

OXFAM CANADA NEWS

Spring 2013



Melanie Gallant / Oxfam

CONFIDENT IN THE FUTURE

Story page 3

Reyna (centre) and twin daughters Liudmila and Liuwitza on their farm in Cuba.

OXFAM
CANADA
TURNS **50**



OXFAM
Canada

OUR FUNDRAISING OFFICE IS MOVING

Thanks to you and our many supporters across the country, donations to support Oxfam Canada's work continue to make a real difference in the lives of people living in poverty, and are as vital as ever.

In order to continue the high standard of international programs for which we are known, Oxfam is streamlining operations, bringing our program, fundraising and communications staff under one roof.

As a result, most fundraising staff will now work from the National Office in Ottawa and the Toronto office is being closed. These changes will take effect in mid June, 2013.

For you, this will mean new donor contacts, plus a new mailing address:

NATIONAL OFFICE:

39 McArthur Avenue, Ottawa ON K1L 8L7

613-237-5236

1-800-466-9326

fundraising@oxfam.ca

REGIONAL OFFICES:

St. John's, Toronto, Vancouver

Please note that Oxfam donation envelopes you have at hand will be forwarded to Ottawa.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing support.

CHANGES TO DONATION RECEIPTING

Starting in April, Oxfam Canada began issuing automatic tax-creditable receipts for gifts of \$20 and above only. We will issue receipts for gifts under \$20 upon request. This is another initiative to save administrative costs and ensure your gifts have the largest impact possible.

BECOME A GLOBAL VISIONARY

CHANGING THE WORLD MEANS FACING UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES, including climate change, famines, food price crises and global financial struggles. In turn, these difficulties push more of the world's poor into hunger and demand even more of Oxfam Canada's resources.

Leaving a bequest in your will to Oxfam Canada can help ensure that we have the resources we need to meet these challenges and new ones in the future. By leaving a bequest to Oxfam Canada in your Will you become a member of Oxfam's Global Visionaries group and will have the opportunity to choose if you would like to be recognized in your lifetime or if you prefer only your estate be recognized.

Meredith Bell is one such Global Visionary after having made the commitment to leave a legacy to Oxfam Canada.

"My introduction to Oxfam Canada was back in 1967 when I was 13 years old. That year I participated in Miles for Millions, which was one of the first walkathons for overseas famine relief. Raising funds and marching with thousands of people, young and old, was a great way to feel that I could change the world.

My connection with Oxfam has strengthened over the years, both through my involvement as a volunteer, and as a donor.

It's important to me that Oxfam is an independent, non-governmental organization, giving them the freedom to pursue development projects without strings attached and to take a stand on issues like gender equality.

That's why, through leaving a bequest in my will, I'm entrusting Oxfam with my personal legacy, my dream for a global community in which everyone recognizes our interdependence on each other.

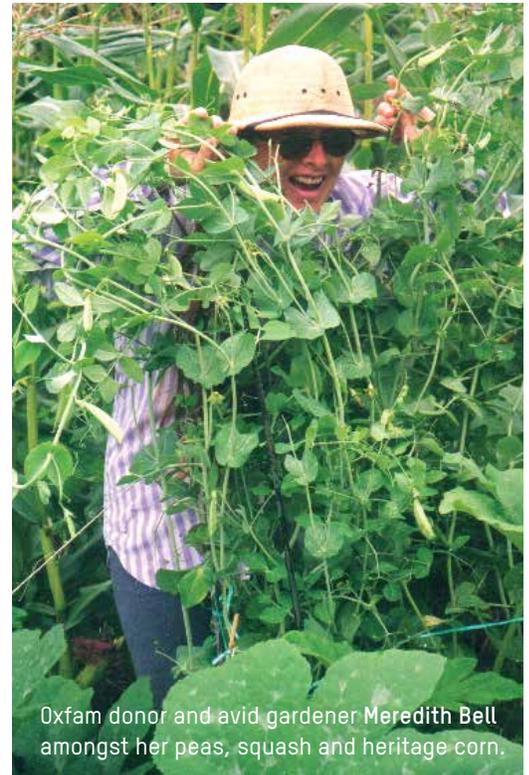
As a loyal friend of Oxfam, you likely believe, as I do, that we live in a global community. What we do affects our neighbours – whether we are talking about climate change or armed conflict, we're all affected by it.

