

OXFAM CLOSEUP

SPRING 2018

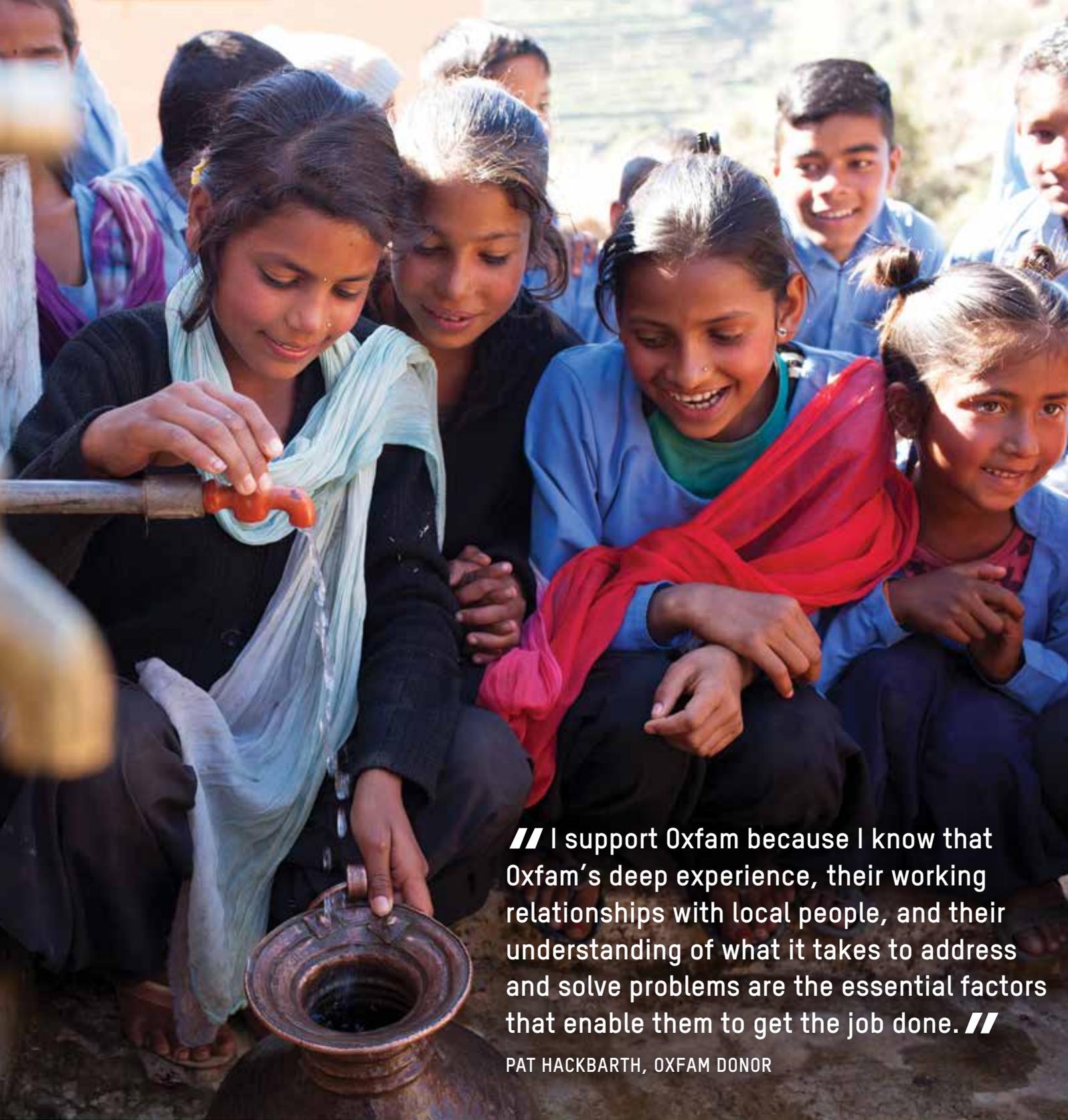
THE AMAZON: A FOREST FOR WHOSE FUTURE?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- > PUERTO RICO AFTER THE STORM
- > TOOLS OF CHANGE IN GHANA



OXFAM



// I support Oxfam because I know that Oxfam's deep experience, their working relationships with local people, and their understanding of what it takes to address and solve problems are the essential factors that enable them to get the job done. //

PAT HACKBARTH, OXFAM DONOR

HELP GET THE JOB DONE.

