

A young girl with dark hair and a bindi on her forehead is smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a black sari with yellow and white embroidery and a purple blouse. She is adorned with multiple necklaces, including one with red beads and a gold pendant, and several red bangles on both wrists. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

# WorldVision

SUMMER 2012

## A Reason to Smile

Sponsored children  
are poised for success  
in rural India.





“This is my way to give back.

I’ve known what it’s like to be poor—what it’s like not to have things. But the Lord has blessed me. By leaving money to World Vision in my living trust, I know that children will be taken care of. Children will benefit from my love, even when I’m gone.”

*My name is  
Gloria Beckford.*

And I'm sharing a legacy of compassion.

**We're here to help . . .**

Do your current plans reflect the legacy you wish to leave? If you have questions or would like assistance, call 1.866.952.4453.

Read more stories like Gloria's at [www.worldvision.org/mylegacy](http://www.worldvision.org/mylegacy).

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World Vision





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Rebecca Teron, 7, is dressed up for the visit of a sponsor to Amri, India.  
JON WARREN/WORLD VISION



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

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Rachel Held Evans saw how a community in Bolivia was transformed by sponsorship.



# Serve the Poor, Grow the Church

BY RICH STEARNS

Since the very first days of the church, ministering to the poor has been one of its central functions. In Acts 6, when the apostles were overwhelmed by their duties, they instituted the role of deacons to distribute food and care for the poor. This was a pivotal moment in the early church, marking the start of its distinct role to care for those in need.

I often say that World Vision can trace its beginnings back to this moment. When Bob Pierce founded our organization in 1950, he only continued what the apostles began two millennia before.

What is remarkable about this story in Acts 6 is not only that the church launched the world's first social service organization. What astounds us today is that care for the poor was fertilizer for the growth of the church. The passage concludes, "So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7). The church flourished as a result of being the hands and feet of Christ. The lesson, it seems, is this: Serve the poor; grow the church.

In his fascinating book *The Triumph of Christianity*, Baylor University sociologist Rodney Stark provides an account of why this was so. Service to the poor, he found, was a major reason why Christianity overtook the Roman Empire in just a few short centuries. One of the most significant factors in the church's growth was that it operated a massive welfare system for the poor when disease and hunger were constant threats.

This was no ad hoc operation, but a large, official organization. "We have our treasure chest," church father Tertullian explained. "On the monthly day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation ... to support and bury poor people, to supply the wants of boys and girls of destitute means."

When two deadly epidemics struck the cities of the empire, the care offered by Christians illustrated the uniqueness of the Christian worldview. The typical response to plague was to flee from victims. "They died with no one to look after



LAURA REINHARDT/WORLD VISION

Manhattan Bible Church in New York City runs a food pantry for the surrounding neighborhood.

*"So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith."*

—ACTS 6:7

them," wrote one ancient historian. Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria, however, described the Christian response during an epidemic: "Heedless of danger, they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ."

Like their neighbors, Christians died in the plagues, but as Stark notes, pagans saw that far fewer Christians died. The basic nursing care that Christians offered—clean water, food, bathing—would have dramatically increased the survival rates of the small Christian community. Stark says this likely led to the church's growth, as nonbelieving survivors were attracted to this miracle-working faith. "Because theirs were communities

of mercy and self-help," he concludes, "Christians did have longer, better lives. This was apparent and must have been extremely appealing."

Service to the poor is like sunshine and fertilizer to church growth. In much of the world today, conditions are not terribly different from those during the Roman era. Many suffer from disease and hunger—and again, Christians are shining lights, attending to their needs. World Vision supports churches that care for the poor around the world.

In Myanmar, where Christians represent a small fraction of the mostly Buddhist population, the church is growing twice as fast as the overall population. Last October, on World Food Day, World Vision staff prayed, fasted, and offered money to help feed Myanmar's 2.5 million food insecure.



This is the extension of the work of those first deacons. If we are a community of love, compassion, and reconciliation—if we really love our neighbors as ourselves—the church will be attractive to its community, drawing people to Christ like bumblebees to flowers. ●



# FRONTLINES



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

f

## IN OUR HANDS

**Malaria has gotten hold** of 6-year-old Umba Imolo. His father carried him four miles to this hospital in Karawa, Democratic Republic of the Congo. The severely dehydrated boy is receiving a saline drip, but to fully recover he will need a costly blood transfusion.

Staff at Karawa General Hospital claim that nearly every child in the area contracts the disease. A nurse says, “[Malaria] kills children. I’m used to seeing that many times.”

With malaria being 100 percent preventable, the lives of children like Umba are in our hands. Insecticide-treated

bed nets prevent children from contracting the disease from mosquitoes at night. World Vision distributed more than 2.2 million bed nets in Africa last year and plans to distribute millions more over the next three years, working toward a 75-percent reduction in malaria cases and near-zero preventable deaths in targeted areas by 2015.

Everyone can help—buy a bed net for a child and family; ask government leaders to maintain malaria funding; pray; or spread the word. Children like Umba are worth the effort. To learn more, visit [endmalaria.org](http://endmalaria.org). ●





ANN BIRCH GRAHAM/WORLD VISION

WEST AFRICA

## WEST AFRICA | HUNGER CRISIS

A deepening food crisis in West Africa has prompted desperate family members to trek for miles to bring their malnourished babies and infants to health clinics. Up to 15 million people in the region are facing food shortages due to poor rains and failed harvests. The situation has been made worse by violence in Mali, which forced thousands of refugees into neighboring countries, putting further pressure on impoverished host communities. World Vision's emergency response aims to reach more than 1 million people and includes running nutrition programs for children, distributing food, restocking cereal banks, and vaccinating livestock. The organization hopes to achieve long-term food security through drilling additional wells and teaching advanced irrigation techniques.

## PHILIPPINES | TYPHOON WASHI

Typhoon Washi hit the southern region of the Philippines in December, sparking flash floods and mudslides. More than 1,200 people were killed, hundreds of thousands were displaced, and nearly 40,000 homes were destroyed. World Vision relief teams provided 16,000 families in Cagayan de Oro and Iligan with drinking water and food, as well as emergency items such as



PHILIPPINES

CRISLYN FELISILDA/WORLD VISION

toothpaste, soap, blankets, sleeping mats, cooking pots, and utensils. Nearly 10,000 children found psychosocial support at World Vision's Child-Friendly Spaces. Staff

also provided school supplies so that children could keep up with their education. Since December, the island of Mindanao has repeatedly received heavy rains and more flooding.

