



Change
for Children

A CHANGE FOR CHILDREN PUBLICATION

BUILDING BRIDGES

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

GLOBAL AND LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENTS
GAIN STRENGTH

THIS ISSUE:

- Supporting Food Sovereignty in Bolivia
- Students Celebrate World Food Day
- Local Change Resonates Globally

Please share this publication.

WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

As the local food movement builds momentum, we find ourselves with more options and more choices. Not only choices about what food we want to eat, but also about where we want our food to come from, how we want our food produced, and who we want to grow it. Being more connected with our food is a growing desire. People are becoming food-aware.

Local awareness goes hand in hand with increased consciousness about the state of food systems globally. We are all connected.

In many countries, land-grabbing for the production of cash crops has left communities who depend on land to subsist devastated and destitute. Not only are their human rights being violated, but people are suffering from malnutrition, hunger and starvation. The production of only one or two commodities for export contributes to food insecurity and widens the divide between the rich and the poor, the nourished and the malnourished.

Change for Children's projects address the dwindling of agricultural land for rural families by supporting initiatives that encourage Food Sovereignty: putting the control of food into the

hands of those who produce, distribute and consume food rather than being at the mercy of markets and large corporations.

Each of us can make choices to support a healthier food system. Your support of Change for Children initiatives helps to free people from oppression and inequality and works as a motivator for people in the global south to claim their right to food. **The right to food is a human right.** It protects the right of all human beings to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. **The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves in dignity.**

Thank you for your continued support of global change.

Sincerely,



Lorraine Swift
Executive Director, Change for Children.

"Every aspect of our lives is, in a sense, a vote for the kind of world we want to live in."

– Frances Moore Lappé, Author of *Eco-Mind: Changing the Way We Think, to Create the World We Want*



Change for Children has championed human dignity, healthy communities, and global justice with the passionate support of Canadians for over 35 years.



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Change for Children Association (CFCA) is an award-winning Edmonton-based civil society organization that partners with grassroots organizations in Latin America and Africa to support community-based solutions to extreme poverty. Funds support international programs that provide: access to potable water and education, health and nutrition programs, sustainable agriculture and economic development initiatives. Locally, Change for Children provides unique global education programs that foster awareness, understanding and leadership amongst students, youth and the community at large.

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Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food. It emphasizes ecologically appropriate production, distribution and consumption, social-economic justice and local food systems as ways to tackle hunger and poverty and guarantee sustainable food security for all peoples. Food Security, on its own, does not distinguish where food comes from, or the conditions under which it is produced and distributed.

SUPPORTING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN BOLIVIA

"This project not only emphasizes the importance of a school feeding program, but the importance of a school feeding program that uses local produce, processed by local people working together to improve the nutrition of local students...This is food sovereignty – and food sovereignty is what we are after with this project."

– Oscar Mendieta,
Executive Director
of Fundación
Renace



"I walk for 45 minutes to get to school so I have to leave my house early in the morning. I sometimes do not eat breakfast so by the time I get to school, I am very hungry." says Julia Mendez, a grade five student in Alto Beni, Bolivia. "I try to concentrate on my studies but I am often distracted by hunger."

Lack of access to food is one of the main issues facing Bolivians today. Rural and indigenous populations depend heavily on subsistence agriculture and people frequently experience food deficits due to recurrent natural disasters and sharp fluctuations in food prices.

Since the federal government passed its National Development Plan in 2007, reiterating the responsibilities of

municipalities to assume local school feeding programs, local citizens have been pressuring municipal governments to fulfill their obligations to school children. But governments here have many options, and the pressure to contract the local school feeding program to transnational pop and cookie companies is mounting.

In an effort to improve nutrition and promote food sovereignty in Bolivia's central lowlands, Change for Children's partner, Fundación Renace is working with women's cooperatives to build capacity in agriculture and local food processing. Nutritious food products are harvested and processed by the women's cooperatives who then sell the products to the local school breakfast program.



ON THE GROUND IN ALTO BENI

In July, 2013, during two weeks of travel on endless bumpy roads, cramped light aircrafts and long river boats, CFC visited 9 of the communities in the Alto Beni region of Bolivia which are being supported by the CFC/CIDA-funded School Breakfast Program.

The Alto Beni region is bursting with diverse agricultural production. A few meters from the door of Fundación Renace's field house in Sapecho, fresh bananas and succulent oranges hang from trees. Vegetable gardens boast carrots, green beans, broccoli, potatoes and cabbage. It seems an agricultural paradise despite the real risks of deforestation and resource exploitation.

In this region, programs that provide equipment, materials and training workshops to local agricultural producers encourage an empowered people dedicated to preserving their land and also their rich culture.



