate. My dad was a gourmet cook who showed his love
for his three children by feeding us well. He greeted me
every morning with a hot, healthy breakfast. Our school
lunches were unlike other children’s; instead of bologna
sandwiches on white bread, we had roast beef and alfalfa
sprouts with thick-sliced tomatoes on seven-grain. In the
summer, we ate fresh vegetables he grew in our garden.
Dinner was a time to eat and talk, sometimes about the
food my parents had enjoyed in Europe when they were
just married: châteaubriand for two served with a béar-
naise sauce so thick you could stand a spoon in it; white
sparagus, tender and flavorful and eaten delicately with

your fingers. We’d listen intently to these stories—and
hope that someday we’d get a taste.

In the hut, I select the contents of each bite carefully,
making my cupful last—I want to extend this meal as long
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Ekidor, 8, the oldest grandchild, sits holding her
8-month-old brother, Amodoi, patting his bare rump as he
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Ekidor, Ekamol’s favorite granddaughter, sings softly to
herself. The girl is bright, but her family doesn’t have the
money to send her to school.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Pray** for comfort and relief for the millions of children who are going to bed hungry tonight.
- **Help** provide food for children and families. Use the envelope adjacent to these pages, or give online at www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond.
- **Learn** more about hunger on World Vision’s Web site, www.worldvision.org/hungerinfo.

ask my grandmother for something to eat.”

Her 5-year-old sister, Lowosa, doesn't want to talk about hunger. She feels so good after her lunch. “I am satisfied,” she says.

I ask the girls what they like to do when their tummies are full. “We like to sing songs praising God,” says Ekidor. “We learn them from our grandmother.” And, with that, they begin to sing: “God cannot change. But humans can. Brothers can change. A sister can change, but Jesus Christ never changes.”

Having a full stomach inspires Ekidor to dream about her future. “I will look after the animals and take care of my grandmother,” she says. “All this time, my grandmother has been very close to me. She takes care of my stomach.”

I ask about their favorite foods. “I like rice,” says Kamaret. “Beans,” says Ekidor with a nod. “I had meat eight months ago when this baby was born. I don't know if I'll have meat again because my dad doesn't have [many] goats.”

After talking with the children, I go to wash in the river, which now looks more like a stream. I feel achy. My back hurts, and my stomach feels crampy. I don't want to ask Ekomol about these symptoms because I'm afraid she'll try to feed me.

Instead, I ask Peter about the children—how they handle not eating. “Sometimes the small children go for two days with nothing,” he says. After that, they have trouble keeping anything down. “When they take water, they vomit.”

What does he wish he could feed his family? “Beans, rice, and meat, but the best thing is the meat,” he says. “We used to have three meals a day when we had enough animals.”

But they haven't eaten this way in more than a year. “This is the worst it has ever been. Hunger pains never go away,” Peter says. “At times, I feel dizziness. When I want to walk, my legs get so weak they want to stop. At times, I



Ekamol and her family worship at St. Mark's Catholic Church in Kerkorisogol. Today the congregation sings praises for the scant rains.

[feel] like leaving my wife and children and going away to disappear. I would go away and let the enemies kill me, or just lie down and die and let the wild animals eat me.”

Peter's admission is startling. Hunger robs him of his passion for life. I ask him how he gets through those dark times. “I pray to God,” he says. “And, when I see my mother, it gives me hope that God has a purpose in all this. She holds us in an umbrella of love.”

Ejore, Peter and Ekomoli's sister who lives nearby, comes to visit. Ejore spies a dove near where Kamaret is peeling fruit. She picks up a rock and hides it behind her skirt, planning to kill the dove so they can eat it. Peter notices what is about to happen and cries out for her to stop. Ejore throws the rock away.

Later, I ask Peter about the incident. “The dove is like a sent agent of God,” he says. “And we see that God is faithful when we see the rain.” But it doesn't rain again today.

Tonight the stars are ablaze in the cloudless sky. It is impossible—dizzying—to take them all in. I've never seen the Milky Way look so spectacular, its foamy white fingers streaking across the universe. *Milky Way is a candy bar*, I think, as I drift off to sleep.

DAY THREE A DAY TO WORSHIP

It is Sunday, the day for church. The children start by eating their father's leftover maize from last night. “I didn't eat [it all] purposefully because I knew there would be no food in the morning,” says Ekomoli.

Today the grownups will not eat. Because they share with their neighbors, relief food only lasts them about 10 days. One of their coping strategies is to fast some days.

We walk with Ekomol and Ekomoli to church, held in a schoolroom made of tin sheets held together with two-by-fours. As we wait for the service to begin, I ask Ekomoli about her faith. During the hard years of her childhood, she did not know God. “We had no animals and no food. We depended on other people.” Ekomol's brother began to take her to church. “The church transformed me,” she says.