That's why it's so crucial for me to help create a world, even after I'm gone, that my son will be proud to inherit.

I invite you to consider what kind of impact your personal legacy could have on the lives of people in desperate need throughout the world."

Bequests are revocable and can be changed if your financial circumstances change. If you have any questions or would like our suggested bequest language to give to your lawyer, contact

Mira Claxton at 1-800-466-9326 or mira.claxton@oxfam.ca



Oxfam donor and avid gardener Meredith Bell amongst her peas, squash and heritage corn.

CONFIDENT IN THE FUTURE



WHEN REYNA AND TWIN DAUGHTERS LIUDMILA AND Liuwitza took over their piece of land it was nothing but a lifeless field of wood-like weeds Cubans call “marabu”. It took them a year to clear it and plant crops.

“We decided to get a farm because the food situation here is a bit difficult,” she says. “I could support myself, but I also have to think of my grandchildren, my daughters, my family, and my community.”

Wearing a white straw hat to block the afternoon sun, Reyna, 65, shows how the farm has started to pay off – for the family and the community near Bartolome Maso nestled in the Sierra Maestra mountain range in southeast Cuba.

“We have 65 goats and sheep on the farm, and a cow that has given birth twice. From her we get milk – not only for our own consumption but also to supplement the diet of local children, because there is no milk in the shops for them. We also produce yucca, corn, bananas and other fruits and vegetables that we eat and provide to the cooperative.”

Reyna applied for a grant under a 2008 law that distributes idle state land to people willing to farm it – part of a series of reforms to reduce Cuba’s dependence on food imports. She also joined one of many cooperatives that are part of the National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP).

Reyna on her farm in Cuba.

Supported by Oxfam since 1997, the ANAP works with cooperatives to encourage and help women become food producers. They learn environmentally -friendly farming techniques and participate in workshops on economic empowerment and gender-based violence.

‘We are equal’

Reyna is a leader to other women farmers. She is independent, outspoken, and never misses an assembly.

“I want to know what is going on firsthand and if I don’t agree, I say so. We have to be independent and make men understand that we have the same rights and that we are equal.”

Although she still faces such big challenges as obtaining a much-needed irrigation system, Reyna is optimistic. She hopes a recently-signed agreement to breed and sells pigs will bring in extra income to reinvest in her farm.

“We just started not long ago and the results are not that big yet because at the beginning everything is an investment. But we are confident in the future. We have seen the results in other cooperatives and they have been very good. We will keep working together to improve our situation. It’s the only way.”

CAMPAIGNING WORKS!



Oxfam's Lina Holguin speaks to the media about the Arms Trade Treaty.

IN RECENT MONTHS THE COMMITMENT AND SOLIDARITY

of Oxfam supporters like you has sparked three tremendous victories.

- In late March, two of the world's biggest chocolate manufacturers agreed to take concrete action to **improve the lives and working conditions of women cocoa farmers**. This first victory – within two weeks of launching Behind the Brands, part of the GROW campaign – shows your power as engaged and informed consumers and advocates to make a real difference in the lives of those who produce and process our food.
- In early April, India's Supreme Court agreed that saving lives trumps corporate profits. It rejected a challenge by pharmaceutical giant Novartis that would have undercut production of generic medicines, ensuring **millions of people in poor countries can access treatment for HIV, cancer and other chronic illnesses**. This capped 12 years of mobilizing in rich countries and poor as part of the Cut the Cost campaign, building on our great work on Make Trade Fair.
- And also in early April, the biggest of them all. After nearly a decade of signing petitions, posting photos, lobbying MPs, naming and shaming arms dealers, putting a human face on the suffering and building pressure on world leaders as part of the Control Arms campaign, Oxfam supporters' voices were heard. The **United Nations General Assembly adopted an Arms Trade Treaty** that sets rules to keep arms and ammunition from flowing to regimes that violate human rights. Better still, the treaty makes it illegal to sell arms where they are likely to be used for gender-based violence.

At Oxfam, we're committed to building a better future now. So it's important that we celebrate historic wins that tackle the root causes of poverty, inequality and vulnerability and demonstrate the power of our global movement for change.

To donate, join our campaign actions or become a member, visit our website at www.oxfam.ca

THREADS OF CHANGE

You may remember the plain piece of cloth we included in a mailing we sent to some donors last fall. We asked you to decorate the cloth with your messages of hope and then send them back to us. The plan is to make these messages into a quilt.

