

Hunger News & Hope

... a Seeds of Hope publication

UN Summit Pushes toward 2015 Goals

by Katie Minchew

Leaders of foundations, celebrities and nearly 150 heads of state and Government came together September 20-22 in New York, NY, for the 2010 Millennium Development Goals Summit. At the summit, these leaders reaffirmed their resolve to work together for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples by achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Among the celebrities attending were runner Carl Lewis, singer Ricky Martin and Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan. The participation of world personalities like these has dramatically accelerated the progress toward achieving the MDGs, originally set to be met by 2015. At the summit, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke about his confidence in the current progress.

In his closing statements, the Secretary-General said,

"I am very encouraged to know that many Member States used the Summit to announce concrete support. All the key issues and ideas have been on the table—part of the discussion—and now are part of the outcome document. All of this and more is where it should be: at the forefront of our attention as we ready ourselves for the push that begins now, this very minute. In the past, we have seen that when the spotlights are switched off, world attention quickly moves on to other issues. With only five years left, we cannot let that happen. Between now and 2015, we must make sure that promises made become promises kept. The consequences of doing otherwise are profound: death, illness and despair, needless suffering, lost opportunities for millions upon millions of people. We must hold each other accountable."

US President Barack Obama also spoke at the summit. He also signed a Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development, the first of its kind to be implemented by a US administration. The directive, according to a White

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Aid Coming to Flooded Pakistan, But More Needed

by Crystal Goolsby

KARACHI, PAKISTAN—Millions of people swim and float through previously non-existent rivers. Children cling to parents in fright. Families ride debris like rafts. Some people stand on newly formed islands that were once buildings.

These are the images that depict the devastation that befell Pakistan in the wake of the floods along the Indus River that put nearly a fifth of the country underwater last summer.

Days of seemingly never-ending downpours from monsoons in July brought Pakistan over 16 inches of rain, along with its worst floods in more than 80 years.

The flooding has killed well over 1,000 people and affected at least 20 million people in some way, either by property loss or property damage.

Further damage and death is expected until living conditions improve, which will most likely take years. Families have been separated or destroyed, homes and farmlands have been lost, crops have been destroyed and herds of livestock have been killed or stranded. Many peoples' sources of livelihood and comfort have been washed downstream in the relentless floodwaters.

Historically, more than 30 floods have affected Pakistan within the last 200 years. Twelve of those catastrophes occurred within the last 82 years. The worst floods before now were the ones that happened in 1929.

These disasters took the lives of more than 400 people. According to a survivor of the 1929 floods, the damage those floodwaters brought—though it was

the worst Pakistan had ever seen to that point—vastly paled in comparison to the horrific state of the nation following the 2010 floods.

The United Kingdom's Department for International Development provided supplies and financial support for Pakistani agencies that aid farmers. This assistance included delivering seeds to farming families.

However, a spokesperson for the agency observed that some of the land has been so severely damaged by the floodwaters that it can never again be used for farming. This shows that Pakistani farmers have a long road to agricultural recovery, as they must find other areas to cultivate.