Ekamol married and had children. When the family moved to Kerkorisogol about 10 years ago, they had 300 animals. “We had milk. We had meat. We had a strong breakfast,” she says. “Then, God wasn't that far away. In those days, I prayed. I sang through the night.”

Now the drought, the livestock virus, and the animal raiders have created a poisonous stew. She worries that her sons will be attacked while grazing again.

Ekamol and I discuss her grandchildren, admitting something I have already noticed: Ekidor is her favorite. “I started taking care of her when she was 2 days old. I could tell she was going to be a special child.”

I know what it is like to have a special relationship with

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ANDREA PEER/WORLD VISION



ANDREA PEER/WORLD VISION



DAVID SCHEIMAN/WORLD VISION



ANGELA SCHUGI/WORLD VISION

FAMINE-FIGHTING POOLS

Cheap, fast, and smart solutions World Vision employs to help hungry children.



SIMON PETER ESAKU/WORLD VISION

MORINGA TREES

In Niger, World Vision is training communities to grow moringa trees, with leaves rich in protein, calcium, vitamins, and iron. The tree comes into leaf at the end of the dry season, when other foods are scarce.

PLUMPY'NUT

This revolutionary peanut-based food for acutely malnourished children is packed with calories. It requires no refrigeration, water, or preparation. It can help rehabilitate a starving child within three weeks.

ORAL REHYDRATION SOLUTION

Diarrhea—a recurring problem due to contaminated water—quickly dehydrates and can kill a malnourished child. Oral rehydration solution (ORS), a mix of glucose, salt, and water, quickly rehydrates a child.

WEANING PORRIDGES

Infants' tummies can be too small to gain adequate nutrition from the thin gruels they are served. World Vision educates moms on the best available infant foods and supplies nutritionally enriched porridge.

NEW CASSAVA VARIETIES

Cassava is a good source of carbohydrates and it has high-protein leaves. World Vision is introducing new varieties of the tuber that can grow in harsh climates. ■

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a grandparent. I was close to my grandfather, having been named for his mother. As the best Scandinavian eater of the grandchildren, I was treated to special Grandpa-prepared breakfasts of kippered herring, tea, and toast. At Christmas, he would watch with delight as I downed my plate of lutefisk. Ekidor told me that she loves how her grandmother “takes care of her stomach.” I am beginning to see how food and love are connected in a way that crosses cultures—whether or not it is a provision of plenty.

The pastor begins the service. “For two years, we didn’t have rain,” he says. “But for two days, we’ve had rain. We give God blessings.”

The congregation responds with an offering, collecting a few rumpled Kenyan shillings in a basket. Two older women dance the basket to the altar, circling each other like crested cranes dancing in a field. Later, I speak with one of the women, Ekadel Ngiro. “What happens if there is no money?” I ask.

“We dance even if it is empty, because God sees us and understands us,” she says. “It is not always when we have something that we celebrate.”

After church, we prepare to leave. Jon must charge his camera batteries, so we have to go to Lodwar, where there is electricity. Ekomol and Ekomoli keep us company as we wait for a World Vision driver to pick us up.

Tired, I close my eyes and see a conveyor belt of sushi running through my brain: smoked eel wrapped in seaweed atop sticky rice; tempura prawns on a bed of romaine tossed with a sweet honey dressing; and dark pink sashimi salmon, begging to be dipped in soy sauce.

I open my eyes and ask Ekomoli if he dreams about food. He says he dreams about meat, “but when I wake up, there is no food.” Just then, the pastor brings food his wife has prepared, rice topped with lentils. “In our tradition, we share,” says the pastor kindly, “just like Americans.”

We are joined by Ekurichanait Naborkut, 34, the head teacher at Kerkorisogol School, who tells us about hunger’s effect on students. “When there is no food, the children become sleepy,” he says. About 80 kids attend school every day. But more and more, children are staying out of school to do chores to earn a few shillings to buy food, or they forage for food.

The teacher can tell who is hungry by their appearance. “When you have not eaten, you get wrinkles on your forehead,” says Ekurichanait. And he can tell by their grades. “When nutrition status goes down, the IQ retards.”