Renew your Oxfam membership for 2018, or sign up to become a member today at oxfamamerica.org/renew.

ABOVE: Students in Baitadi, Nepal, gather around the outdoor water faucet Oxfam installed at their school. Access to clean water prevents the spread of waterborne diseases and allows children to spend more time in the classroom. *Abbie Trayler-Smith/OxfamAUS*

DEAR FRIENDS,

When I step back for a moment and consider all that you are doing to help fight the injustice of poverty, I am humbled by the scale of it. Your commitment is extraordinary: together, we are now part of a \$1.12 billion organization working in more than 100 countries. The potential that represents is phenomenal. We truly have the power to help people build better futures for themselves.

And that's where I want to refocus our energy: on people in Ghana and Peru, in Puerto Rico and Uganda, on people you will read about in the pages ahead, people like Sister Magna Martínez Jiménez and Carmen Villanueva. They are two powerhouse women who jumped in immediately to help their communities after Hurricane Maria hammered Puerto Rico last September. With access to clean drinking water severely curtailed and electricity out across the territory (and still not fully restored in many places!), these two islanders mobilized neighbors and colleagues, and began the arduous task of assessing needs and finding ways to meet them—even as our federal government dragged its feet.

Their example, and the examples of so many other enterprising people in some of the poorest places on our planet, is what Oxfam's vital work is all about: the role each of us can play in bringing about change.

For those of us working inside the organization, that commitment to change is absolute and includes our pledge to be transparent in discussing the challenges Oxfam is facing. But as important, change is about listening to you—the people who so deeply believe in our mission and know that together we can create lasting solutions to poverty. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, I urge you to reach out.

Sincerely,



Abby Maxman
President & CEO, Oxfam America

OXFAM CLOSEUP

OXFAM AMERICA'S MEMBER MAGAZINE

SPRING 2018 VOLUME 18, ISSUE 1

MEDIA MASHUP

2

Stories of hope, refugees in Trump's childhood home, Yemen humanitarian crisis, temporary protected status



HURRICANE MARIA MEETS HER MATCH

3

In Puerto Rico, Oxfam follows two local leaders who know what it takes to get things done in the aftermath of a major emergency.



'THE LAND INVADERS'

6

As pressure mounts from investors and local officials, two Peruvian communities struggle to defend their land rights in the Amazon.



TOOLS OF CHANGE

10

Simple tools are helping to inspire long-term change in farming communities in northern Ghana.



Oxfam CloseUp SPRING 2018

EDITOR Coco McCabe

WRITERS Divya Amladi,
Chris Hufstader

DESIGNER Emily Eberly

PRODUCTION LEAD Carl M. Soares

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Smita Singh

Chair

Joe H. Hamilton

Vice Chair

Abby Maxman

President & CEO

Jack Regan

Secretary

N. James Shachoy

Treasurer

Mohamad Ali

Manish Bapna

Tony Bebbington

Latanya Mapp Frett

Gina Glantz

Joe Loughrey

Carl Muñana

María Otero

Laura Rusu

Kitt Sawitsky

Sonal Shah

Joseph R. Siegelbaum

Anil Singhal

Tara Lynn Torrens

Dabie H. Tsai

Kim Williams

COVER: A young boy collects cacao pods from a tree in the village of Panguana, in northern Peru. Like many communities in the Amazon region, Panguana is trying to secure legal title to its farming and forestlands. *Diego Perez/Oxfam America*

We welcome your feedback. Please direct letters to editor@oxfamamerica.org.