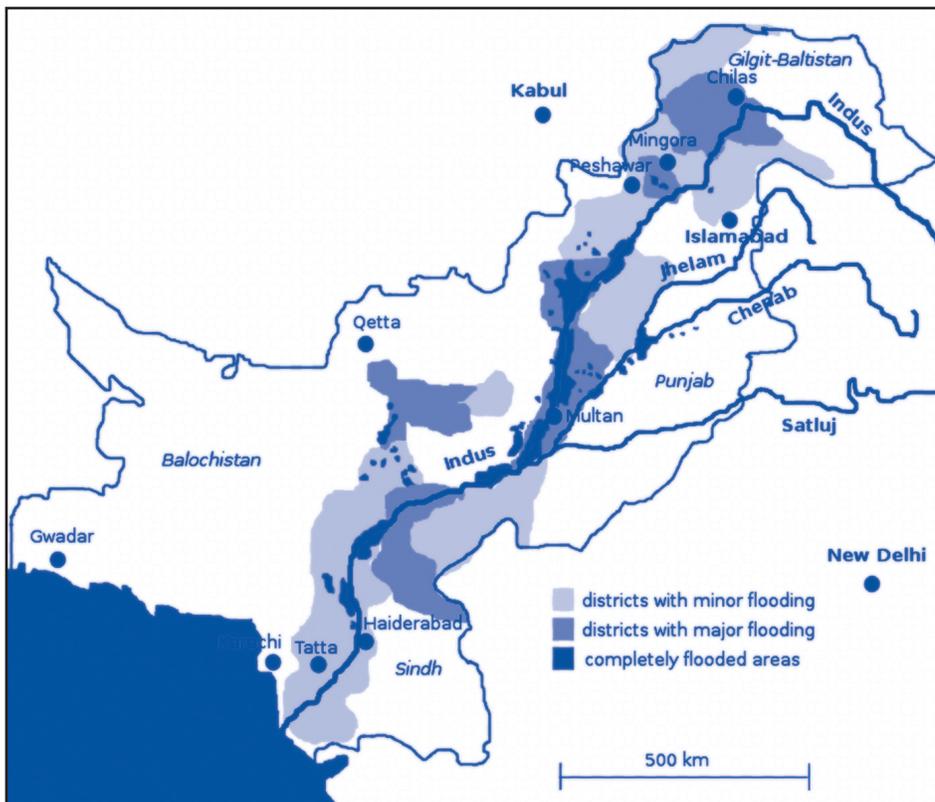
Catholic Relief Services (CRS), one of the first organizations to respond to the crisis, plans to help ease this path to recovery by providing farmers with makeshift shelters, seed fairs, and seed vouchers to rebuild their farms.

The largest group of people affected by the floods has been expecting mothers. Even before the rains began, it was difficult for pregnant women in Pakistan to receive proper prenatal care and proper nutrition.

Since the flood, roads, bridges and clinics have been destroyed, leaving the women with nowhere to go for care.

Moreover, the unsanitary conditions brought on by the floods brought with them an increase in water-borne and water-related illnesses—such as diarrhea, cholera and dengue fever—fostering even more health hazards. This increased exposure to illness jeopardizes the safety of both expectant mothers and their children.

Many pregnant women are so thin from starvation that it is difficult to tell they are as far along in their pregnancies as they claim they are. They were malnourished prior to the monsoons, but the severe depletion of the food supply



Above: the flooded areas of Pakistan follow the Indus River Basin. Areas affected include Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Gilgit-Balgistan.

brought on by the floods has left few of the women with any nourishment at all. If they do have food, it is not sufficient to feed a whole family.

The only places they now have to turn are the refugee camps, if they can make it there. One possible destination is a Save the Children clinic—if the women are close enough geographically. These clinics are providing transportation to their locations. Volunteers waded through the water carrying pregnant women on wooden beds. They also distribute necessities to the rural areas that are not close to the clinics.

Even with all the assistance that has come into their country, once these women give birth to their babies, they have no home to which to take them.

Women who cannot go to clinics or who are not in areas where mobile health units travel are forced to give birth to their babies in dirty tents, using contaminated water to clean up what they can.

Though pregnant women are some of the people at highest risk, the health of all affected citizens has been compromised by food shortages and unsanitary water supplies. The US Department of International Development is assisting by sending water sanitation trucks, food and rescue boats.

CRS has provided shelter kits to almost 80,000 people. They have also provided people with hygiene kits that contain soap, kitchen necessities, materials for bedding and tablets to sanitize drinking water. CRS also provides classes on hygiene to minimize the risk and spread of disease. Their longer-term projects include fixing the country's water supply systems, in part by employing local citizens.