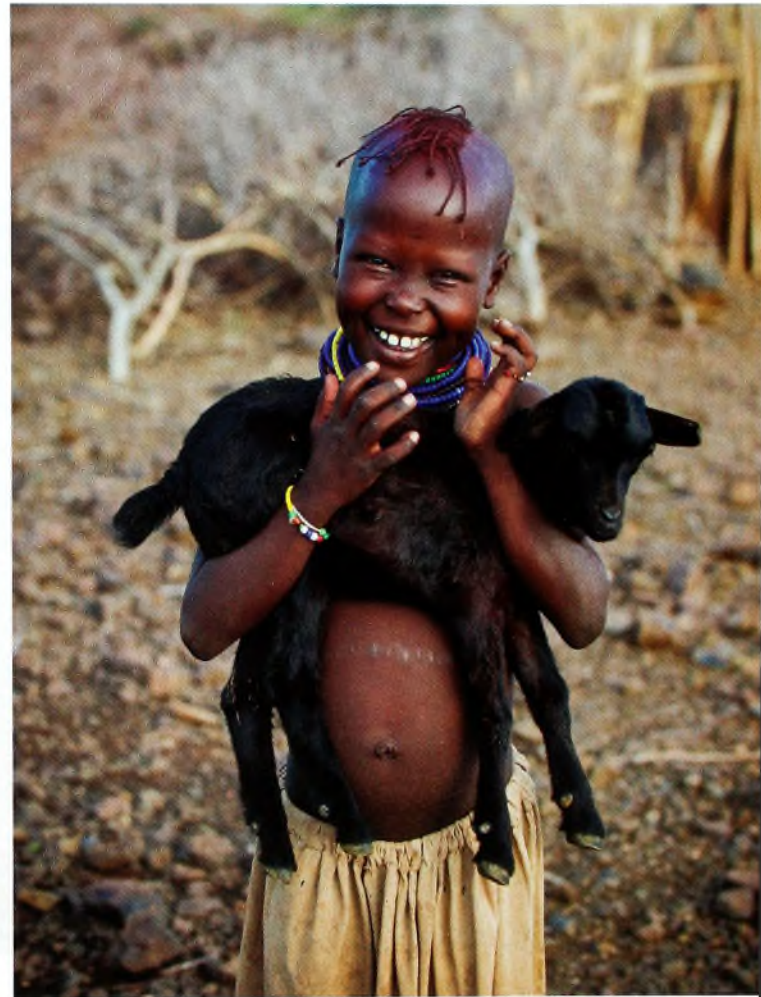
The driver arrives to take us to charge our equipment overnight. From the touching church service to the Sunday dinner that appeared out of a dream, it has been an incredible day. I wish Ekomol’s family could have the food that fills *their* dreams.

—continued on page 25





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP » A day's worth of the family's food. Ekidor with one of the family's few remaining goats. Lowosa and Ekidor fetch water. Sisters Kamaret, Ekidor, and Lowosa enjoy their dinner: Family portrait: from left, Ekomoli; his daughters Ekidor and Lowosa; his wife, Iyanae, holding their son, Amodoi; third daughter Kamaret; and Ekomol, Ekomoli's mother.





ABOVE » Ekidor and Amodoi watch their uncle, Peter, and two of his children care for their camel—one of the few assets they have left. FACING PAGE » Aerial view of dry northwestern Kenya.

—continued from page 22

DAY FOUR SEEING STARS

I wake up in the morning in a Lodwar guesthouse, camera batteries charged, and feeling recharged myself after sleeping on a bed and using a real bathroom. We decide we can have a cup of tea before we leave, since we think Ekomol's family might be having tea this morning.

We talk about food all the way to Kerkorisogol, such as the special food hostages ask for when their ordeal ends—often, hamburgers. I don't want a hamburger. Right now I want fried chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, and biscuits, or a wonderful spaghetti dish my grandmother used to make, featuring canned spaghetti.

When we arrive, all the children but Ekidor are sleeping. No one has eaten anything yet today.