The response was tremendous. Our donors not only shared their resolve and hopes for a better world but also showed their amazing creativity. We're still collecting the squares of fabric, but hope to begin the next phase of the project soon. Please watch for news in upcoming issues of the newsletter.



**TAKE ACTION.
GET INVOLVED.
STAY INFORMED.
INSPIRE.**



Lucie Lalanne/Oxfam

With the proceeds from her yard garden, Muslimah is hoping to pay for her children's education.

MUSLIMAH AMAZED AND PROUD

MUSLIMAH LEARNED HOW TO MANAGE LAND, PLANT,

raise seedlings, and make compost at a three-month field school provided by the Mangrove Action Project, a local partner in Oxfam Canada's Restoring Coastal Livelihoods program in South Sulawesi, Indonesia.

That inspired her to plant mustard greens, aubergines and chilies in her house yard. But Muslimah, a 41-year-old mother, went farther, with training in human resources, bookkeeping, and how to participate in development planning meetings. The skills

prepared her for a new role as leader of a women's economic group.

Economic groups in 60 vulnerable coastal communities form the backbone of Oxfam Canada's five-year Restoring Coastal Livelihoods project that is rehabilitating depleted mangrove forests, stimulating enterprise and empowering women to participate in economic planning by local agencies.

Loan system created

Muslimah's 26-member group has earned profits from processing and marketing salted duck eggs at local food expos. The women have also accumulated capital for a lending system by collecting voluntary and compulsory savings from group members. School fees are a popular use for loans.

The rhythm of Muslimah's life has changed from homemaking to busy community

leadership.

She gave a presentation on behalf of the women's group to a village planning meeting and was subsequently asked to represent the village at a sub-district development planning meeting.

"I was amazed and proud because I could represent the women's group from my village. There are lots of other women, but I was the one who was invited to represent my village. I was scared, but at the training I'd already learned how to 'speak', so I was only a bit scared."

Muslimah and the other women are committed to diversifying and maintaining their business when Oxfam leaves. "We have the basics from the training and support from Oxfam, which we can use to continue to develop our group."

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS



Caroline Gluck/Oxfam

Collecting water from an Oxfam tap-stand in Za’atari.

1.4 MILLION REFUGEES HAVE FLED VIOLENCE IN SYRIA

into neighbouring countries since the onset of conflict in March 2011 and seven million more require humanitarian assistance inside Syria itself. Oxfam and other agencies are working tirelessly to provide services to the constant influx of new arrivals.

In just seven months, the number of Syrian refugees registered or awaiting registration with the United Nations refugee agency has increased from 120,000 to 1.4 million. Many have fled with limited or no resources and are in desperate need of shelter, food, water and medical care. Jordan and Lebanon have had the greatest influx of refugees and Oxfam is working in both countries, in refugee camps and in host communities, to support people who have had to leave their homes in search of safety.

In Jordan, we are providing 20,000 people with access to water and sanitation, and coordinating hygiene training in Za’atari camp. Oxfam is installing taps, latrines and water collection points and is the only agency installing disabled-friendly toilets and showers. According to the UN refugee agency, UNHCR, the majority of Syrian refugees in Jordan live in urban areas, outside of formal camp settings. Oxfam is planning cash assistance for food, water and other necessities to vulnerable refugees who are living in host communities and have few resources.

For more information or to support Oxfam’s work with Syrian Refugees, visit our website at www.oxfam.ca/what-we-do/emergencies/syrian-refugee-crisis-appeal



Amid a sea of male construction and site workers in Jordan's sprawling Za'atari refugee camp, Oxfam's engineer, Farah Al-Basha stands out from the crowd.

OXFAM'S ROLE MODEL FOR GIRLS AT ZA'ATARI REFUGEE CAMP

by Caroline Gluck

Amid a sea of male construction and site workers in Jordan's sprawling Za'atari desert camp Oxfam's female engineer, Farah Al-Basha stands out from the crowd.

The energetic 27-year-old Jordanian joined the Oxfam team earlier this year, quitting her job at a private engineering company.

Instead of working on military and defence contracts and designing underground bunkers, she now helps to oversee work building toilet and shower blocks and installing water tanks at Za'atari's refugee camp. She's been involved in drawing up quality, safety and inspection plans; liaising with and advising contractors; and carrying out on-site inspections to ensure standards are met at every stage along the construction project.