Local celebrities have also contributed to relief efforts. Some have hosted fundraisers and telethons, while others have worked with the government and local charities to deliver food and water to people stranded by the flooding.

The Met Office, which is the UK's National Weather Service, has provided emergency water purification systems and emergency shelters through the charity ShelterBox [see "ShelterBox Provides Thousands with Polyester Sanctuaries" in *Hunger News & Hope*, Vol 11 No

3, *Summer 2010*, page 10.] They are also assisting other charities with weather forecasts specific to the flooded regions of Pakistan, so the charities know when the best times are to distribute supplies.

As the flood waters recede, Church World Service is working to re-establish construction trades training centers it supported in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake.

These centers equip people with the skills and tools to rebuild their own homes and communities. In addition, focused cash-for-work projects and other initiatives will help families recover their homes and livelihoods.

In the US, people are trying to help from afar. All American citizens can text "SWAT" to 50555. This action donates \$10 per text to United States' relief efforts in Pakistan.

In Chicago, many mosques have risen to the occasion to help the world's second-most-populous Muslim country. They are working alongside the charity Helping Hand USA to collect monetary and supply donations to send weekly to Pakistan. As long as Pakistan has a need, these organizations say they are committed to continual help until the country fully recovers.

Though these groups, and many others, are working hard to assist the flood victims, the aid is still not sufficient to meet everyone's needs. Many people, particularly in the US, have political prejudices against Pakistan, so they are choosing not to help the people in the country. The floods are also being overshadowed by the need to help the earthquake victims in Haiti. Relief is coming, but more is needed.

So how can the average person help with the relief efforts? American citizens can help by donating to any of the numerous charities and organizations that are providing aid to Pakistan.

These organizations include the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org), UNICEF (www.unicef.org), CARE International (www.care.org),

Doctors Without Borders (www.doctorswithoutborders.org), the International Rescue Committee (www.theirc.org), the International Medical Corps (www.internationalmedicalcorps.org), Mercy Corps' Pakistan Emergency Fund (www.mercycorps.org/countries/pakistan/15062), Oxfam (www.oxfam.org), The World Food Programme (www.wfp.org), Church World Service (www.churchworldservice.com), Islamic Relief Worldwide (www.islamic-relief.com), and BRAC (www.brac.net). Most of these organizations accept online donations.

Some of these charities also accept donations of fundamental supplies such as blankets, sleeping bags, and kitchen utensils. Many more charities that are not listed are accepting donations as well.

All they ask is that people look past the politics of Pakistani-American relations and look into the heart of the matter—the lives of the affected individuals.

—Crystal Goolsby, a native of Los Angeles, CA, is a freelance writer in Austin, TX. Rachel Badders contributed research to this article. Sources are listed above.



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justice
and
food security
for all of
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Jeffrey Sachs and the End of Poverty

a review by Jonathan A. Lindsey

Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. New York: Penguin Books, 2005. 398 pp. with index.

Jeffrey D. Sachs is director of The Earth Institute, Quetelet Professor of Sustainable Development and Professor of Health Policy and Management at Columbia University. Prior to these posts he was a special advisor to the United Nations Secretary-General, Director of the UN's Millennium Project, and he held various academic posts at Harvard, following receipt of three degrees there, including a Ph.D. in 1980.

Sachs' career trajectory has been an upward movement for the quarter century prior to publication of *The End of Poverty*, with increasing recognition for his ability as an international economics consultant whose focus has been among developing countries. His most recent monograph is *Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet* (Penguin, 2008).

The End of Poverty, written prior to the international economic crisis of 2008-10, is aimed at an explication of an economic process by which

1. the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are met by 2015 (see pp. 211-213 for a succinct table presentation of the goals);
2. a worldwide end to extreme poverty is achieved by 2025;
3. all of the world's poor countries can make progress up the ladder of economic development well before 2025; and
4. these goals (1-3) can be accomplished with minimal cost to rich countries.