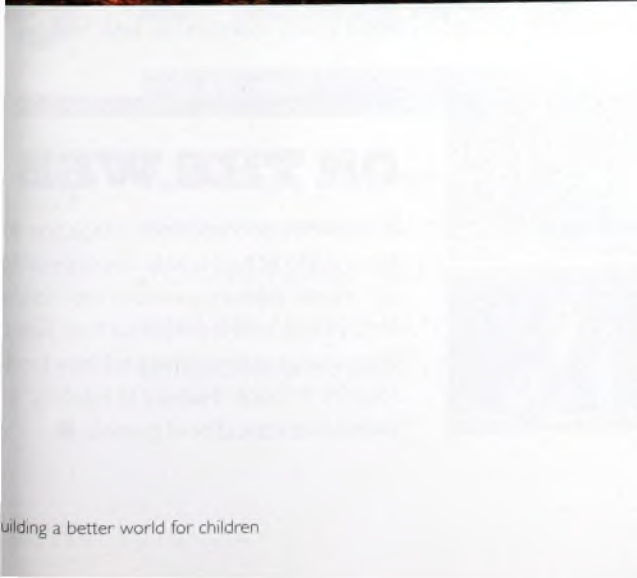
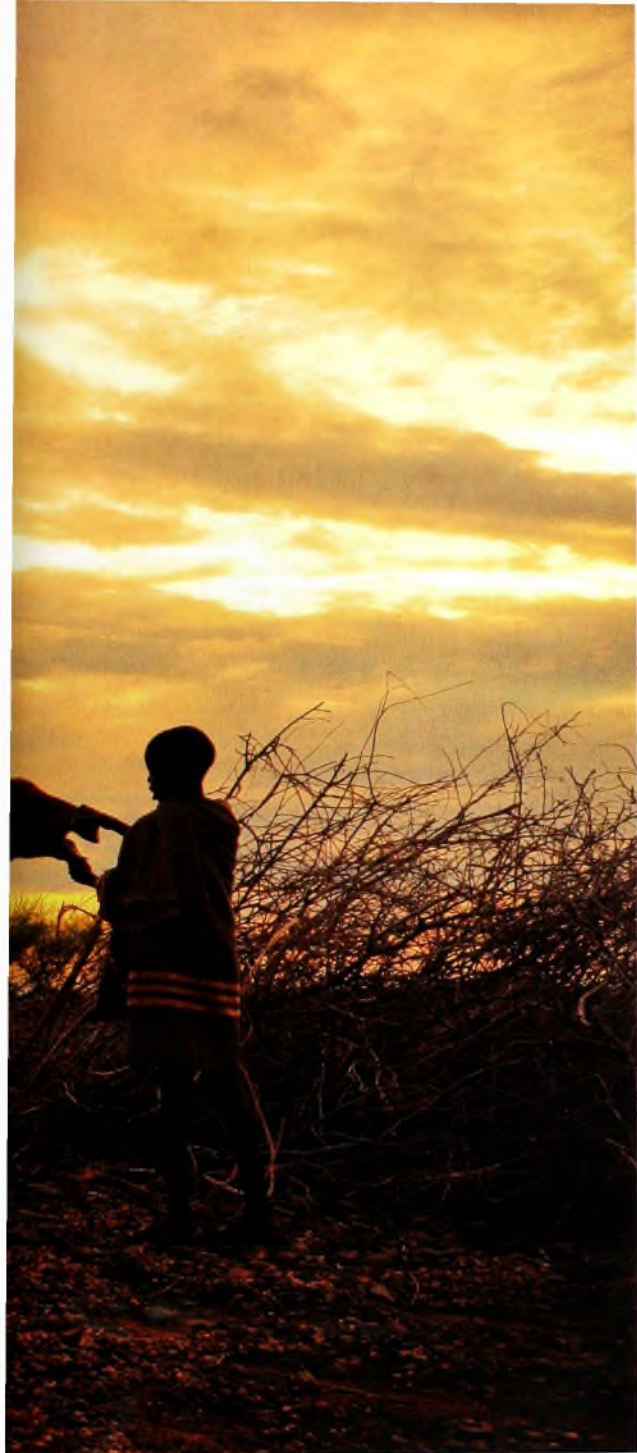
"I am feeling hungry, but I have to bear it, because we won't eat until evening," says Ekidor. She enjoys being with the animals, which distracts her from hunger. What she likes best is going to school, but her family has no money to pay for school supplies.

Ekomoli comes back from grazing the animals, and Iyanae milks the goats, moving nimbly over the volcanic earth. Afterward, the children gather around her. The baby, Amodoi, claps his hands. He is smart; at 8 months, he can already say "mama" and Jon's name.

The children play games with little rocks, cupping them in their hands, tossing them up, and then catching them on the backs of their hands to see how many land between their knuckles. Ekidor can catch at least six.

"The girls walked at 8 or 9 months, but now they are getting weak," says Ekomol. She glances over at her favorite granddaughter. "Ekidor is losing her dimples."

The family has come to a life-changing decision. Ekomoli and Iyanae will no longer leave the area to graze the animals. The raids have made it too dangerous. "I would rather stay here and die poor than fight those enemies," says Iyanae. Now they will have to find another way to survive. With the lack of rain and the rocky soil, farming seems impossible.





Kari Costanza with Ekomol on their last day together. When she arrived in Kerkorisogol, Kari asked the community whom she should live with. Everybody suggested Ekomol.

We eat our last dinner together—a cup of corn soy blend stretched with the wild fruit Kamaret has prepared. It has gotten dark, making it hard to see tonight's porridge, but it looks a little greenish, and it has a sawdust-like texture. As the food supply diminishes, it is becoming less appetizing.

Ekomoli gazes up at the starry heavens, Kamaret bundled in his lap. "I look to the sky because it gives direction to my life," he says.

When I look to the star-crowded sky, I find it breathtaking. But to Ekomoli, a sky without clouds means more dry weather. And dry weather means hunger. How will he take care of his family?

DAY 5 GOODBYE TO HUNGER

I wake up this morning to a beautiful sound: Ekomoli singing to his children. His voice is rich and melodic. I peer from the hut to watch and listen. The girls and baby Amodoi are trying to find a place to sit on their father's lithe frame. Ekomoli is my height but must weigh 40 pounds less than I do. There is not an ounce of extra fat on anyone here.

There is no breakfast.