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA | THEATER FIGHTS TRAFFICKING

World Vision uses theater as a way to help youth who are at risk of becoming trafficking victims. The country of Bosnia and Herzegovina has among the highest unemployment rates in Europe. Two-thirds of its young people have expressed a desire to leave in search of a better life, and that eagerness provides fertile ground for human traffickers. World Vision's theatrical presentations show how traffickers can approach teens in seemingly innocent ways.

## INDIA | CYCLONE THANE

Thousands were left homeless

## ON THE GROUND

*Crislyn Felisilda is a World Vision communications specialist in the Philippines.*



WORLD VISION STAFF

"Typhoon Washi hit northern Mindanao, my home. It struck in the dead of night while many were sleeping. I can't believe what I've seen. As a humanitarian worker, I know I should keep going. I've seen enough other disasters. But this time, I experienced the rawness of it all. I saw a father squatting and cradling his muddied baby, limp and lifeless. There were no tears in his eyes, no words from his lips, but on his mouth was a frozen scream. I heard the cries of children searching for their loved ones. The most heart-rending scenes were the dead bodies being pulled out, one after another, from the floodwaters. Nevertheless, I see hope. Nevertheless, I see God working graciously in the midst of suffering. There's more work to be done."



and in need after Cyclone Thane lashed India's southeast coast on December 30. At least 47 people died, and more than 200,000 homes were damaged—50,000 of them were totally destroyed. Rain and sustained winds of more than 80 miles per hour damaged thousands of acres of rice and other cash crops that were ready for harvest. Rural poor and slum dwellers were the worst affected. World Vision is part of an inter-agency team that assessed damage and planned aid for people in distress.



JOAN NIJUNA/WORLD VISION

**LEBANON | WOMEN'S WELL-BEING**

Lebanese mothers are teaching their peers about the importance of breastfeeding and other healthy behaviors through health forums supported by World Vision. After attending training sessions, 12 mothers from the Zahle area reached out to approximately 200 other women. Around 400 children also learned the importance of eating healthy food and maintaining personal hygiene. Through these forums and other activities, World Vision strives to improve the quality of life for pregnant women, mothers, and their children.

**AFGHANISTAN | TELEPHONE TREATMENT**

Afghanistan has some of the highest rates of mother and



NILA AKBARI/WORLD VISION

child mortality in the world. But now a pilot program uses inexpensive mobile phones to improve chances of survival. The technology was introduced by World Vision and Massachusetts-based technology firm Dimagi and is currently being tested by community health workers in five remote villages. The phones, containing special software, provide a checklist of questions for the health worker to ask and highlight important steps to take based on a woman's answers.

**WORLDWIDE | NATURAL DISASTERS**

Economic losses from natural catastrophes topped \$380 billion in 2011, the highest figure on record, according to reinsurance firm Munich Re. But another measure of costs from 2011 natural catastrophes was notably low—fatalities reached 27,000, compared to more than 10 times that number in 2010, the year of the Haiti quake. Three out of five of 2011's most costly disaster



KEVIN TONN/WORLD VISION

events occurred in highly developed parts of Asia and Oceania: the Japan earthquake and tsunami; floods and landslides in Thailand; and a series of earthquakes in New Zealand.

**HAITI | CHOLERA RECOVERY**

More than 550,000 people have contracted cholera in Haiti since October 2010, with more than 7,000 dying from the disease. Cholera, which is preventable and curable, easily spreads in places without adequate water and sanitation infrastructure. World Vision's work to combat cholera in Haiti includes distributing water filters, buckets, and jerry cans; rehabilitating borehole wells; and providing education on hygiene practices. The organization also supports treatment centers and oral rehydration posts. ●

**KEEP UP TO DATE** with the latest humanitarian news from World Vision's iPhone app. Search for "World Vision Now" in the Apple App Store.

**POVERTY DECREASING**

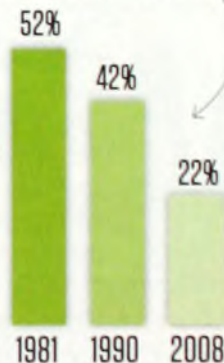
Extreme poverty is defined by the World Bank as living on **LESS THAN \$1.25/DAY.**



Based on its 2011 projections, the number of people living in extreme poverty around the world is anticipated to be **883 MILLION IN 2015** (lower than the previous estimate of 918 million).

Central to the global effort to fight extreme poverty and hunger is the first Millennium Development Goal to **HALVE THE 1990 POVERTY RATE BY 2015.**

Significant progress has been made over the years:



**BY 2015, THE POVERTY RATE IS EXPECTED TO DROP TO LESS THAN 15%.**

Source: The World Bank, 2011, 2012



# GLOBAL SOCCER MOM

*A stay-at-home mom helps orphans across the globe.*



COURTESY SHAYNE MOORE

**M**eet stay-at-home mom Shayne Moore. She spends her time stocking the refrigerator, supervising homework, and driving her kids to sports practices. Although she had been content with her life, Shayne woke up one day from what she now calls her “suburban stupor.”

It happened in 2002 when the singer Bono came through her hometown of Wheaton, Ill., to educate people about poverty and the AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa. Shayne’s heart broke when she learned that a projected 25 million children would be orphaned by AIDS by 2010 because their mothers and/or fathers would die without life-saving medicine. (Today, thanks to international efforts,

the number of children orphaned is 16.6 million.)

“Although I considered myself a somewhat well-educated woman living in North America, this was really the first time that I had heard about the severity of the issue,” Shayne admits.

The experience prompted Shayne to start making a difference in her circle of influence. She began signing petitions and using her voice to motivate her church, her friends, and even her elected leaders to do their part in “changing the world.” She also traveled to Zambia with World Vision in November 2009 to see firsthand the effects of poverty caused by AIDS. She continues her involvement with World Vision today as a part of its Speaker’s Bureau.

In October 2011 she was invited to a meeting at the White House with other

global-thinking moms, to meet with Dr. Jill Biden, USAID Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah, and Gayle Smith of the National Security Council. The group discussed practical ideas for other moms and families who want to make a difference.

“One thing that you can do is just start right where you are,” she says. “Don’t think that you have to be a perfectionist about it. You don’t even have to be a policy expert. Just start right in your own kitchen, with your own family, with your group of friends.”

“We all have our spheres of influence, and we all have our networks. We all can raise our voice.” ● —Cat-Dan Lai-Smith

**LEARN MORE ABOUT** speaking out on behalf of hurting children and their families by visiting [www.worldvision.org/advocacy](http://www.worldvision.org/advocacy).



## WHY I LOVE BEING A CHILD SPONSOR



ION WARREN/WORLD VISION

### APARNA SEN, MILWAUKEE, WISC.

As a girl growing up in Calcutta, I would often visit rural schools with my classmates, to teach younger children. Our principal said we were "creating ripples in the pond"—her way of teaching us that change starts with the individual.