Sachs indicates that one sixth of the world's population lives in extreme poverty (\$1 per day by our buying

standards). The centers of this level of poverty lie in East Asia, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, with approximately 700 million of the more than 1 billion in the latter two regions. These three regions contain 93 percent of the people who live in extreme poverty.

Since 1981, extreme poverty has increased in all areas of the world except East Asia, which has achieved remarkable changes from about 800 million to about 275 million living in extreme poverty.

Sachs writes that, if the rich countries of the world would fulfill commitments already made concerning the percentage of their contributions to the identified poor countries of the world, it would be relatively easy to achieve the goal of erasing extreme poverty by 2025.

He is particularly hard on the US with regard to the percentage and dollar amount of aid provided to the poor countries of the world.

Readers with math or statistical anxiety may be overwhelmed at times with the manner in which economists use data.

However, by careful reading and plugging through the numbers, one eventually agrees with Sachs that "for about .44 to .54 percent of the rich-world GNP each year," the UN Millennium Goals can be adequately funded from 2005-2015.

This amount is "significantly less than the 0.07 percent of GNP promised" (p. 299). In constant 2003 dollars, this amounts to approximately \$235 billion per year for the decade. Sachs demonstrates (pp. 304-308) how either the top 400 US taxpayers could *voluntarily* and easily fund significant poverty amelioration worldwide.

A second focus of this volume is what

this writer calls an intellectual autobiography of a well-trained statistical economist, as he comes to an understanding of the historical, cultural, geographical and humane issues associated with the alleviation of international poverty.

Sachs takes his "new" model of development economics education from observations of his spouse's engrained methods of clinical diagnosis as a practicing pediatrician. He offers a model for the education and practice of development economists that recognizes (pp. 79ff)

1. that economies are complex systems;
2. that economists should use "differential diagnosis" as a basic tool in assessing the issues of development economics;
3. that "clinical economics...should view treatment in 'family' terms" requiring a holistic approach to the issues being addressed, including external/international relationships;
4. that "good development practice requires monitoring and evaluation, and especially a rigorous examination of goals and outcomes;" (see Ian Parker, "The Poverty Lab, A New Method for Development Economics," *The New Yorker*, May 17, 2010, pp. 78ff., which reviews the work of Esther Duflo, professor of development economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology); and
5. that development economics have a professional status, including a code of professional ethics.

Sachs' scheme is clearly set out, in a one-page graphic summary (p. 84) followed by six chapters (pp. 90-209) detailing his own two-decade, on-the-job education as a development economist.

He illustrates his agenda and methodology by recounting his experiences as a primary consultant with Bolivia, Poland, Russia, China, India and Ghana.

The world is confronted constantly by the ravages of poverty in developing as well as rich countries; disasters, natural or the result of warring parties; and worldwide economic issues that generate severe, if temporary, potential economic disaster for all citizens.

Concern about extreme poverty has to go beyond altruistic solutions generated by visual images of pot-bellied, big-eyed, barefoot children.

Poverty and its amelioration is a responsibility of all citizens in rich nations. Learning to differentiate between "the poor" and those whose lives are lived in extreme poverty is more than a problem in economics. It is a problem in what it means to be human.

Sachs provides insight into the issues that generate extreme poverty, and uses the bully pulpit of his opportunities as a UN advisor, as the director of The Earth Institute, his multiple professorial appointments and his international contacts among the powerful of the world's governments to focus a fiscal solution that can be met by rich nations.

The end of extreme poverty is a worthy goal, to be reached by 2025, or any time. This monograph is a solid place for the concerned reader to begin, perhaps then becoming another gadfly to help increase interest and insight that result in responsible international action.

Once the reader is engaged in this campaign, a good first step would be to become familiar with the Millennium Development Goals and then to become aware of the UN agencies that are involved in the implementation of these goals. [See "UN Summit Pushes toward 2015 Goals" on page 1 of this issue. See also "UN Summit to Accelerate Progress on Millennium Development Goals," the special pullout section of *Hunger News & Hope*, Volume 11 No 2, Summer 2010.]