MEDIA MASHUP

LOOK. WATCH. LISTEN. JOIN THE CONVERSATION.

STORIES OF HOPE

TOYS MADE BY BOYS

In Uganda's refugee settlements, where even the most basic supplies are hard to come by, children are making playthings out of unexpected materials.

Like so many others living in Bidibidi, a resettlement area with more than 287,000 refugees, Martin (right) had to leave his life behind to escape fighting back home in South Sudan. Having arrived in Uganda with few possessions, Martin and his playmates in Bidibidi are building themselves a new toy collection out of the things other people throw away.

Learn more: oxf.am/closeup-toys



WATCH REFUGEES IN TRUMP'S CHILDHOOD HOME?

In the home where President Trump lived as a young child—now for rent—we invited refugees who escaped conflict and persecution to share their stories, and be heard.

oxf.am/closeup-trumphome

IN THE NEWS

YEMEN: 'EVERYONE NEEDS TO PUT DOWN THEIR WEAPONS'

In a Jan. 22 story about a conflict-triggered humanitarian crisis in Yemen, Scott Paul, a senior humanitarian adviser for Oxfam, told the *Washington Post* that the Saudi promises of financial aid and assurances that aid corridors would be off-limits to airstrikes were "welcome steps." But he added that the Saudi-led coalition needs to do more, including allowing commercial flights to land in the capital and ensuring open access to Yemen's seaports. Paul told the paper, however, that none of the measures would be sufficient to stave off growing civilian hardship without a cease-fire.

// This decision is ill-conceived, dangerous, and undermines US foreign interests in the region. This needless move will force hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes in the US to return to El Salvador, an unsafe country plagued by gang and drug violence, natural disasters, and poverty. //

Vicki Gass, Oxfam senior policy adviser, for ABC News on Jan. 8, 2018, responding to the Trump administration's decision to end temporary protected status (TPS) for people from El Salvador

HURRICANE MARIA MEETS HER MATCH

ONE IS A NUN, THE OTHER IS A COMMUNITY ACTIVIST, AND THEY ARE DOING ALL THEY CAN TO HELP THEIR PUERTO RICAN NEIGHBORS RECOVER FROM THE DEVASTATING HURRICANE. THEY ARE JUST TWO OF THE LOCAL POWERHOUSES WHOSE LEAD OXFAM HAS FOLLOWED IN ITS EMERGENCY RESPONSE ON THE ISLAND. **COCO MCCABE** REPORTS.



By the time you read this, at least seven months will have passed since one of the strongest hurricanes to hit Puerto Rico plunged the territory and more than three million of its people into darkness—a power failure so complete that, as of this writing in early March, electricity has yet to be restored to everyone on the island.

It's not often that Oxfam works on humanitarian emergencies in the US and other wealthy countries. But after Hurricane Maria decimated Puerto Rico in late September 2017, we made the decision to step in when the federal government's response faltered. We called on you for support, and then turned to local leaders to help us reach people in the greatest need.

From the beginning, storm response and recovery for many Puerto Ricans have been achingly slow. But the progress that has been made is, in no small part, due to strong women at the helm of their communities, steering material help and practical guidance to some of their most vulnerable neighbors. This is the story of two of those women.



RALLYING FOR A NEIGHBORHOOD

It was just before Thanksgiving and the afternoon was winding down when we arrived at the Colegio María Auxiliadora, a school of 400 students from prekindergarten through sixth grade in a neighborhood of San Juan. Still, there was plenty of buzz as kids darted past the principal's door and others played a game on an open court nearby. Right away we got the feeling that this was more than just a school; it was a magnet for the community.

We were visiting the *colegio* as part of Oxfam's ongoing assessment of needs in poorer parts of San Juan. Sister Magna

Martínez Jiménez, the principal, ushered us into her office—as spotless and white as her flowing habit—and pulled out a stack of papers with columns printed in a careful hand. The lists tallied the destruction her extended school community was living with. Windows, doors, ceilings, even whole houses—all wrecked. Fridges, stoves, cars, beds: ruined. And worse, jobs were gone. Forty-seven mothers were out of work; so were 29 fathers.