Seeing how few girls attended school, I promised myself to someday help educate girls. But that promise wasn't fulfilled until 2008 when I sponsored Rebika, a girl in India. [See a story about Rebika's community on p. 12.]

Even though I now live in the U.S., I had to meet Rebika. As my husband and I approached her village, we were greeted by a community-wide celebration. We joyfully met Rebika and visited her home and family.

We also discovered how World Vision works not just with children, but with families and the entire community to provide a lasting support network. I was convinced then that I had made the perfect choice in supporting World Vision.

Once home, my husband sponsored another child through World Vision. We hope to visit her on our next trip to India. We are very grateful to be able to keep the ripples going.

### WHY DO YOU LOVE BEING A CHILD SPONSOR?

Write the editors at [wvmagazine@worldvision.org](mailto:wvmagazine@worldvision.org).

## FACEBOOK POLL

WHY DID/WOULD YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A CHILD SPONSOR WITH WORLD VISION?"

—Posed by World Vision on Facebook



## CHANGE AGENT

**NAME** Ben Ward

**HOME** Long Island, N.Y.

**OCCUPATION** Worship pastor

**PROGRAM** Team World Vision

**THE HULL!** While Olivia Ward was competing on "The Biggest Loser" TV contest (which she won in May 2011), her husband, Ben, was attempting his own dramatic weight loss. He dropped 113 pounds, despite lacking the facilities available to contestants on the show. Ben, 35, is a worship pastor who lost much of his weight by running. He entered the ING New York Marathon and asked people to support him by sponsoring a child. Ben aimed to get 26 children sponsored—one for every mile of the race. His wife's TV celebrity status was helpful in achieving that goal: Ben promoted his quest to her 27,000 Twitter followers. ●

*"You are helping change someone's life for the better and inspiring other people to do the same thing. It's incredible to be part of that."*

— BEN WARD



COURTESY BEN WARD

### TAKING PART IN A SPORTING EVENT?

Join Team World Vision and help children in need. Visit [www.teamworldvision.org](http://www.teamworldvision.org).



Marilee shares about the impact of hunger in the Horn of Africa.

permission to give the offering we took today to fund the new building."

Every congregation I speak to gives generously, but I have never heard of a pastor giving away his building fund offering. My heart was pounding. The church had been without a home for 13 years and needed that down payment. After a stunned moment of silence, the elders granted their permission.

"I sensed that we should give the building fund offering," Pastor Oh later told me. "I don't know if that was my faith, but I do know that our people exercised their faith. I feel so proud and thankful for their giving, because they responded so generously with their loving hearts. It's not always the amount. It's the heart of those who give."

Pastor Oh is right. It is not always the amount. But in this case, the amount was impressive: Love and Truth Church gave more than \$8,000 that Sunday. Amazingly, more came from the "famine" box than the building fund.

They gave another \$4,500 over the next few weeks. Best of all, 74 more children were sponsored, bringing the church's grand total of sponsored children to 138.

And what about that down payment?

"We closed on the building on Nov. 8," Pastor Oh told me. "But you know, we'd already been blessed, for the giving itself is a blessing. And the giver [is] a blessed one."

This church truly believes that everything they have comes from God; they understand that what they so humbly give away simply goes right back to the One whose hand first supplied it. ●

—Marilee Pierce Dunker

**TO REQUEST MARILEE** or another World Vision speaker for your event, please visit [www.worldvision.org/speakers](http://www.worldvision.org/speakers).

이 사람들에게 여러분은  
무엇으로 다가가겠습니까?



COURTESY MARILEE PIERCE DUNKER

## FROM THE HAND OF GOD

*Marilee Pierce Dunker encounters a church in New Jersey that gave sacrificially.*

**Love and Truth Church** is a Korean-American congregation of about 400 people in Bergenfield, N.J. Last fall I was invited to speak there about the famine in the Horn of Africa. I did not know what kind of response to expect.

"The church already sponsors 64 children, and we are raising funds to buy our church building," I was told by Julia Kim, a World Vision staffer and member of this congregation. "But I know the church will give something."

The message I gave was nothing remarkable, but what happened after I sat down is worth telling. Pastor Benjamin Oh stood and said, "I feel that God is calling us to do something. There is a collection box in the back marked 'famine.' I want everyone here to consider putting something in the box as you leave. Young people, do you have money in your pockets? Put it in the box. Children, do you have money? Give it. In fact, I want the elders'



## WORLD VISION BY THE NUMBERS

In fiscal 2011, generous donors gave to World Vision in record numbers. The organization raised \$1,058 million—an increase of 2 percent over the previous year.

### BREAKDOWN OF OPERATING EXPENSES



86%

Programs that benefit children, families, and communities in need

9%

Fundraising

5%

Management and general expenses

### HIGHLIGHTS

**1.1 million**

children around the globe are supported by 725,000 sponsors in the United States.

**400,000**

youth participated in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine program

**9,900**

volunteers in the U.S. donated more than 89,000 hours of work and support

For more details, see World Vision's 2011 Annual Review at [www.worldvision.org/AR](http://www.worldvision.org/AR).

## HOW CAN I HELP?

Four more ways child sponsors can make a difference.

### PRAYER

Join the Hope Prayer Team and receive monthly prayer points for children around the world.  
[www.worldvision.org/prayerteam](http://www.worldvision.org/prayerteam)

### PLANNED GIVING

Name World Vision as a beneficiary in your will or make a more complex trust arrangement.  
[www.worldvision.org/mylegacy](http://www.worldvision.org/mylegacy)

### IN THE U.S.

Support World Vision's work here at home, from responding to disasters to providing school supplies for students from low-income families.  
[www.worldvision.org/usp](http://www.worldvision.org/usp)

### MICROENTERPRISE

Join World Vision's effort to help hard-working entrepreneurs generate sustainable income for their families.  
[www.worldvisionmicro.org](http://www.worldvisionmicro.org)

## PRECIOUS GIFT

When Florida construction worker Mike Murphy looked closely at his child sponsorship information folder, he discovered that he could send a financial gift to World Vision to benefit his sponsored child's family and community, in addition to his regular sponsorship contribution.

Mike, from Boynton Beach, decided to send \$100 to help improve the life of his sponsored child, 9-year-old Devi, who lives in northern India.

For Mike, 43, it was a significant sacrifice. A deep recession in Florida's building industry means Mike has struggled to find regular work. He has no car and little family support, and he estimates that over the last 12 months he has earned just \$16,000.

But Mike felt that God laid it on his heart to give the money. He believed Devi's family could make even better use of it than he could—perhaps by using some of it to help improve their home or buy a cow.