THE 6 PILLARS OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

- Focuses on food for everyone
- Values food providers
- Localises food systems
- Puts control in the hands of local food providers
- Builds knowledge and skills
- Works with nature



842 million people in the world do not have enough to eat.

Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five - 3. million children each year.

Source: wfp.org

Monthly giving is an affordable way to make a meaningful contribution. Sign up for automated monthly donation at www.changeforchildren.org or by calling 780-448-1505.



GUATEMALA



Sustainable Agriculture & Food Security

Mayan Mam indigenous farmers in Comitancillo are being pushed off their traditional lands due to land grabs by large agricultural corporations. Unable to grow food on their own lands, farmers work growing cash crops such as carnations and brussel sprouts for export. This reliance on growing cash crops rather than crops for food has resulted in the highest child malnutrition rate in Latin America.

Change for Children has constructed five elementary schools in the region. At each school, there is now a garden that grows food for the students and teachers, shares seeds and harvests with the students' families, and encourages local food growing, production and consumption.

School gardens grow food, build community, and encourage learning



Locally produced organic breakfasts are enjoyed by close to 4500 students of all ages

BOLIVIA



Sustainable Economic Development

In the tropical lowlands of the state of La Paz, 63 percent of households cannot provide the minimum caloric intake for family members. Sustainable economic development, especially for women, is a necessity as many single women farmers lack technical and managerial capacity to grow and market their produce for a fair price.

With support from Change for Children, six indigenous women's federations are being assisted with sustainable income programs, and 47 schools are being supported by teaching students and mothers about the importance of local, sustainable, organic production; the importance of good nutrition; and about environmental stewardship.

"If you are planning for a better future, you must plan for the children." – Ancient Chinese proverb



UGANDA



Maternal & Child Health

Uganda currently has the 15th highest rate of infant mortality in the world. In the Kigezi region of Uganda, 50% of children under five years old have stunted growth. The quality of diet in the region is severely affected by the economic inability to diversify crops.

Change for Children supports outreach in rural villages to educate mothers on nutritious and balanced feeding and to provide agricultural training to encourage and facilitate crop diversification. With access to seeds, livestock, and micro-finance, women are able to better nourish their children and generate income, thereby reducing child malnutrition and poverty.

Training on nutrition and safe motherhood in remote communities improves early recognition of illness and complication



"It's important for us to organize where we find ourselves – in our communities – to make sure that everyone around us is able to eat."

– Raj Patel

You are
year, plant rice;
a decade, plant trees;
g for a lifetime,
people."
nese Proverb



NICARAGUA

Gender Equality & Democratic Participation

Miskito-Mayagna indigenous communities in the BOSAWAS rainforest region face the highest rates of poverty, malnutrition, and vitamin deficiencies in Nicaragua. The effects of globalization & climate change make it increasingly difficult to predict growing seasons, and it is a struggle to produce crops in the face of extreme weather including droughts and flooding. For many communities, growing food is a matter of life, or death.

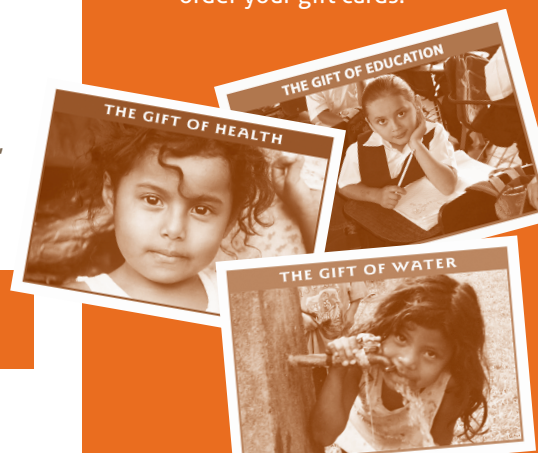
Establishing school gardens, planted & harvested by teachers and students in remote villages, provide an ongoing source of nutritious food for students and increases knowledge of sustainable agriculture practices.



Increasing knowledge of sustainable agriculture promotes an ongoing source of nutritious food for students.

GIFTS THAT CHANGE THE WORLD

Giving one of Change for Children's *Gifts that Change the World* is a meaningful way to contribute to solutions that alleviate global poverty. This holiday season, consider gifts that provide clean water, tools, seeds and training, or access to education and healthcare where it is most needed. Personalize the card of your choice with your own message and *change someone's world* this holiday season. Visit www.changeforchildren.org or call 780-448-1505 to order your gift cards.





"FOOD SECURITY
exists when all people,
at all times, have
access to sufficient,
safe and nutritious
food to meet their
dietary needs and
food preferences for
an active and healthy
life."