We walk with the family to the village center, a half an hour away. We leave behind the food we've brought to restock what we ate from the family's rations. Ekomoli stays behind for a few minutes to lock up the sugar in the trunk. Sugar is as valuable as shillings for a Turkana.

As promised, Ekomoli gives me something from the hut—a handmade container for goat meat. I am touched that he would offer me one of their few possessions.

It is hard to say goodbye. My heart is as heavy as my stomach is empty. Ekomol takes hold of my hand as we walk toward the car. My throat constricts, and the tears begin to rise. I will miss this family. They are such good people.

Back in Lodwar, we have lunch, goat meat with rice and green vegetables. I think of Ekidor and Kamaret and how they would love this meal. I want to enjoy it on their behalf. But halfway through the meal, my stomach begins to cramp. I rush to the bathroom where I am violently ill. My system was depleted after eating just one cup of food per day.

As much as I've observed about food in my 46 years, I learned more in these five days how hunger permeates a life. Hunger is a killer of things both great and small, destroying simple desires and big dreams. It impacts how you walk the earth and consider the stars. When a clear night's majesty causes a hungry father to feel angst instead of ecstasy, there is something wrong with our world. ■

Celine Ekitela Achuku, a World Vision food monitor in Turkana, Kenya, contributed to this story.

EDITOR'S NOTE

In Kenya's Turkana district, World Vision helps more than 150,000 hungry people by distributing World Food Program food, operating stabilization centers for severely malnourished children, and employing adults in food-for-work projects. Such measures halt starvation and improve nutrition in times of acute need. But World Vision's goal is to build resilient communities in which families can feed themselves, now and in the future. Achieving food security is an uphill battle in arid, drought-prone Turkana—but not impossible. Agricultural training, water programs, and health and nutrition assistance, supported by generous U.S. donors, can yield success. Read on to see how one community, backed by World Vision sponsorship, beat hunger.



ON THE WEB

Visit www.worldvision.org/magazine to see a video of Kari Costanza's experience in Turkana; take a visual tour around the family's hut; and learn about how World Vision helps communities achieve food security through "Hungry to Healthy," an interactive educational graphic. ■



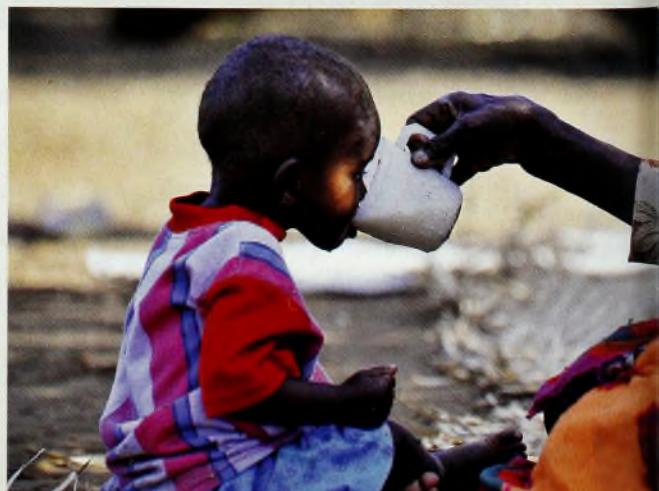
Twins and sponsored children
Namuchurui (left) and Lokol (right) eat,
learn, and play to their heart's content.



IN A PLACE of PLENTY

Can hungry communities ever break their dependence on food aid? Morulem did—a town just 50 miles from Kerkorisogol. Morulem and Kerkorisogol share the same climate and landscape, but the people of Morulem have everything they need and more. The reason? An ingenious irrigation system and investment in the community through child sponsorship.

RIGHT » At the Morulem Food Bank, farmers store surplus crops for use during lean times. BELOW: Thanks to the irrigation project and child sponsorship, Morulem appears as an oasis in the desert. BOTTOM » Esther feeds her grandson, Nawon, his breakfast porridge.



“I have lived here since before World Vision came,” says Esther Ikal, a grandmother in her 70s. “I remember when the trees were much shorter. There were very few houses and very few people. The people had animals. There were no schools. People got their water from the river Kerio.”

But on this Saturday morning in Morulem, a town of 10,000 people in northwestern Kenya, Esther watches as new memories are made.

Cuddling 1-year-old Nawon on her lap, Esther observes her daughter, Dorcas Ayane, 32, preparing breakfast—a pot bubbling with hot, sugar-sweetened porridge. Dorcas’ 5-year-old twins, Namuchurui and Lokol, play soccer in the yard with their younger siblings.

Esther smiles at the enthusiastic competition and the sounds of laughter emanating from her grandchildren. She is surrounded by the family’s animals: goats, chickens, cows, sheep, and camels. The tidy compound seems a little like Noah’s Ark.