What happened after he sent the gift took Mike's breath away. He received a letter from Devi's neighbor saying that the family was extremely grateful. The letter went on to explain that it was now the cold time of the year, and Devi's father was conscious that children in their village needed something to help them keep warm. So he worked with World Vision to use Mike's gift to provide a top-quality blanket for every child in the village.

Accompanying the letter were pictures of the village children clutching their new blankets. The letter and photographs reduced Mike to tears. "It floors me that somebody that poor can share with somebody else."

He says the letter could not have come at a better time. Because his own circumstances have been so trying in recent months, many times he has succumbed to depression and felt like giving up. But the news from India revived his spirits.

Mike likens the experience to throwing a rock into a still pond. One ripple touches the next one and the next one and the next one. "It's like God touched me, and then I touched Devi's family," Mike says, "and then they selflessly shared what they had with their whole village—touching many children. That's how God's love works." ●

—James Addis



COURTESY MIKE MURPHY



# { From Here }

Child sponsorship helped isolated villages in northeast India for more than a decade. Now, with programs winding down, World Vision helps people plan for what's next.

BY KATHRYN REID  
PHOTOS BY JON WARREN



to





Other



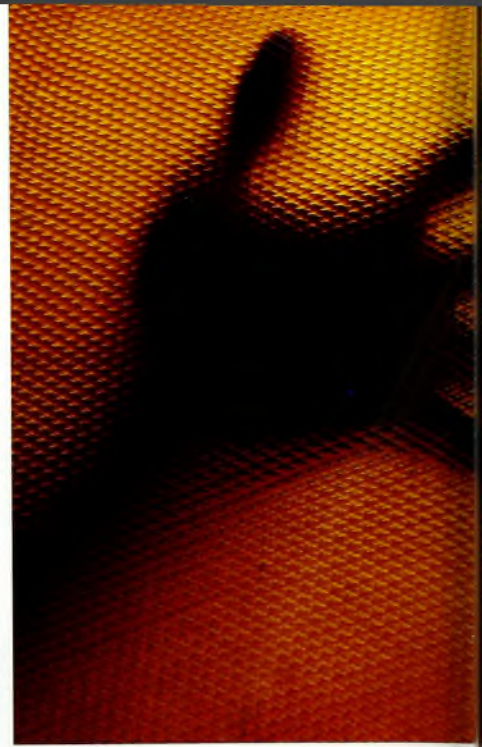
**I**t's a walk of little more than 100 yards from the past to the future.

On sandaled feet, 11-year-old Nabami Junuka (precisely "11 years and 7 months," she says) and her father, Lokhan Rongchon, walk along the narrow, muddy dike of an emerald-green rice field.

Nabami, a World Vision sponsored child, shyly explains that she likes to run and play *kabaddi*, a fast-moving South Asian tag game, and that she helps her mother clean house and wash dishes—but schoolwork is her focus. Assamese

language is her favorite subject. With her father looking on proudly, she says boldly, "I want to be a doctor."

For Nabami, the future is full of promise. World Vision's sponsorship-funded work in her community for the past 15 years—providing opportunities for better healthcare, education, infrastructure, and economic development—has paved the way for this. She and her generation will break the cycle of poverty that has long afflicted the tribal people of northeast India's Assam state.





FACING PAGE Nabami Junuka (center) and her friends walk alongside rice fields near their village. BELOW AND LEFT Rubber starts as tree sap and is formed into mats and then dried. BOTTOM Lokhan cares for his rubber plantation as a legacy for his children.



“I have four children ... this [rubber plantation] is for them.”

—LOKHAN RONGCHON,  
farmer (at left)

Living in isolated mountain communities, they have been rich in tradition and craftsmanship, but dirt-poor in nearly everything else. Lokhan has 11 *bighas* of land, less than five acres, on which he barely grows enough rice to feed his family; there is none left over to sell. He works in the fields for others, when jobs are available.

But leaving the rice paddy, Lokhan and Nabami climb a steep hillside to arrive at what will make all the

difference in his family's fortunes: his small rubber plantation of 350 trees. With time and care and World Vision's support, these trees will yield an income for 50 years.

That means Nabami and her siblings don't have to leave their tribal home and close-knit community to find success. “I have four children,” Lokhan says, gazing at his plantation. “It would be good if they get jobs, but *this* is for them.”

#### ROOTED IN PLACE

World Vision began working in the Amri Karbi area through the Amri Area Development Program in 1997. Today, more than 2,300 children are sponsored, and communities are gearing up to continue the area's development even after World Vision phases out.

“Our main activities from now until our program closes in 2014 are helping families develop rubber plantations and seeing that young people have training



that directly relates to jobs,” says Mukul Borah, manager of World Vision’s Amri development program.

Lokhan’s trees are young and will require four more years of care before they’re ready to be tapped for the milky sap that makes rubber. “This is fertile land, they grow well,” Lokhan says. “All I have to do is clean [the underbrush] about three times a year.”

World Vision’s cash-for-work and food-for-work programs have provided income for the aspiring rubber-growers. Staff also helped families obtain the right to use land that was part of a tribal block. The national Rubber Board conducted training here, and it will monitor production and buy the rubber.

“This plan and other things will change this place,” says Kati Rahang, a rubber farmer and community advocate. He once participated in a village development committee organized by World Vision—now he serves on its successor, the government-funded Amri Karbi Development Council.

“Our way of life can’t go on,” Kati says. “We must have a better life for the next generation.”

## ROAD TO THE FUTURE

When asked what World Vision’s greatest contribution through sponsorship has been for these hill tribes, Kati ponders the question and counts off three



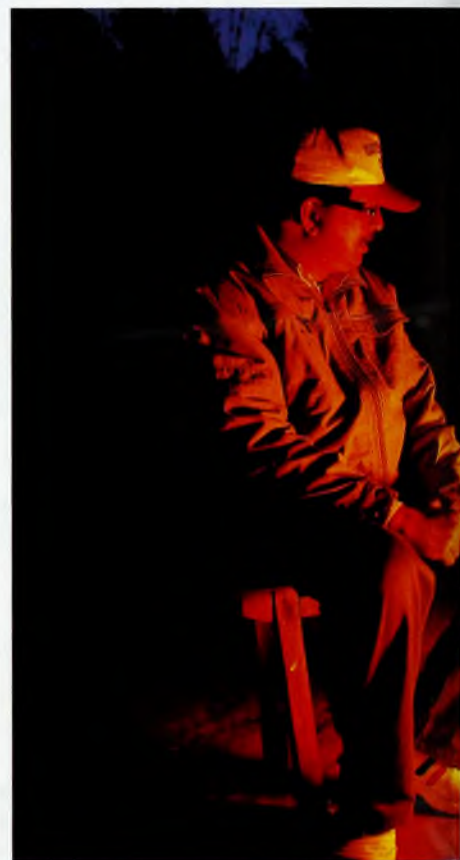
answers on his fingers. “First, education. Of course, economic development,” he says with a nod. “And the road.”

