RESOURCES
The information provided in this issue of Building Bridges has been compiled with the help of the following resources.

Patrick Bond Article
www.counterpunch.org/bond06/172005.html
Make Poverty History-Canada
www.makepovertyhistory.ca
Canadian Council for International Cooperation
www.cccica
UNESCO - Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future
www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/
Global Citizens for Change
www.citizens4change.org
Friends of the Earth International
www foes
Rights Action
www.rightsaction.org

SUPPORT CFCA – 29 YEARS OF MAKING POVERTY HISTORY
All donors who contribute $10 or more automatically gain membership in Change for Children Association and will receive our Building Bridges newsletter three times annually.

Please find enclosed a tax-deductible donation to be used in the following areas:
$___________ Undesignated - to be used as needed by Change for Children
$___________ General project account (supporting a variety of projects as required)
$___________ Supporting projects in the country of
$___________ A specific project:
$___________ Change for Children’s Global Education Program in Canada
$___________ The Change for Children Endowment Fund
$___________ Total Amount Enclosed Please make cheques payable to Change for Children

I authorize Change for Children Association to begin Automatic monthly withdrawals from my/multiple bank account as specified on the enclosed cheque marked “VOID.” This authority is to remain in effect until further notification from myself/ourselves or Change for Children.

I/We authorize Change for Children Association to pay doctors for this specialized care and supporting projects in the country of __________________________.

Date Signed

Change for Children Association #222, 9624 - 108 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 1A4 • www.changeforchildren.org

Check out our newly launched (and partially still under construction) website! www.changeforchildren.org

CFCA Annual Dinner & Silent Auction Fundraiser
September 25th, 2005 @ 6pm
Khazana Restaurant
10177 - 107 Street, Edmonton

Join us for an evening of music, delicious East Indian cuisine, arts and crafts from around the world and good company! The evening will wrap up with a cake auction, of delicious homemade and gourmet bakery cakes.

Tickets $55/each
(partial tax receipt available)
For more information and to purchase tickets contact CFCA (780) 448-1505.

THE ROOTS OF POVERTY

Small victories in the battle against HIV/AIDS

Roatan is the largest of the three Bay Islands in the North of Honduras. Despite its image as a vacation paradise, most tourists are not aware of the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic that is currently sweeping across this scenic little sand patch in the midst of the ocean. The World Health Organization estimates that by 2001, approximately 11,800 AIDS cases had been reported in Honduras, which has the largest HIV-infection rate in the Western Hemisphere. In 2001 alone, the estimated number of deaths due to AIDS was 3,300. The estimated number of children under 15 who had lost one or both parents to AIDS-related deaths by the end of 2001 was 14,000. Perhaps the most disturbing piece of this picture is the $2 million dollars in HIV/AIDS medical aid that lays stagnant with the Honduran Health Ministry due to a lack of trained physicians with the knowledge of how to use antiretroviral drugs, and the unwillingness of the Health Ministry to pay doctors for this specialized training.

In response to these alarming statistics, and the increasing number of AIDS-related diagnoses and deaths on the island, Valerie Nelson, a Canadian-born social worker, founded Familias Saludables (FS) in Roatan. “It seemed like a building burning down with people inside...how could we see this and not decide to stop and help extinguish the flames?” she says. Nelson estimates that the current HIV-infection rate in Roatan may be as high as 10%. Accurate rates of HIV exposure are difficult to detect because of the silence and stigma surrounding the virus. Only an estimated one in ten positively infected people in Roatan seeks testing, partially due to the fear of knowing one’s positive status. On an island with little medical support, meager sanitation facilities, and poor nutrition, an HIV-positive diagnosis is “like a death wish.” Nelson states. While the estimated time lapse between diagnosis of HIV to death from AIDS in the developing world is, on average, nine years, it is about six months in Roatan.