The eight goals are to:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,
2. Achieve universal primary education,
3. Promote gender equality and empower women,
4. Reduce child mortality,
5. Improve maternal health,
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases,
7. Ensure environmental sustainability, and
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

These goals are not to be accomplished serially, but are interrelated. Developing countries are required to provide implementation strategies that are country-specific for the achievement of these goals in order to generate fiscal support.

After becoming familiar with the goals, one needs to become aware of the plethora of non-governmental organiza-

tions working in developing countries specifically with the issues associated with the eradication of poverty. The next step is to query how governmental, non-governmental (including religious) organizations can best work together to achieve the same goals.

Finally, we must ask the question "Where or with whom does the buck stop?" Somehow the great judgment parable of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew appears to be relevant (25:31ff). We must ask, and answer, this question if we are to achieve anything close to relieving extreme poverty in the next 15 years.

The End of Poverty points in a direction, provides an analytic methodology and sets out neat statistical options. Solutions to extreme poverty will have to come from an informed, committed, active world citizenry.

—Jon Lindsay is a retired university administrator, trained as an American church historian, and whose adult religious pilgrimage has been among "alternative" Baptist churches. He lives in Waco, TX.

New Measurements for Ending Poverty

an author's note

by Jonathan A. Lindsey

As I was completing this review of *The End of Poverty* by Jeffrey Sachs, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) released the early findings of its review of 104 countries worldwide using a newly developed Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to be released later this year for the UN Development Programme's Human Development Report.

This new index takes into consideration 10 equally-weighted characteristics in three categories: education, health and standard of living. Through statistical assessment of these characteristics, the foci of poverty within a region can be assessed, thereby providing a stronger response for alleviation.

This group of measures, along with the standard \$1-1.25/per-day gauge, will allow for a different level of economic planning and cooperation, and will reflect more clearly the interrelationships among the UN's Millennium Development Goals. (Go to www.ophi.or.uk for a press release on which *The Economist* and NPR made reports between August 1-7. You will also find an executive brief at that site.)

The Oxford approach appears to build on multiple variables used by UNICEF for more than a decade to define the extent and focus areas in which greatest poverty exists. —jal

Guatemala Beset by Weather

by Rachel Badders

It has been a season of disasters. As Guatemalans attempt to recover from the landslides of the past four months, they hope Mother Nature has run out of surprises.

The village of Jocotenango, located a few miles outside of Antigua, has been all but wiped out. Most residents live in slums, and cardboard shacks are sprinkled throughout the hills.

Hundreds of people have received aid over the last few months, however, thanks to the Scheel Center. Since it opened in January 2008, the Scheel Center has offered comfort to the Jocotenango community. It is located at the bottom of a hill in the Vista Hermosa slum. It provides standard education, specialized technical training, and community building.

Baylor University student Jenny Giesbrecht volunteered at the Scheel Center last summer. "I was in Guatemala when the first natural disasters hit," she said. "Because airports were closed, we were stranded in Antigua. We worked at the center for a few days, cooking meals and distributing them to people who were displaced from their homes."

The first disaster occurred May 27, with the eruption of Volcano Pacaya near Guatemala City. Tropical Storm Agatha hit during the following two days, causing floods and mudslides in the Antigua area. The 25 inches of rain destroyed thousands of homes and forced about 74,000 people to evacuate.

Brandon Brickley, former director of the Scheel Center, happened to be in Antigua during the storm. He and new director Ron Fortin headed up the initial relief efforts. "The devastation was horrible, but the people were in good spirits. You could tell they were so grateful to have a mattress to sleep on and food to eat," Brickley said.