"I wanted to work with an NGO to help people here, to try to do something more for the community. For me, work shouldn't just be about the money" she said.

But she admits her first visit to the camp was a bit of a shock. "It was the first time I have ever been to a refugee camp and, honestly, it was overwhelming", she said. "I had only seen this on television, not first hand. I realized this job was going to be totally different in terms of what it required of me than my previous work.

"It's been a life-changing experience for me. Helping to change people's lives is not an easy thing to do. It's also a difficult thing to realize that, as much as you want, you can't help everyone everywhere."

Women engineers are as capable as men

In Za'atari camp, Farah is a woman on a mission: determined to show that women engineers are just as capable as their male counterparts and making sure she is up to date on all the latest reading and research to make sure that no-one can fault her. Farah's day-to-day work involves overseeing and inspecting the work of the (all-male) labourers and making sure everything goes to plan - or if it doesn't, finding solutions to daily problems.

She's firm but polite as she speaks to the contractors, pointing out problems. But they accept what she says. "I'm very demanding and quite strict, but they respect me", she says. "They realize I am not here for a fashion show, but I'm an expert and know what I'm talking about.

"Every day, big groups of women and children follow me as I work in the camp", she says. "The girls say they see me as a kind of role model and say they'd like to do work like me when they are older."

"The children in the camp love to see us work: they make sure they are awake and up and about when we arrive in the camp for our day's work."

YES, I'd like to make a donation to support Oxfam's work.

\$35 \$50 \$75 \$100
\$ _____

Enclosed is my cheque payable to Oxfam Canada

OR Visa MasterCard
 American Express

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ADDRESS _____

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EMAIL ADDRESS _____

To make a donation by telephone, please call toll-free: **1-800-466-9326** or donate on-line at **www.oxfam.ca**.

Check the following if you would like to receive:

- SharePlan brochure, describing Oxfam's monthly giving program
- Oxfam Canada Annual Report 2012
- A Guide to Planned Giving
- Information on the Oxfam-Citizen's Bank VISA card

Please clip coupon and mail to: Oxfam Canada, 410 Adelaide Street West, Suite 210, Toronto, Ontario M5V 1S8

Receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

Charitable registration number: 12971 6866 RR0001.

OXFAM NEWSLETTER:

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Charity Challenge

JOIN OTHER ADVENTURERS ON ONE OF TWO JOURNEYS through the heart of Cuba in March 2014 and raise funds for Oxfam’s work. You can choose between the Cuban Revolution bike ride from Havana to Trinidad de Cuba, or a hiking trek through the Escambray Mountains on the Caribbean coast.

THE BIKE ADVENTURE BEGINS IN THE CUBAN CAPITAL, Havana, and ends by the Caribbean Sea in Trinidad de Cuba some 350kms later. You’ll be touched by the friendliness and pride that the Cubans feel for their country. Outside of Havana, there are very few vehicles on the road and as Cuba has a strong biking culture, you will fit right in. You will pass villages separated by colourful fruit orchards, sugar plantations and tree-lined avenues. You will also see the monument to Che Guevara as you pass through Santa Clara. You will cycle through Cienfuegos, which sits in a bay facing the Caribbean Sea and has attracted pirates through the ages, and continue to the magnificent Sierra del Escambray before finally reaching Trinidad.

THE ESCAMBRAY MOUNTAIN TREK STARTS IN THE VIBRANT capital and UNESCO World Heritage Site of Havana. Once out of Havana, things are generally quieter and more easygoing. But for you, this is where your challenge begins. You will be trekking for four days, for between 6 to 7 hours a day, passing farms, coffee plantations and fruit plantations. The terrain is undulating, and in parts tough going, but with amazing views and tropical waterfalls to bathe in, it is well worth the effort. You will visit the city of Santa Clara, famed for the final battle of the Cuban Revolution, the Sierra del Escambray and finally the beautiful city of Trinidad.

BIKE OR TREK TO SUPPORT OXFAM’S WORK!

These adventures are operated by Charity Challenge, the world’s leading fundraising challenge operator. For more information about these Cuban adventures that will benefit Oxfam’s work, go to www.oxfam.ca/what-you-can-do/fundraise-for-oxfam/oxfam-charity-challenge.