

SEEK & SERVE

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

A PUBLICATION OF EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT • FALL 2017 ISSUE



COUNTRY FOCUS: KENYA: Gold from the Dust

In Kenya, agriculture is the backbone of the economy, and most of the production – about 75 percent – comes from small-scale farms. The nation, however, has faced severe recurring drought and at the same time has undergone rapid population expansion. This has led to a scarcity of both food and paying work.

Homa Bay County is located in the western part of the country, and the area experiences dry spells, poor harvests, high poverty levels, and HIV/AIDs prevalence. Episcopal Relief & Development is partnering with with the Anglican Church of Kenya and its humanitarian arm, Anglican Development Services (ADS-Nyanza), to improve health, agriculture, and income generation among rural families in this region. And for one group of local farmers, the answer has been chickens!

Kaloo Anding'o Group is a community group of 30 farmers, 25 of whom are women. The group members were initially trained in poultry production management as well as the construction of poultry houses and other facets of poultry farming. They also took part in the purchasing of new chickens, which provided a choice stock of fast growing poultry with very good potential for weight gain and egg production. Several volunteers were trained as Trainers of Trainees, who could then offer support to the rest of the group as well as other nearby farmers.

With help from ADS-Nyanza and the County Government, the group was awarded a 528-egg capacity incubator, with a standby generator. This greatly increased the group's productivity and earnings. The incubator hatches roughly 400 chicks each cycle, and the group earns an average of 410 USD per hatching.

Beatrice is one of the group's farmers, and she admits she was skeptical at the start of the project. "I have unsuccessfully tried poultry production over the years and am sure of failing because of diseases," she said. Like many of the farmers, Beatrice started off with only a couple of chickens, but she now has 250 – proof positive that enhanced capacity and management pays great dividends.

Beatrice sold 200 chickens in early 2017, earning a good income of roughly 140 USD. The money has enabled her to enroll her two children in high school.

Members of Kaloo Anding'o Group are passionate about learning and practicing their new skills. Beatrice's skepticism has been replaced by confidence and appreciation. Now, when she looks at the dirt where her chickens roam, she thinks, "Gold is in the dust!"



Unlocking Abundance Around the World

I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. — John 10:10

Abundance is on my mind these days, for a few different reasons. First, of course, is the season. With fall comes harvest and then Thanksgiving. This time of year inspires many of us to consider the bountiful gifts we've received and how we can make the best use of them.

But abundance is also at the heart of Episcopal Relief & Development's mission. The vision we have for the work we do is not one of *creating* abundance, but rather *unlocking* the abundance that is already there. We recognize the inherent assets and untapped potential already present in individuals and communities. With love, care, and service, these assets can grow stronger and flourish.

We achieve this through thoughtful stewardship of the relationships and resources present in our community of partners, supporters like you, and program participants. This is our unique strength. With this in mind, we embarked on a process of reflection and inquiry over many months to develop our 2017–21 strategic plan, which outlines Episcopal Relief & Development's priorities over the next five years. The plan identifies three key programmatic priorities that will leverage our unique gifts to enable transformation at the community and household level. These three priorities are:

- Early Childhood Development
- Gender-Based Violence
- Resilience & Climate Change

Each of these priority areas contains within it a number of pillars. For instance, Early Childhood Development includes nutrition, health, parenting skills, and social protection efforts to mitigate poverty and strengthen families.

This new framework builds on the success of Episcopal Relief & Development's integrated approach. So for example, a child orphaned by HIV/AIDS may also be at risk for malaria, so our *Nets for Life*® program will ensure that she sleeps under a mosquito net. Other pieces of our Early Childhood Development program will ensure her nutritional and psychosocial needs are met – all so that she can achieve her full potential as she moves toward adulthood.

In the same way, the other priority areas integrate the work of different programs to address challenges in a holistic way, and achieve a sustained and measurable difference in people's lives.

These new priorities in no way replace our commitment to disaster relief, microfinance, clean water, or micro-smart agriculture. In fact, success in these areas is *essential* to accomplishing our goals in the three key priorities. It is my deepest hope that the people served by Episcopal Relief & Development gain the confidence necessary to grow in self-sufficiency and create for themselves a more abundant life. As you and I engage in this profound and compassionate work, we increase our abundance along with them.