Three months later, the villages near Antigua endured more torrential rains causing more landslides. In addition to damage caused by the floods, at least 38 people were confirmed dead. Hundreds were forced from their homes.

Fortin, who has been the director of the center for less than a year, said that, because he felt so helpless, those two days plagued him most of all. "This rainy season, which started early and has persisted with ferocity, has taken a toll on Guatemala's poorest people, who are relegated to the unsafe hillsides to build their homes and raise their families. Every time a storm hits, we watch the skies, hoping it will stop raining before disaster strikes," Fortin said.

The Scheel Center is one of many GOD'S CHILD Project facilities. Patrick Atkinson, founder and executive director of the project, is asking for donations. "We are rationing our supplies for the most needy and most affected victims and sending out a call to action. We need your help," Atkinson said.

—Rachel Badders, a native of Nacogdoches, TX, is a journalism student at Baylor University.



Technology Company Strives for One Laptop per Child

by Nicholas Villapana

All you need is love. All they need is knowledge.

In the 16th Century, Sir Francis Bacon said "Knowledge is power," and that saying is even more important today. Information is being transmitted across the entire planet and back within minutes these days, and many important decisions are made aided by valuable information. I read the book *Good Intentions: Nine Hot-Button Issues Viewed through the Eyes of Faith* in an introductory business course at the Hankamer School of Business at Baylor University. One of the issues discussed in the book by Charles M. North was how to give the most to people in poverty.

How would you give a child in poverty \$1 million? According to North, the most efficient way would be to give them an education. With a proper education, those children would have the ability to make a living and get out of poverty—and keep their future families out of poverty. The One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) program is one way that people can directly help children all over the world to gain a better education.

UN Summit

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The program was first initiated by Amazon.com. When you purchased a laptop for yourself, one was given to a child in need somewhere around the world. Now, for half the price, you can buy a laptop for child in a participating country, without having to purchase one for yourself.

This year, OLPC sponsored a project in Australia, during which all people had to do was send a text. A hundred texts meant a laptop for a child.

The group produces an XO-1 model that features 1 gigabyte of flash memory, a Fedora-based Linux operating system, 256 megabytes of RAM, a webcam, and wireless connectivity.

What all that means is that the XO-1 is a great computer for kids in a poor country.

Instead of a hard drive, OLPC decided to use flash memory to eliminate the chances of a disk crash. Using the Linux operating system lowers the chances of kids getting a virus on their laptops, and a webcam allows them to communicate with virtually anyone in the world.

Another plus is that the laptop can be charged by the traditional plug in the wall, or it can be charged via solar or hand-crank power. While the computer may not be “up to spec” for the average computer user in the United States, just having access to the Internet in a durable and convenient package opens up a plethora of opportunities for some children in this world.

In this so-called “Information Age,” knowledge really is power. Giving children a laptop is giving them more than just an opportunity to learn. You are giving them an insight to the rest of the world, and to what they are truly capable of achieving. You are giving them a dream to chase, and goals that they could never imagine without access to the vast amount of information in the world.

We should all invest in the future. The way our economy is looking, most of us will have to rely on a 401k, or another way of personal investing as a means of retirement. Maybe one day, the child you gave a laptop to will return the favor by helping with your retirement. Nobody will ever know of what the youth of the world are capable until they are given the opportunity.

—Nicholas Villapana, a native of Walnut Creek, CA, is studying Information Systems at Baylor University. For more information about OLPC, go to www.theaustralian.au and look for “Far Away Kids in Remote Control.”

House statement, “provides clear policy guidance to all US Government agencies and enumerates our core objectives, our operational model, and the modern architecture we need to implement this policy.”

In addition to the eight MDGs, there is talk of adding a ninth goal—ending energy poverty. According to the *New York Times*, more than 1.4 billion people in the world lack access to electricity. Experts have stated that providing people with electricity will help lead to reaching the other eight goals.