A primary function of FS is to challenge stigma and misinformation through a community-based educational curriculum and skilled staff members. Nelson’s offices are always open. “Everyone needs someone to listen to them,” she announces one day, after dozens of people, mostly women, come in and out of her busy office to talk about health, poverty, broken hearts, or simply the weather. Unfortunately, for this community, it is common to know someone who has died of AIDS-related causes. The unspoken fear of the exponential increase in death rates due to AIDS resonates loudly in thoughts about future generations. Hope resides in the erosion of stigma, in the confidence of islanders as they develop a sense of entitlement to a long and healthy life, and in small victories as a community continues to battle against AIDS.

Hope resides in the erosion of stigma

Change for Children is developing a new partnership with Familias Saludables in Roatan, Honduras and supporting their work to train local health promoters, prevent and treat HIV/AIDS, engage in human rights advocacy and policy changes, and build capacity of Familias Saludables as a leading Honduran NGO that is addressing the HIV/AIDS crisis. For more information on this project, and how to support it, please contact Change for Children Association.
Change for Children, in collaboration with all members of the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC), is currently working to implement an Alberta-wide campaign with two goals: 1) to profile the work of Alberta NGOs and their contributions to “Make Poverty History”; and 2) to encourage Albertans to get involved in Making Poverty History in their communities and with Southern partners to bring life to the issue of global poverty. There will be Alberta events held on September 10th and December 10th. This Alberta specific campaign builds on the existing national Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)-led campaign, Make Poverty History, which is itself based on the International “Global Call to Action Against Poverty” campaign. Make Poverty History was officially launched on February 11, 2005 in Ottawa and this coalition unites diverse organizations such as NGOs, unions, churches, artists, musicians, universities, and many other individuals with the common belief that poverty can be eradicated on a global and also domestic level.

THE CAMPAIGN

More and Better Aid: The campaign is calling for the Canadian Government to reach the UN target of 0.7 percent of Gross National Income by 2015.

Trade Justice: Currently international trade is neither free nor fair. The campaign calls for the creation of trade legislation that puts human rights and environmental protection at the forefront.

Debt Cancellation: Promote immediate and unconditional cancellation of 100 percent of multilateral and bilateral debt owed by the poorest countries.

End Child Poverty in Canada: Call to end child poverty in Canada through living wage employment, universal and affordable housing, universal and affordable early learning and childcare.

SOLIDARITY: CFCA supports communities in the South in their struggles to make poverty history.

PARTNERSHIP: Since the majority of the world’s poor live in the global South we seek to support their goals and visions for eradication of poverty, while providing Canadians with an opportunity to partner with them.

CRITICAL THINKING: Patrick Bond, a South African academic, provides an interesting critique of the Global Action Against Poverty Campaign (that Make Poverty History is a part of), claiming that “any top down campaign against poverty is both unrealistic and subject to early cooptation.” Bond also mentions that the Global Call to Action Against Poverty makes no reference to the history of anti-poverty movements in the Global South that existed long before this campaign originated. He also discusses the fact that within the campaign there is no recognition of the history of movements to end poverty in the 80’s and 90’s such as “global indigenous movements, global justice activism since Seattle, the Social Forum movement, anti-war demonstrations, and the revival of the left in Latin America.”

We wanted our wedding to be about community and sharing. Since weddings have traditionally involved large groups of people coming together to celebrate the joy of a single couple, it seemed natural to have traditionally involved large groups of people coming together to celebrate the joy of a single couple, it seemed natural to further extend this sense of community.

Both of us feel that CFCA is a very progressive and effective charity, and we are proud to be associated with it. Vanessa says that “CFCA stands out because of its emphasis on community based projects that are driven by community partners.” David and Anne Fath agree, saying “We like the idea that this CFCA project may eventually sustain itself, and that we are making an initial contribution in what we see as a long term investment.”

Donations from David and Anne’s wedding will go towards projects of a new CFCA partner, MesoJ Yan in Bolivia, while contributions from Vanessa & Dave’s friends and family will support primary school construction in Guatemala.

CFCA thanks the Bishop and his friends and family for the enormous difference they are making.