– Declaration of the World
Summit on Food Security

"FOOD SOVEREIGNTY
is a call for the right
of everyone to be
able to actively shape
the food system,
rather than being
shaped by it. It's a
call for a democratic
debate and action
around food, and
about redistributing
power more equitably
in the food system."

– Raj Patel

STUDENTS CELEBRATE WORLD FOOD DAY

Elementary students from St. Vincent Elementary School celebrated World Food Day on October 16th by learning about global food security issues with hands-on activities aptly dubbed the *Hunger Games*. The relay race included a trip to 'the market' and the completion of a physical 'climate change challenge'.

Students were divided into six countries (Uganda, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Bolivia, and Canada) and were issued currency based on each country's respective typical daily income. Students were tasked with buying coloured jelly beans, representing the four food groups, in an effort to meet daily dietary needs. It quickly became obvious that students representing Canada came away with a full bag and a full spectrum of jelly bean colours, while those from other countries could only afford to buy one or two.

"It's not fair that Canada got \$20 and a 2-minute head start!"

"I didn't have enough money to buy a chicken!"



Students prepare for a trip
to the market on World Food
Day, October 16, 2013 (left)

CFCA partners with local
schools to raise awareness
and open dialogues (above)

The Hunger Games wrapped up with a *Hunger Lunch* which provided the students with a lunch from Nicaragua, Uganda, or Canada, emphasizing the disparity that exists in the world. Students representing Canada were delighted to receive pizza, an apple, and juice; students representing Nicaragua shrugged at the small plate of rice they were offered and declared they were still hungry; and jaws dropped as students representing Uganda were left looking into an empty box.

"I feel sad. I'm hungry. Imagine if this was our life every day."

"Without enough food, my family would be unhealthy and wouldn't grow properly."

The aim of the *Hunger Games* is to challenge students to learn about and compare food supply and resources in Canada and the Global South. The message resonated through the St. Vincent gym in the disbelieving faces, the declarations of unfairness, and the expressions of empathy that lingered even after the students were dismissed.

Permaculture is the design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. It produces more food with fewer resources; it integrates people and place; it finds solutions in problems. The world's environmental and economic challenges have brought permaculture and its regenerative solutions into a rapidly growing global movement.



The food movement is local and global, and we can all play our part.

LOCAL CHANGE RESONATES GLOBALLY

"The most important work being done on the planet is that of permaculturists."

– David Suzuki

An ardent local community enthusiast, Shelaine Sparrow is passionate about the power of local food production to affect change. With a design certificate in permaculture, Shelaine applies the principles to her own household and yard. In a typical urban lot, Shelaine is increasing food security and food sovereignty for her family and community.

Shelaine concedes that while communities in the global south are currently bearing the lion's share of suffering as a consequence of the larger issues of climate change and unfair global political economic systems, in the long run, no one wins. "We are living unsustainable lifestyles built on unsustainable systems."

By promoting permaculture and working locally at a grassroots level to shift the way we relate to food, the environment, each other, and place, Shelaine is striving to affect political change.

Says Shelaine, "The relationship we have to our food and environment has been degraded as global industrial food systems have developed. Restoring it will foster more abundant and resilient lifestyles." For those looking to live a more sustainable lifestyle, Shelaine recommends choosing local options and growing whatever you can. Consumer demand for low-cost imports is intricately connected to the realities of CFCA partner communities.

Through her work at Change for Children, Shelaine has witnessed the power of a strong community that encourages knowledge and resource sharing. This is true of Change for Children's food sovereignty projects globally, but also holds true locally. "Resilience is key in addressing the issues of today and tomorrow."

Shelaine Sparrow was the Fund Development and Communications Manager at Change for Children for seven years. She now offers permaculture design services, focusing on creative urban solutions that connect people and place in healthy and productive ways.

Change for Children encourages rights-based development. We accompany our partners (local farmers and women's cooperatives) on their quest to achieve food sovereignty. Locally, we partner with businesses that sell/serve local food and fair trade imports. The movement is local and global – and we can all play our part.



"You are not Atlas carrying the world on your shoulder. It is good to remember that the planet is carrying you."

– Vandana Shiva

Save the Date for the 2014

Annual
**Development
Dinner**

September 26, 2014

You are invited to our Open
House on Friday, December 6th,
2013. Come celebrate with us!
(10808-124 Street, 2nd Floor)

Stay connected with the latest
news, events, opportunities and
project updates by signing up
for CFCA's Enewsletter.

www.changeforchildren.org

Thank you volunteers,
donors, partners, fundraisers,
advocates, friends and tireless
supporters. Your local support
means global change. You are
the spirit of Change for Children



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