With all the talk about what still needs to be done to achieve the MDGs, it is easy to feel defeated and overwhelmed. To add a little hope, here are a few examples of progress the world has already made:

- In 2008, Rwanda elected a majority of women (56 percent) to its lower chamber of parliament, the highest level of female representation of any country.

- In Ethiopia, the net enrolment rate for primary school was 72.3 percent in 2007, an increase of 88 percent on 2000 enrolment rates.

- Nicaragua reduced its hunger rate by more than half, from 52 percent in 1991 to 21 percent in 2004-06.

- Between 1990 and 2008, China’s mortality rate, for children under five years old, has declined from 46 deaths for every 1,000 live births to 18 per 1,000, a reduction of 61 percent.

- In Rwanda, contraceptive use among married women aged 15-49 jumped from 9 percent in 2005 to 26 percent in 2008.

- Cambodia has managed to halt and reverse the spread of HIV, with the prevalence falling from 1.8 percent in 2001 to 0.8 percent in 2007.

- In 2006, 80 percent of the rural population in Ghana had access to an improved drinking water source, an increase of 43 percent on 1990 levels.

Despite the great progress that has already been made, much more still needs to be done. You can help the world achieve the Millennium Development Goals by becoming involved with a relief-and-development organization and by spreading awareness about global poverty and the MDGs. You can also hold your government accountable by writing to your legislative representatives. Be active, and be excited—the achievement of these goals is making our world a better place!

—Katie Minchew, a recent professional writing graduate of Baylor University, is a freelance writer in Frisco, TX. Sources: the United Nations (www.un.org/millenniumgoals); www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010); the official web site of the US White House (www.whitehouse.gov); The New York Times (<http://green.blog.nytimes.com>); SOS Children’s Village (www.soschildrensvillages.ca).

“In the past, we have seen that when the spotlights are switched off, world attention quickly moves on to other issues. With only five years left, we cannot let that happen.”

**—UN Secretary-General
Ban Ki-moon**

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Seeds of Hope is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended

quotes, poems, & pithy sayings

There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.

—*Charles Dickens, Oliver Twist*

Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead.

—*St. John Chrysostom*

If a man were poor or hungry, [some] would say, let us pray for him. I would suggest a little different regimen for a person in this condition: rather take him a bag of flour and a little beef or pork, and a little sugar and butter. A few such comforts will do him more good than your prayers. And I would be ashamed to ask the Lord to do something that I would not do myself.

—*John Taylor*

We need to stop the dying and start the living; stop the hunger and start the hoping.

—*Penelope Cruz, actor*

What the people of the world want most and have always wanted...are bread and peace.

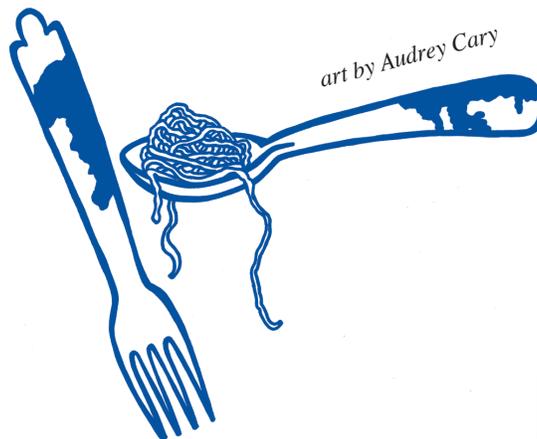
—*Patricia Young, founder and director of the US Committee for World Food Day*

If we can conquer space, we can conquer childhood hunger.

—*Buzz Aldrin, US astronaut*

In the face of all our realities: We are the people who heal each other, who grow strong together, who name the truth, who know what it means to live in community, moving toward a common dream for a new heaven and a new earth in the power of the love of God, the company of Jesus Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

—*Dorothy McRae-MacMahon, Echoes of Our Journey, Liturgies of the People*



to be optional. The group intends to seek out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

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