The road. Though it’s little more than a dirt track in places, the road connects National Highway 39 to Amri Karbi villages and then winds farther into the hills. As one of the first projects World Vision carried out more than 10 years ago, it was a highly visible promise of progress.

Holding onto the passenger-side window frame of a four-wheel-drive vehicle as it bounces and slides over muddy rocks, World Vision’s Mukul Borah points out piles of gravel at the road’s edge. “The government has taken up road maintenance now,” he says triumphantly. Kati and the council are being heard at the seat of power.

This now-passable road has effectively shortened the distance between the past and the future. Children go to school regularly. Villagers walk to the market weekly to trade. Cattle move

—continued on page 18







World Vision



JON WARREN/WORLD VISION

# YOU'RE THE MORE SHE'S LOOKING FOR

Hundreds of thousands of children around the world await sponsorship. Do you have room in your heart for another?

By sponsoring another today, your love and support become tangible. You provide a child—a boy or girl in the region of your choice—with access to clean water, nutritious food, an education, and more.

Sign up today and change another life!



TOP PAGE, ABOVE Education is a high priority for village children. BELOW The mountain road connects villagers to schools and markets. TOP World Vision gave bicycles to girls who needed transportation to school. LEFT Mukul Singh (left), World Vision program manager, talks to village leaders. ABOVE Kurina, age 8, is a dedicated student.



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Lokhan's trees are young and will require four more years of care before they're ready to be tapped for the milky sap that makes rubber. "This is fertile land, they grow well," Lokhan says. "All I have to do is clean [the underbrush] about three times a year."

World Vision's cash-for-work and food-for-work programs have provided income for the aspiring rubber-growers. Staff also helped families obtain the right to use land that was part of a tribal block. The national Rubber Board conducted training here, and it will monitor production and buy the rubber.

"This plan and other things will change this place," says Kati Rahang, a rubber farmer and community advocate. He once participated in a village development committee organized by World Vision—now he serves on its successor, the government-funded Amri Karbi Development Council.

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### ROAD TO THE FUTURE

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**RIGHT PAGE, ABOVE** Education is a high priority for village children. **BELOW** The mountain road connects villagers to schools and markets. **TOP** World Vision gave bicycles to girls who needed transportation to school. **LEFT** Mukul ah (left), World Vision program manager, talks to village leaders. **ABOVE** Kurina, age 8, is a dedicated student.



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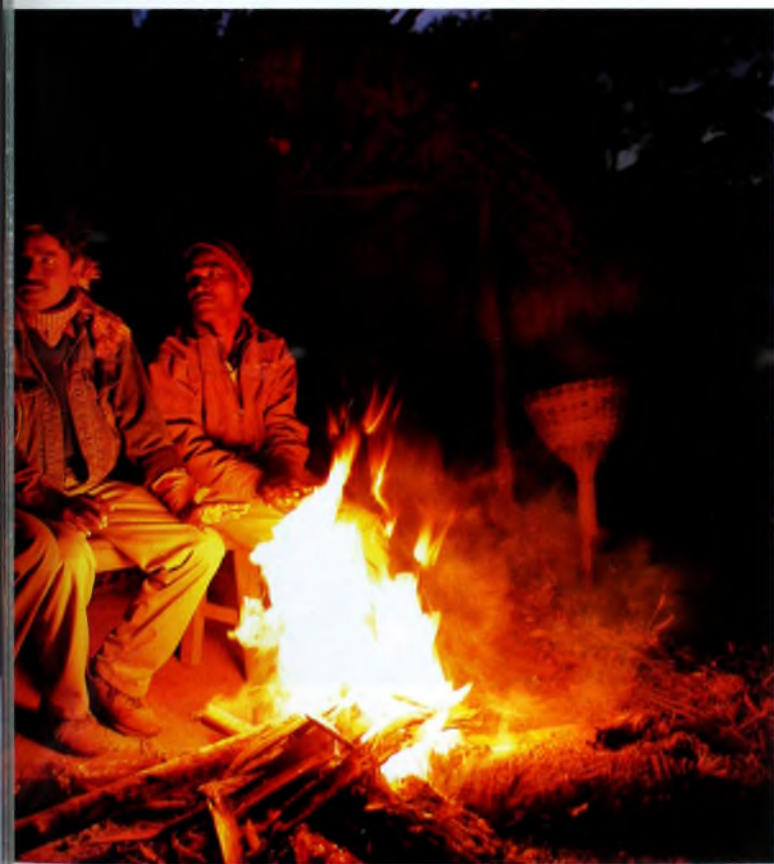
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FACING PAGE, ABOVE Education is a high priority for village children. BELOW The mountain road connects villagers to schools and markets. TOP World Vision gave bicycles to 500 girls who needed transportation to school. LEFT Mukul Borah (left), World Vision program manager, talks to village leaders. ABOVE Kurina, age 8, is a dedicated student.





—continued from page 16

aside for motorcycles.

“This was a neglected place for a long time,” Mukul says. In the past, for example, government health workers didn’t immunize children of the hill tribes because the workers had to pay for their own transportation. But then World Vision staff arranged for the health workers to ride along with them to the villages. Now, healthcare is a community priority, health visits occur regularly, and villagers travel down the mountain for more advanced care.

## EMPOWERING PROGRESS

Mukul says that what World Vision provides to help communities set their own development priorities is the “power of the vision.” There is power in giving books to children to encourage a habit of reading or bicycles to girls so they can ride to school safely. Distant possibilities become achievable goals. Education opens up new worlds and makes dreams accessible.

“Education is so important to my family,” says Bhogen Ramde, the father of four sponsored children. His second son, Roton Ramde, 28, is the first person from his community to earn a master’s degree. Roton teaches geography at the prestigious Kaziranga English Academy, a boarding school in Guwahati.

World Vision supplied school fees, uniforms, and sometimes meals that helped Bhogen’s children stay in school. But what he remembers most is that someone from World Vision came to their home every month to check that the children were attending school.

Bhogen is president of the village

development committee and a revered local leader. He had 400 rubber trees and bought 800 more with his sons as an investment for his children and grandchildren.

Roton’s success is inspiring for all village children. Schooling gives them a boost, while economic development for their parents strengthens their households.

Sponsored child Abha Smitha, 14, dreams of being a music teacher. Her widowed mother, Rodali Phangcho, 33, runs a small shop in her home and earns enough to pay school fees for Abha and her son and weekly music lessons for Abha, who plays harmonium and sings.