Yours faithfully,



Robert W. Radtke
President



PROGRAM FOCUS: Alleviating Hunger in Nicaragua

Eradicating poverty and hunger is central to unlocking abundance. With our partner, the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD), Episcopal Relief & Development is working in rural communities in the Nicaraguan regions of Nueva Guinea and San Francisco Libre to alleviate hunger and promote nutrition. We focus on supporting residents in these areas as they improve their farms and enrich their food supply. Participating small-scale farmers learn how to make natural pesticides and fertilizers, how to prepare their land to withstand droughts and flooding, and how to diversify and increase their crop production.

The programs are designed to produce long-term benefits. Communities select volunteer farmers, called Community Agricultural Promoters, who receive training from CEPAD. The promoters in turn train community members in the methods they have learned, so the new skills continually spread outward.

Roque, the father of five grown children, lives with his wife, Paula, outside San Francisco Libre. He began the CEPAD program two years ago, and he now has three community members training under him. Before he got involved with the program, his plot of land was poorly irrigated and he had to walk long distances to get water. Without proper irrigation and efficient farming techniques, he and his wife rarely had access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

But because of his training, Roque was able to build a micro-dam to store water for his farm, and he learned how to make organic pesticides and compost from readily available materials. The new fruits and vegetables he now grows to eat and cook with bring variety to his family's meals and increase their nutrition.

"We used to eat [fruits and vegetables] only when a pick-up truck came to the community to sell them. That was not often, and sometimes when it came, we didn't have the money to buy them," Roque said. "Now we have all these vegetables because we harvest them in our own plot."

Another Community Agricultural Promoter is Eva, age 65. When she was selected to participate, she was afraid that her age and being a woman would be liabilities. Now, she thanks God for giving her the opportunity and strength to work.

Through the training she has learned to make irrigation ditches so the rain won't erode her soil and to cultivate organic compost to strengthen her plants. Eva and her husband have a beautiful plot of land where she grows cucumbers, watermelons, squash, oranges, limes, tangerines and avocados. With so much fresh produce, their nutrition has improved, and Eva has enough extra to sell for a profit.

"In spite of the obstacles, I now see the fruit of my labor," Eva said. "I am very enthusiastic to continue working in my own land, producing my vegetables. Besides, I consider that my work is an example to my community since I've shown that my age and working by myself are not obstacles."





UPDATE REPORT:

Responding to Famine in South Sudan

In February, the United Nations formally declared famine in parts of South Sudan. The UN warned that war and a collapsing economy have left some 100,000 people facing starvation, and a further one million people are classified as being on the brink of famine.

Episcopal Relief & Development continues to work with the Episcopal Church of South Sudan & Sudan and its humanitarian arm, the South Sudanese Development & Relief Agency (SUDRA), to respond to needs in the wake of this ongoing crisis.

Through a longstanding relationship with the Anglican Alliance and church partners in South Sudan, Episcopal Relief & Development is providing critical food to 20,000 people in Rubkona County in Unity State. This partnership supports internally displaced people fleeing violence due to political unrest in South Sudan. Changing weather conditions are further intensifying food shortages by making it difficult for farmers to grow crops. Local diocesan disaster teams are distributing food and other supplies such as sorghum, beans, oil, and salt to roughly 6,000 women,



10,000 children, 3,000 of the elderly, and 1,000 people with disabilities.

The widespread hunger and malnutrition further complicate access to education and exacerbates gender justice issues. Young children, particularly boys, are recruited to join rebels and government forces, and as a result, 51 percent of children are not attending school. And according to SUDRA, women and girls traveling long distances in search of food for their families are vulnerable to attack or sexual violence.

Please pray for families and communities impacted by famine and political unrest in South Sudan.



GIFTS FOR THE WORLD THIS CHRISTMAS



This Christmas season, give a gift that has the power to transform lives by supporting **Gifts for Life**. By putting your faith into action, you will help fight poverty, hunger, and disease around the world. Supporting *Gifts for Life* is a joyous way to make a deep and lasting impact. This is truly a gift that keeps on giving.

What will you give? A goat, a cow, or a flock of chickens, to help families feed themselves and increase their income . . . A share of a village well, to provide a community with access to clean water . . . Mosquito nets and training, to drastically reduce the risk of malaria and save children's lives. And much more!

With each gift you purchase, you'll receive a free printed card or e-card announcing that you've made a generous gift in honor of a loved one – and you'll be able to spread the word via Facebook and Twitter.

Celebrate the birth of Jesus and his hope for the world by supporting *Gifts for Life* this Christmas season.

To learn more about how you can support *Gifts for Life*, visit www.episcopalrelief.org/gifts.