Dorcas gathers her five soccer-playing children on the mat around their grandmother and serves cups brimming with porridge. Lokol has three helpings. Breakfast finished, Dorcas washes the dishes with clean water from a tap in the compound and lays them out on a rack to dry in the sun.

It is time for the family to visit the farm, a half-acre of land where they grow sorghum, maize, cowpeas, spinach, watermelon, tomatoes, onions, papaya, and even spices. The children scamper down the path shaded by neem trees. Butterflies flutter by. Today the family will work in their sorghum and maize crops, irrigated by the Kerio river. They are one of more than 3,000 families who have been deeded fields by the Morulem Water Users Association—plots that have turned harsh land into a place of plenty.

Spanning more than a thousand acres, the Morulem Irrigation Project appears as an oasis in the desert. It was initially built in 1978 by Western missionaries, Dr. Dick Anderson and Ben Webster, who handed it over to the community in 1983. But by the early 1990s, the project needed maintenance and expansion beyond what the community could manage.

“World Vision moved in to help,” says Daniel Mwebi, World Vision’s program manager who jump-started the project in 1992. Farmers redug the canals and created ridges “so people don’t have to jump over the canals,” Daniel explains. World Vision also created gates to regulate the flow to farmers’ gardens. They are lifted on a strict schedule to ensure that crops receive the right amount of water at the right time.

With funding from World Vision and USAID, the project grew from 150 acres to its current 1,110 acres. New crops were introduced; fruits and vegetables the people had never eaten before. At a training center with a demonstration garden, people learned how to grow organic crops. “This training center has been used by farmers all

BELOW » Lokol is first in his class and hopes to become a doctor someday. BOTTOM » Lokol’s sister, Namuchurui, learns English in school.



over Kenya," says Daniel.

The irrigation project helped these former pastoralists move to a new, secure lifestyle as farmers. "We were able to train farmers to calculate the amount of food they need to consume as a family for a whole year," Daniel says. "And the rest, they sell as surplus."

Up the hill from the irrigation project is a food bank where crops are weighed and stored. Farmers can "withdraw" food when they need it during the lean months. "And because of the surplus food they sell," says Daniel, "they've been able to [afford to] connect private water to their homes."

Esther was a change agent in Morulem, Daniel says. A risk-taker, Esther was among the first to try growing her own food. "She did a very good job to convince the others and to contribute to making the irrigation scheme successful," Daniel recalls.

Esther learned from Ben Webster to plant her first crop—sorghum. She remembers her eagerness to taste it. "I could not imagine something I had never had in my life," she says. "What would it be like? Would it taste good or bad? It was so sweet."

The project brought other changes. "The children have clothes," says Esther. Her own daughter, she recalls, "grew up naked."

One of the biggest changes, says Esther, has come through child sponsorship, which started in 1996. About 4,500 children in the area currently sponsored through World Vision benefit from access to education. Dorcas' twins are stars in school. Lokol is ranked first in a class of 81; Namuchurui, fourth of 72. Lokol wants to be a doctor. Namuchurui wants to teach.

"Their grandmother really believes in education," says Oscar Ngetich, the head teacher at Morulem Primary School. "[Esther] is a role model."

"It is beautiful here because of sponsorship," he says, ticking off the long list of things U.S. sponsor funds have provided the school—new classrooms, bathrooms, desks, solar panels, and water tanks. Eight years ago, there were 341 children in this school. Today there are 634.

Watching his school grow allows Oscar to dream big. "I thought the goal of literacy by 2015 would be impossible," he says, referring to the Millennium Development Goal for primary education. "It is now possible to have a literate world."

The irrigation project changed the landscape of this community. "Before, this was bare land with [scrubby] trees," says Oscar. "Now, it is green and rich with food crops. When you are there [at the irrigation project] there is fresh air. It's not as hot, maybe because of the water. Maybe it's because the people are happy."

In 2006, something extraordinary happened. Working with a World Vision-supported irrigation project in nearby Lokubae, the Morulem farmers donated seven tons of grain to fellow Kenyans suffering from drought.

"The act of people who were receiving food [in the past], now donating food—that's a memorable moment," says Daniel Mwebi. Not only was the community of 10,000 people now food-secure—it also could respond to the needs of others.

John Atelo Ebonu, chairman of the Morulem Water Users Association, credits the irrigation project with peace in his community—unlike other parts of northern Kenya. "Without this," he says, "it would be like a war zone here. People would be fighting. There would be no life. [The project] is like air."

On a Sunday morning in Morulem, the air is filled with singing. Esther and Dorcas have brought the children to Sunday school. The twins, Lokol and Namuchurui, sit in the front pew, clutching shillings they will place in the offering plate when it passes.

Esther sits next to Dorcas, who balances baby Nawa on her knee. When he begins to fuss, Dorcas uses the time-honored trick of mothers everywhere, plying him with milk from a sippy cup. Fussing soon turns to satisfaction.