Rodali belongs to a women’s self-help group, a self-governing savings club that loans money to its members. A savvy businesswoman, she learned basic business by helping her husband in his small shop. After his death, World Vision helped restock her shop and provided training in entrepreneurship.

Rodali plans to grow her business. She and other members of her self-help

—continued on page 20



TOP Now a teacher, Roton Ramdey (center) is the pride of his parents. Neither parent completed elementary school. ABOVE The *Junali* (moonlight) women’s savings group meets to discuss business plans. TOP RIGHT Rodali helps Abha, 14, complete her schoolwork in her small shop. FACING PAGE Nabami Rhongchon (right) learns the intricate weaving process from her mother, Mousumi Phangcho.





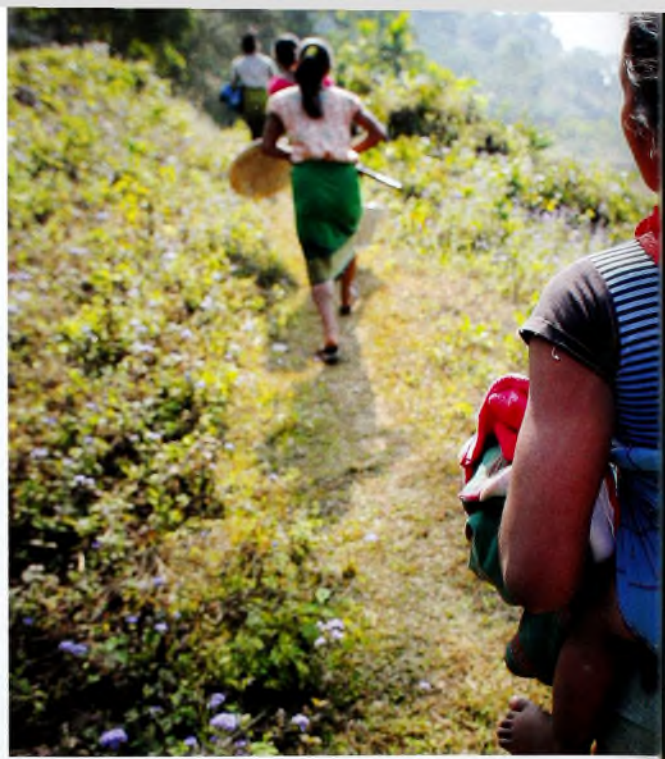
“I want to  
stock a bigger  
quantity of  
staple goods.”

—RODALI PHANGCHO,  
store owner (at left)





THIS PAGE Orange groves are a source of income for savings group members, who trek there each day to plant, water, prune, or harvest. FACING PAGE, ABOVE Esther Phangcho (left), 11, and Arje Ingli, 8, show fish harvested from a savings group pond. BELOW On the road to a brighter future, boys will be boys.



—continued from page 18

group have put in a proposal for a government grant and hope to receive 20,000 rupees each (US\$372) for business development funding.

“I want to stock a bigger quantity of staple goods,” says Rodali, gesturing at the neatly stacked shelves around her. Inexpensive snacks make up most of her inventory now, but when she’s able to offer higher-value merchandise, her income will increase.

With shops and rubber trees, as well as fish ponds and orange groves, World Vision is helping Amri Karbi parents give their children the opportunity to reach their goals.

### THE POWER OF PRAYER

World Vision staff members are committed to praying for the children in this community. Seeing the Amri Karbi Development Council as key to the future development of Amri Karbi people, last year World Vision workers spent a day fasting and praying for it.

In this region where Christians are the minority, World Vision expresses the love of Christ through compassionate acts, training for local churches to care for the poor, and, of course, fervent prayer.

At morning devotions in World



Vision’s building in Guwahati, 12 staff members crowd into Mukul’s small office. One by one they mention requests for sponsored children, colleagues, and family members. Then they study Acts 3:1-10, in which Jesus’ disciples Peter and John met a lame man begging at the temple gate. Peter looked at the hurting man and gave what he had—the power of Jesus, which changed the man’s life.

World Vision’s staff in Assam draw on the same power—sustained by faithful child sponsors *here*, providing a future and hope to children *there*. ●

*Kathryn Reid writes about international development and disaster response for World Vision.*

*Joan Nirupa P and Kit Shangpliang of World Vision in India contributed to this story.*





“We must  
have a better  
life for the next  
generation.”

—KATI RAHANG,  
community farmer and advocate





# { SPIRITUAL SAFETY NET }

Compelled by God's profound love for children, World Vision encourages spiritual nurture for children in sponsorship programs, with the desire that boys and girls experience God's love and life in all its fullness. In places where expressing Christian

faith is obstructed by custom or law, staff do not impose spiritual teaching on children. Rather, World Vision nurtures spirituality through local people, groups, and institutions that have direct impact on children's well-being. **Key among those relationships:**

## FAMILIES

Recognizing that children's care is primarily the responsibility of families, World Vision intentionally engages with and equips parents, guardians, and caregivers to encourage children's holistic development, protection, and spiritual nurture.

## LOCAL CHURCHES

Churches are indispensable partners in spiritual and social transformation. World Vision supports pastors with tools, training, and encouragement to witness to the gospel in holistic ways and nurture faith among adults and children.

## WORLD VISION STAFF

Staff serving in communities can be powerful examples of what it means to follow Jesus. Especially in sensitive contexts, mature Christians and staff are trained and spiritually supported.

## PRAY FOR CHILDREN

Receive monthly prayer updates about the needs of children around the world by signing up at [www.worldvision.org/prayerteam](http://www.worldvision.org/prayerteam).



## CHILD SPONSORS

A sponsored child's first personal connection with Christianity may be his or her sponsor. Sponsors' unconditional love and prayer support can make an enduring impression on children about the character of our loving God.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

World Vision's support to communities places children's well-being in the spotlight and encourages care for the poorest and most vulnerable populations—sensitively pointing to Christian values at the heart of our work.

## FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

World Vision collaborates with local Christian groups and coordinates with those of other faiths that share common humanitarian objectives, such as children's well-being, community-based empowerment, and peace and reconciliation.



# { Confessions }



Rachel Held Evans saw how child sponsorship helps children and the entire community in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

BY RACHEL HELD EVANS  
PHOTOS BY AMY CONNER  
FOR WORLD VISION

## of a Child Sponsorship Skeptic

When I was invited by World Vision to travel to Cochabamba, Bolivia, for a week to help raise awareness about child sponsorship through my blog, I confess I was a little skeptical. The phrase *child sponsorship* brought to mind a movie star in a TV commercial, kneeling beside a child and pleading, "If you can just save one life, won't it be worth it?" »





**BELOW** Sponsorship funds help single mother Cinda improve her crops and provide for her daughters.

As passionate as I was about alleviating poverty, I worried that child sponsorship was too limited. I thought it meant that only a few select children received meals, school supplies, and medical attention. I worried that it created dependency, and that it forced families to attend church in order to receive assistance for their little ones.