Right after the storm, Martínez Jiménez, 46, and other nuns from the school fanned out through the neighborhood to gauge the damage. They quickly realized they needed to make their building available as soon as possible so kids would have a place to go while their parents cleaned up the mess in the wake of the storm. The community needed a gathering place, too, and so the *colegio* opened its doors to neighborhood families. Then, house by house, staffers visited all 400 students, noting each family's losses and recording T-shirt and shoe sizes to help replace clothing.

And so began the wait in long lines for everything—fuel, food, water. Ensuring there was enough clean drinking



water for all the students was one of the things that worried Martínez Jiménez the most. On one nearly daylong hunt she went between emergency command and distribution centers, waiting for hours, only to return with eight 24-bottle boxes of water. Undaunted, she divvied up her supply and the entire school had a portion to drink.

A FOCUS ON CLEAN WATER

Access to potable water has been one of the key objectives of Oxfam's emergency response, along with the distribution of solar lights, legal aid assistance, and advocating in Washington, DC, for a robust aid effort. In the weeks and months after the storm, while the power was out in many communities, municipal water delivery systems were not working; many families spent precious dollars buying a bottled supply or collecting it, untested, from springs and streams—increasing the chance of contracting waterborne diseases.

Together with the Foundation for Puerto Rico, Oxfam purchased 2,000 water filters for both household and community use, and we have been distributing them to families and schools where the need has been greatest: in rural areas and in the poorest pockets of San Juan. The smaller household devices can process up to 6,000 gallons of water each before the internal filters need to be changed.

The filters are a good interim solution for people who have no other options. In addition, we are working with other organizations on the island to repair water systems in remote areas and to provide solar pumps to ensure communities have a sustainable supply—especially when the electricity is not reliable.

Soon after meeting with Martínez Jiménez, we delivered two community-sized filters to the *colegio*, one for the kitchen and one for the dining room—helping to ensure that all 400 of her students can stay healthy with a clean supply of drinking water.



HILL BROTHERS—AN EXTENDED FAMILY

A short distance away, in the Hill Brothers neighborhood, Carmen Villanueva was getting ready to close the local community center for the evening. A small building, it was serving as a distribution depot, and though the storm had torn through two months before, there was still no electricity. At 57, Villanueva has been an activist here since she was a child, first within the folds of her church, and later, frustrated by its values, outside of it. But always, one thing has remained constant: her belief that her community is like an extended family.

And that's why Oxfam turned to Villanueva for guidance. Who among the Hill Brothers community had the gravest needs and could benefit most from the water filters? That might have been a tough question to answer in a working-class neighborhood where people had lost their jobs, basic services had disappeared, and so many were desperately wondering how they were even going to feed their children. The answer was 100 percent community-minded: let households share them.

Across the neighborhood, in two houses per street, 85 community filters were soon providing water for 1,700 people. Along with the filters, Oxfam also distributed 192 solar lights for families to share.

But for all the light and water you, our island partners, and the local leaders

with whom we work have brought to people in need, the bigger challenge is yet to come: the restoration of a gem of an island burdened with \$123 billion in debt and pension obligations before the storm, and now facing more than \$94 billion in recovery costs.

Villanueva, who loves Puerto Rico deeply, is under no illusions about what that challenge means. "If we keep doing what we're doing, without coordination, structure, and measuring the consequences of Maria—which had to do with poor infrastructure before the hurricane—we're going to be ... poorer ... with fewer people, with less futures, and a debt that not even God can pay," she said.

But there's a better way, Villanueva told us later: "We can look at this as an opportunity to rebuild trust and make real change, allowing the communities' voices to direct the response so our people can feel their most urgent needs are met."

A CLOSER LOOK

Read about another strong woman helping to bring legal aid to storm survivors in Puerto Rico: oxf.am/closeup-fema.

THIS PAGE: Carmen Villanueva is a community leader in the Hill Brothers neighborhood of San Juan.