Hunger surrounds him in northwestern Kenya, but the child feels no want. Someday, he will understand how his grandmother helped make it so. ■



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP » Dorcas works in her field at sunrise, cultivating sorghum. Esther (right, pictured with her cousin, Nakenyit), was a change agent when farming was first encouraged in the community. Children play at the top of the hill overlooking the Morulem irrigation project.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- » Sponsor a child: Fill out the envelope between pages 18 and 19, or sign up online at www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond.
- » See a photo slideshow, "Morulem Then and Now" at www.worldvision.org/magazine.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



LEFT: Savitri, a Christian, finds strength in Scripture. **FACING PAGE:** Visiting community members to offer help and encouragement is Savitri's main duty.

The village of Rongphar, in north-east India, isn't where a young, college-educated person would likely choose to live. Located in one of the least developed districts in the country, Rongphar has only one way in and out—a dusty, bumpy track, passable only by SUV.

Yet here is Savitri Tumung, 28. After finishing her college degree, she returned to the community where she was once a World Vision-sponsored child.

Her dream is to see every child in her village receive a quality education and every family take part in the economic boom that so far, has been limited to India's affluent cities. "Besides participating in village development, I want my community to be aware morally and spiritually," she says.

Through Rongphar Baptist Church, Savitri is a community worker, visiting families throughout the district to determine their needs and the best ways to help. Her emphasis is providing counseling for women and children. "Savitri's role in catering to the specific needs of women and winning their trust is crucial, because women in our social context are reluctant to share their problems with men," says Pichong Ronghang, a village leader.

Savitri's work complements World Vision's project in the area, which provides support for schools, access to health care, and opportunities for generating income. Some of this community development work started when Savitri was a sponsored child.

Beginning when she was 9 years old, sponsorship helped Savitri attend school and provide for her family's basic needs. But in time, she came to value the communication with her sponsor even more.

"All letters would reach our school caretaker, who would then give them to us.

Written On Her Heart»

by Kitkumar Shangpliang

Savitri found comfort and encouragement in letters from her sponsor. Now she's returning the support to her own community.

KITKUMAR SHANGPLIANG/WORLD VISION (2)

member how eager I would get, waiting open and read those letters," Savitri says. "I remember I would feel so happy." The letters benefited her in another way. When I found it difficult to understand all the words in the letter, I would seek help from the dictionary or somebody who knows English," Savitri says. This helped her learn English—widely spoken in India, in addition to the national language, Hindi. Savitri studied hard, completed high school, and attended college in Dimapur, more than 180 miles from her village. Savitri's father, Sonsingh Tumung, sees a vast difference before and after World Vision's intervention in Rongphar. "Previously, he says, parents did not place much importance on their children's education. "But knowing that a sponsor who is so far away cares for their children, [that] helped them realize they should put more effort to care for their young ones."

As Savitri helps guide children in her village, she continues her sponsor's legacy. "I understand it now," she says, "the encouraging words of my sponsor pushed me to become the person that I am now." ■

Kupar Shangpliang is a communications coordinator for World Vision in India.

WRITING REMINDERS

Letters can have a profound impact on sponsored children, as Savitri can attest. Some tips for keeping in touch:

- ☑ When you receive a letter from your sponsored child, write back promptly.
- ☑ Use the birthday and holiday cards World Vision provides.
- ☑ Jot reminders in your calendar to write to your child at least a few times a year.
- ☑ When you have news you would share with family such as a new baby or grandchild, share it with your sponsored child as well.



» QUESTIONS ABOUT WRITING

to your sponsored child? Visit www.worldvision.org/sponsorship journey or call (866) 952-4453.



About World Vision

WHO WE ARE | World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to helping children, families, and their communities worldwide reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

WHOM WE SERVE | Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed—regardless of a person's religion, race, ethnicity, or gender—as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people.

WHY WE SERVE | Our passion is for the world's poorest children whose suffering breaks the heart of God. To help secure a better future for each child, we focus on lasting, community-based transformation. We partner with individuals and communities, empowering them to develop sustainable access to clean water, food supplies, health care, education, and economic opportunities.

HOW WE SERVE | Since 1950, World Vision has helped millions of children and families by providing emergency assistance to those affected by natural disasters and civil conflict, developing long-term solutions within communities to alleviate poverty and advocating for justice on behalf of the poor.

YOU CAN HELP | Partnering with World Vision provides tangible ways to honor God and put faith into action. By working together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families who are struggling to overcome poverty. To find out how you can help, visit www.worldvision.org. ■



Sowing Generously »

In the mid-first century, the Apostle Paul organized what today we might call a humanitarian foreign aid program—helping people suffering from famine in Judea by gathering resources from churches in Asia Minor. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he encourages the community to give generously, reminding them, "whoever sows generously will also reap generously" (2 Corinthians 9:6).