I could certainly see the value in saving “just one life.” Yet I longed to invest in solutions for the underlying problems perpetuating poverty across entire communities, rather than invest in simply easing poverty among a few. These concerns didn’t stop me from sponsoring children, but they kept me from advocating on behalf of World Vision’s sponsorship model. And I wasn’t alone.

Many of my friends and readers were wary of the suggestion that our

responsibility to the world is limited to caring for “just one child.” My generation, now in our 20s and 30s, has become increasingly interested in addressing the systemic causes of poverty rather than simply applying Band-Aids to open wounds. We long to “let justice roll on like a river” (Amos 5:24), not for charity to drip out like a leaky faucet.

So I went to Bolivia with both an open heart and an inquisitive mind, armed with a long list of questions I’d solicited from my readers about child sponsorship. I’m pleased to report that my experience dramatically changed my perspective on child sponsorship. World Vision far exceeded my expectations.

### **A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH**

Outside the city of Cochabamba, where snow-covered mountains loom over arid, rocky hills, and where horses and cows





RIGHT In the arid mountains of Bolivia, water is a key resource. World Vision helped build a dam to bring water to the community.



## “So I went to Bolivia with both an open heart and an inquisitive mind, armed with a long list of questions...”

perch as skillfully as mountain goats upon the steep slopes, I met a woman named Cinda. A quiet, sun-weathered woman with earnest eyes, she wore her long black hair in two braids down her back. Her youngest daughter, about 7, hid shyly behind her mother's skirts as Cinda told us her story.

Cinda had three little girls and several acres of land to tend when her husband abandoned the family. Although she harnessed the skills necessary to harvest potatoes and beans, her planting time, yield, and variety were limited due to a lack of irrigation on her property. With only one adult tending the fields and caring for the children, it would be difficult for her family to survive.

Cinda wasn't the only one with a water problem. She and her neighbors live beneath the snow-capped mountain called Hunu. To catch the runoff from melted snow, residents had built a dam,

but it was inefficient: It provided water for only a few dozen families, stirring up strife between neighbors desperate for its life-saving waters.

But Cinda's daughters found World Vision sponsors. And that changed everything.

Sponsorship contributions not only purchased school supplies and meals for Cinda's daughters, but also—when pooled with contributions for other local sponsored children—helped solve problems that were keeping the community in poverty. Like their desperate need for water. Partnering with local municipalities, World Vision helped the community build and maintain a better dam. This beautiful reservoir of deep blue beneath Hunu provides irrigation to more than 170 families.

Now a stream runs swiftly through Cinda's property, which yields several varieties of potatoes and beans and

sustains a couple of llamas, a herd of sheep, and a very noisy pig. In fact, Cinda produces enough crops to both feed her family and sell the excess at market. In this way, sponsorship not only helps provide for her children's immediate needs, but also improves their overall quality of life.

World Vision's community-based approach to poverty became clear to me in Bolivia. It begins by identifying and addressing the needs of children, and then works to address the root causes of those needs in the community. Sponsorship donations are pooled to provide the child, his or her family, their community, and other impoverished children with the assistance they most need. I saw how sponsorship money has funded everything from guinea pig farms to after-school programs, hearing aids and irrigation systems to marriage counseling and maternal-health programs.



## SUSTAINABILITY & EMPOWERMENT

I'd supported World Vision for several years, but I never realized that when World Vision begins working in a community its goal is to remain there for 15-20 years. After that, it slowly transitions so that all the programs, systems, and opportunities are handed over to the community to sustain.

For example, World Vision initiated the dam and irrigation system in Cinda's community and provided training. Yet the structures were designed by locals, built by locals, and are so well-maintained by locals that they have become self-sustaining. One man—wrinkled and toothless and full of laughter—proudly informed me that when floods damaged part of the dam last year, he and his neighbors repaired it, without any assistance from World Vision.

We also visited a bakery in Cochabamba that employs the mothers of sponsored children. (Oh, it smelled heavenly.) Over the past few years the bakery has grown and now it thrives, providing rolls, cookies, and cereal to local families, as well as several public schools in the area. The bakery turns a profit, resulting in better wages for its workers. The goal is that it will become self-sustaining.

Far from creating dependency, child sponsorship helps lift entire communities out of poverty in sustainable ways. This creates a better future for sponsored children and for upcoming generations.



“Far from creating dependency, child sponsorship helps lift entire communities out of poverty in sustainable ways.”

## LOCAL STAFF

I like to think that I know best how to help my sponsored children. The truth is, when it comes to poverty, local problems are usually best solved by local people. Workers indigenous to the area are often better equipped to build relationships with families in need and to navigate the cultural nuances that make humanitarian work so challenging and so exciting.

On my trip, I was delighted to learn that more than 90 percent of World Vision's international staff consists of people who are local to the communities they serve. In fact, every staff member I met in Cochabamba was Bolivian. And they represent the best and the brightest. I met two doctors, an engineer, an agricultural specialist, and a food specialist, as well as several teachers, accountants, and administrators.

I saw that child sponsorship empowers local professionals, parents, grandparents, and neighbors to care for the children in their communities. This strategy ensures that no cultural barriers stand in the way of progress.

## CONTEXTUAL SPIRITUALITY

In Bolivia, more than 99 percent of the population identifies itself as Christian. So World Vision staff is free to partner with local churches of various denominations to host Bible schools and faith-related activities. But aid is never withheld from families who do not participate. World Vision staff members take care to not impose U.S.-style religious practices on the people they serve. This is why World Vision can work in countries where Christianity is illegal. When the goal is simply to love as Jesus loved, communities are transformed by this compassion and care.

In Cochabamba, I met with four brave couples who shared deeply personal stories. Each had experienced radical change during marriage counseling organized by World Vision with a local pastor. One young man, Adam, confessed that he had once been jealous and controlling of his wife; she had to get permission from him to even leave the house, and he felt only anger and bitterness toward her.

But after joining this group of young couples, Adam began to pray for a softer





heart. As he shared his story, he put his hand on his wife's shoulder. In turn, she shyly nestled her face against his chest, tears of joy streaming down her face. Now Adam supports his wife's autonomy. He speaks about her with respect and affection because his heart has changed. Their newfound bond has created a safer, more nurturing environment for their two children.

World Vision staff members explained that in rural Bolivia, where drug addiction, alcoholism, and domestic violence run rampant, some problems cannot simply be solved with money, resources, and education. They are matters of the heart. Counseling, therefore, is a critical part of this child sponsorship project.