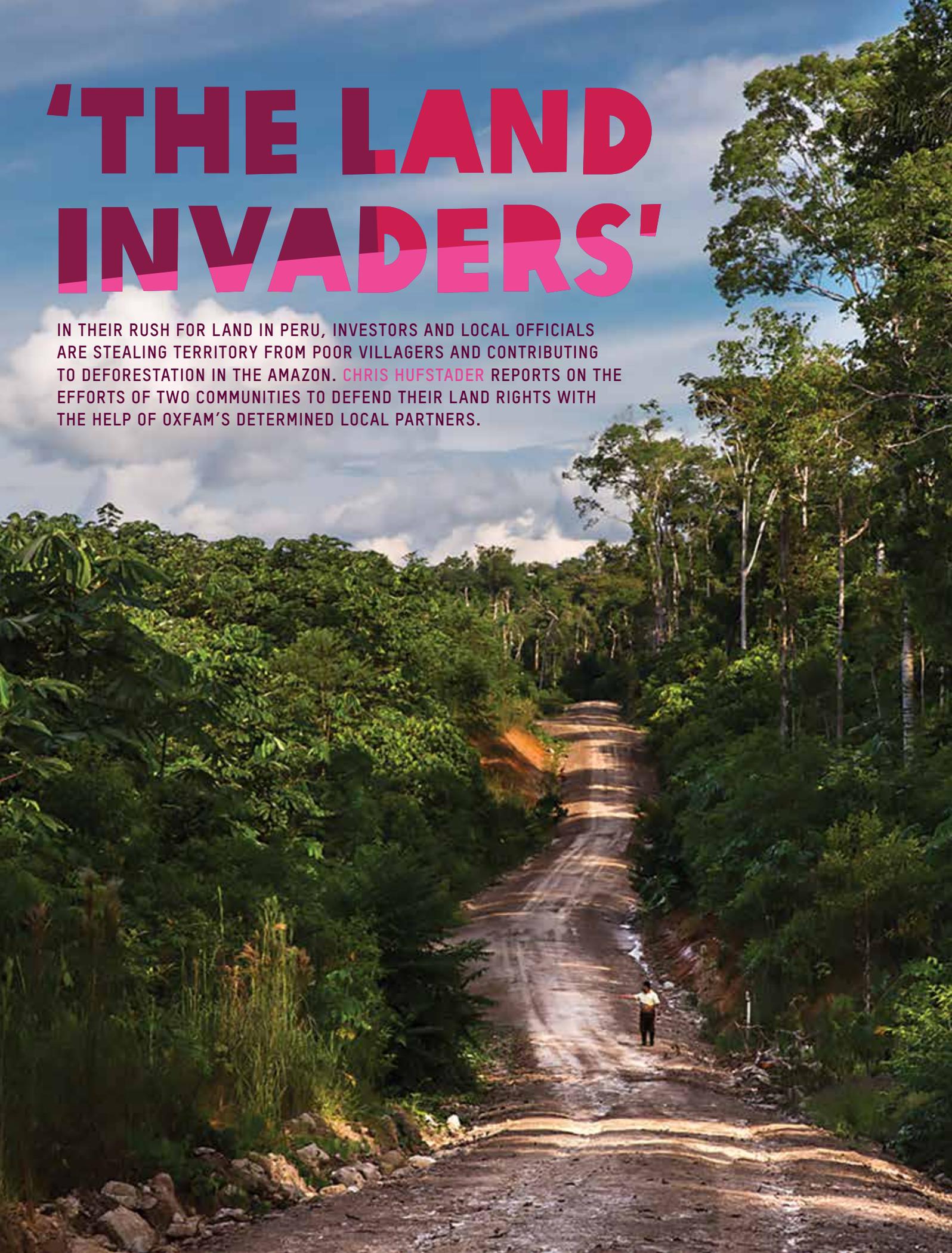
OPPOSITE, TOP: Sister Magna Martínez Jiménez is the principal of the Colegio María Auxiliadora in San Juan.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Bob Brox, a water and sanitation engineer working for Oxfam, shows families how to use the water filters distributed by Oxfam and its local partner.