As Christians, we experience the love of God through Jesus Christ. This love moves us to share with our neighbors, whether they're in the next house or the next continent. As individuals, we give to other people and charities. But God is also concerned with our behavior as a nation.

The global hunger crisis has reversed some of the progress made against hunger in the last four decades. Our nation's response, while positive, has not matched that of other developed countries. Paul asked the Corinthians to achieve "a fair balance between your present abundance and their need." Although we have made a tremendous difference by providing effective foreign assistance so that people in developing nations can build a better life, we can do more.

This year, Bread for the World, the collective Christian voice against hunger that I lead, is urging Congress to rework U.S. foreign assistance for greater impact on hunger and poverty. Our grassroots members and churches across the country are explaining to elected officials that the United States can deliver more impact with our foreign aid dollars by making assistance more effective and refocusing more of it on development and poverty reduction.

"...whoever sows generously will also reap generously." —2 Corinthians 9:6

Last December, I visited Mozambique and Malawi and saw the positive impact of U.S. assistance, combined with that of the faith community. In poor, remote villages, schools were rebuilt and people were living longer, healthier lives thanks to medications we provided. In Mozambique alone, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief helps 100,000 people.

Among the people I met was Pedro Kumpila, who lives in Mtimbe in northern Mozambique. Life in Mtimbe can be hard: Everyone experiences hunger when the cassava harvest is poor.

When HIV and AIDS reached the community, Pedro became gravely concerned as more and more parents could not work in



David Beckmann (second from right) in Mozambique.

the fields and children became orphans. He joined a program at his church that trains volunteers to educate their neighbors about HIV prevention and treatment.

Together, the door-to-door outreach of Pedro's team, the church's support, and antiretroviral medications—mostly financed by the generosity of American people—have saved many Mozambican lives. They are saving people who matter to the community and to God. I found it profoundly moving to meet with mothers and fathers who would not be alive today but for this help.

Pedro's work complements faith-based advocacy on hunger and poverty in this country. As we work for effective U.S. development assistance and continue to make private charitable contributions, we are aiding Pedro and tens of thousands of people like him in poor countries.

This year offers us the opportunity of new administration and a new Congress. To end hunger in God's world, we must push for better policies and ensure that commitments on hunger and poverty are not pushed aside in the crush of other issues. ■

David Beckmann is the president of Bread for the World, a Christian advocacy group.

RETROSPECT



JUSTIN DOUGLASS/WORLD VISION

M O N G O L I A

Munkhzorig, 17, found his aim at World Vision's youth farm center, a place for children from abusive homes to learn life skills. He is beginning to live up to his name, which means "forever brave." As a child, Munkhzorig never went to school, but at the farm he caught up with his studies, completing the eighth grade. This enables him to study at a technical college. "Watch me," Munkhzorig says. "In three years' time I will be a motor mechanic and a driver." As he faces the future, Munkhzorig knows that he is not alone: "I pray to Jesus to help me, and he answers my prayers." ■

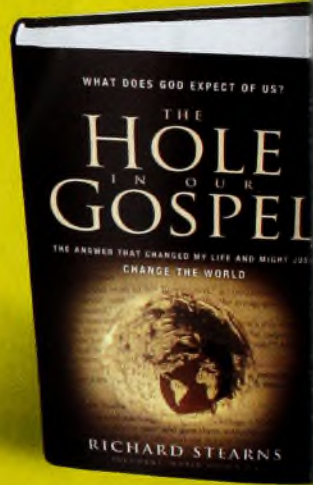
EVERY

"With passionate urging and earnestness, Rich Stearns challenges American Christians to embrace the whole gospel of Jesus Christ by embracing the neediest and most vulnerable among us. After reading the moving stories, the compelling facts and figures, and Stearns' excellent application of Scripture and his own experiences at World Vision, you will no doubt be asking yourself: What should I do?"

—CHUCK COLSON, FOUNDER OF PRISON FELLOWSHIP

The Hole in Our Gospel

The Hole in Our Gospel invites you on a journey of a million miles with Rich Stearns, president of World Vision in the U.S., as he experiences forgotten places and explores the heartbreaking dimensions of suffering in our world. Rich's own life story documents a different journey, from childhood poverty to corporate success and ultimately to significance as he accepted God's call on his life to bring the "good news"—the whole gospel—to the poor. Rich repaired the hole in his embrace of the gospel, and he challenges individuals and churches to do the same—to say to God, "Use me; I want to change the world." If you've ever wondered, *What does God expect of me?*, this book is for you.



Purchase at Family Christian Store, online retailers such as Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, or Borders.

At www.theholeinourgospel.com you can read the author's blog, photos and video, and connect with others who have read the book. You'll also find an expanded study guide to use with your church small group.

At the author's request, all royalties due to the author will benefit World Vision's work with children in need.



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