## LIVING PROOF

I met so many people in Bolivia who helped change my view of child sponsorship, including a girl named Lizeth, age

13 or 14. Early in the trip, our team had arrived at a school where the children waited outside to greet us. I was drawn instantly to Lizeth. She greeted me with a big smile and a confident laugh.

I asked her to teach me some Spanish words, pointing to my eye, nose, mouth, and ear. "Ojo!" she shouted. Then, "Nariz! Boca! Pie!"

Somewhere in there, she must have made a joke, because her friends started giggling.

As it turns out, Lizeth was indeed a leader. In fact, she volunteered to share the devotional that morning. She spoke quietly but confidently from Matthew 13, where Jesus teaches that the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed: "Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

It was the only time during the trip

that I couldn't stop myself from crying on the spot. The mustard seed is a beautiful picture of World Vision's approach to helping communities lift themselves out of poverty. The organization starts by addressing the needs of children and then, from there, works to improve the conditions surrounding them so that mothers, fathers, grandparents, siblings, and the entire community are affected. A single sponsorship is like a tiny mustard seed that, when it grows, becomes a tree in which the birds come and perch in its branches.

Lizeth is living proof that this model works. Her testimony, and that of so many others, turned this skeptic into a lifelong advocate. ●

*Rachel Held Evans is a speaker, blogger, child sponsor, and award-winning author from Dayton, Tenn., where she lives with her husband, Dan. Read more blogs from Rachel and other Bolivia bloggers at [blogworldvision.org](http://blogworldvision.org).*



FACING PAGE,  
ABOVE: Mothers of  
sponsored children  
run a bakery.  
INSET: Sponsored  
girl Lizeth has  
become a leader.





ZANELE DLAMINI/WORLD VISION

## GRADUATING WITH DISTINCTION

A FORMER SPONSORED CHILD FINDS A BETTER WAY TO LIVE.

BY ZANELE FAITH DLAMINI AND JAMES ADDIS

**M**eet Nozipho Shabangu today—a graduate of the University of Swaziland with ambitions to start her own business—and it's hard to believe the miserable circumstances into which this bright young woman was born.

Nozipho, 23, grew up in Nkalashane, Swaziland—an area in southern Africa that at the time was devastated by regular droughts, poor harvests, and AIDS. Children there frequently suffered from malnutrition. Transport to and from Nkalashane was so poor that Nozipho's mother, Mariah, received no medical attention while giving birth to Nozipho.

To make matters worse, the day Nozipho was born her father turned his back on his family, leaving Mariah to care for Nozipho and her five older brothers and sisters.

Nozipho's life would not be defined by her circumstances, however, as the seeds of transformation began with a loving mother. Instead of seeing the arrival of her youngest child as a burden, she saw her as a blessing, a fact reflected in her choice of the name Nozipho, which means "gift."

Mariah devoted herself to raising her children as best she could—making a little money by growing cotton. Even so, Nozipho often went days without eating during tough years. One of those years was 1992, when another failed harvest prompted World Vision to undertake emergency food distributions in Nkalashane.

Also that year, World Vision began a development program funded by child sponsors, and Nozipho was among those who became sponsored. The privilege was another step along the road to a changed life.

When Nozipho discovered there was someone else in her



## THE SEEDS OF TRANSFORMATION BEGAN WITH A LOVING MOTHER.

life who cared about her, she was deeply touched. “[My sponsor] used to write me letters and send me Christmas cards every year,” she says, “and that made me feel special.”

Sponsorship also brought practical benefits. Mariah recalls donations of food, clothes, shoes, goats, and fruit trees.

Mariah adds that one of the early sponsorship projects was helping residents mix cement to make tanks that would capture water and make the best use of limited rainfall. Energized by the transformation that the tanks could bring, Mariah constructed several for her own family and assisted neighbors in constructing theirs. Her enthusiasm got noticed. When World Vision began a sanitation project that would allow everyone to have access to a toilet, Mariah was chosen as the project manager.

But perhaps the best practical gift was helping Nozipho complete her education. When Nozipho reached high school, the fees were beyond her mother's means. But recognizing that Nozipho was a first-rate student, World Vision supplied the necessary funds for her to graduate.

It was a good investment. The Swazi government awarded Nozipho a scholarship to study for a diploma in journalism and mass communications at the University of Swaziland. “The main reason I was attracted to my course is because I like being creative and [communicating] new ideas,” Nozipho says.

She says receiving the scholarship was

like living a dream. She believes she is the first person from her community to attend university.

After graduation, Nozipho began work as a marketing officer for a construction company. Her ambition is to run her own business, and she believes she has identified a promising market. She says many firms in Swaziland lack adequate security. Her idea is to train security officers and outsource them to large companies.

Nozipho says she is intensely grateful to her sponsor, not only for her own personal development, but also because the improvement in her finances has allowed her to look after her aging mother—the woman who cared for Nozipho so faithfully during her formative years, despite terrible hardships.

One of the first things Nozipho did when she started earning an income was pay for electricity to be installed in her mother's home. Later, she paid for a 10,000-liter water tank to supplement the smaller tanks her mother had installed with the help of World Vision. Currently, she is assisting her mother in caring for six of her nieces and nephews following the death of two of Nozipho's siblings.

Through such means, Nozipho continues to demonstrate her love and devotion to her mother and the rest of her family. And her future is made bright by the blessings in her life. ●



## 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, healthcare, 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](http://www.worldvision.org). ●

**TO SPONSOR A CHILD** see the envelope between pages 16 and 17. Or go to [www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond](http://www.worldvision.org/ReadandRespond).



Hunger. Neglect. Exploitation.

# It shouldn't hurt to be a girl.



From the moment they're born, many girls are treated like outcasts. While boys eat, girls go hungry. While boys attend school, girls work. They are forced into early marriage and exploited in other ways. Their days are filled with tears.

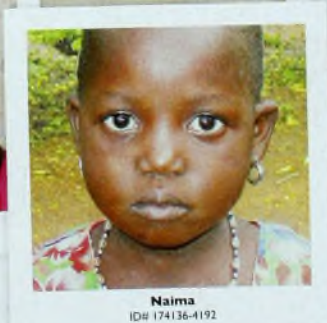
Right now, a precious girl full of life and potential is waiting.

She's hoping and praying that someone like you will care enough to give her an opportunity for a decent life.

Will you show her  
God's love?



Aseel  
ID# 186466-4047



Naima  
ID# 174136-4192



Solialin  
ID# 177948-4204

Go to [www.worldvision.org/AGirlsWaiting](http://www.worldvision.org/AGirlsWaiting)  
or call 866-952-4453

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