ALL PHOTOS: *Coco McCabe/Oxfam America*

'THE LAND INVADERS'

IN THEIR RUSH FOR LAND IN PERU, INVESTORS AND LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE STEALING TERRITORY FROM POOR VILLAGERS AND CONTRIBUTING TO DEFORESTATION IN THE AMAZON. CHRIS HUFSTADER REPORTS ON THE EFFORTS OF TWO COMMUNITIES TO DEFEND THEIR LAND RIGHTS WITH THE HELP OF OXFAM'S DETERMINED LOCAL PARTNERS.





Richard Fasabi is standing on the sandy bank of the Aguaytia River, looking west, toward his father's homestead, a small collection of thatch-roofed structures amid trees above the river. Fasabi grew up there, and when he started his own family, he built a home just a short walk down the high river bank.

He had no way of knowing that this place, an ethnic Shipibo community called Santa Clara de Uchunya, would become a battleground. Now 40, Fasabi is living under the threat of death by armed men who have moved to the area west of the Aguaytia and are cutting down the forest and planting crops. This establishes them as farmers in the area, so they can eventually get a formal land title. They then have the option of selling this land to an oil palm plantation aggressively expanding into the area. The land invaders, as Fasabi and others describe them, have come to his home, armed with guns and their faces masked, to tell his wife that if the couple does not leave the area they will kill him.

The land these outsiders are grabbing is the ancestral home of the Shipibo indigenous people, who have been here for centuries. But that history is not enough—yet—to convince the government to guarantee the Shipibo communal title to their territory, despite international and federal laws protecting those land rights.

Fasabi says he can't imagine moving away, even just across the river. "My soul will always be here," he says. "Even if they kill me, I will never leave this place."

The muddy waters of the Aguaytia flow by slowly, ignoring the conflict on both sides. Palm oil and other agribusiness plantations are expanding in Peru, and are a major cause of deforestation in Amazonian areas. Oxfam's research shows that new medium- and large-scale plantations are now covering 80,000 hectares (about 196,000 acres) mainly in San Martin, Ucayali, and Loreto provinces. Many of these new plantations overlap with indigenous community land claims. More than 1,300 indigenous communities currently have title to 12.4 million hectares of land in the Amazon in Peru, but are claiming 20 million more, according to estimates from indigenous federations.

Oxfam is helping local communities defend their rights to own and manage their ancestral territories, invoking national and international laws overlooked by some corrupt local officials. But these agribusiness land grabs are hurting people far beyond the Amazon: the massive deforestation is a leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, which are a driver of the climate change that is affecting the entire planet.

PERU BOOMING

Conflict in Santa Clara de Uchunya started in 2015, when villagers gathering wild fruit and medicinal plants in the forest on the west side of the Aguaytia were confronted by security guards from a plantation that was suddenly cutting down the forest. "They asked us who we are, where we are going," says Manuel Diaz, a former village chief. "We used to go there to hunt and fish; now we can't anymore."

According to Diaz, the guards worked for a company now known as Ocho Sur P, part of an international agribusiness concern owned by Dennis Melka, a Czech-American living in Singapore. The company acquired land title through the regional government to raise oil palms. Its claim lies partly in forestland Santa Clara de Uchunya villagers say has been theirs for generations.

The Federation of Native Communities of Ucayali, known by its Spanish acronym FECONAU, is working with Oxfam's support to survey and demarcate Santa Clara de Uchunya's territory, and file claims in local courts to get an official title. They have also requested that the government stop the oil palm plantation's operations and expansion. They did get a judge to issue an injunction in 2015, but it wasn't enforced until late 2017, and only in newly planted areas. Since then, FECONAU and villagers in Santa Clara de Uchunya have reported violent threats. The one Richard Fasabi described occurred the first week of January 2018.

FECONAU's leader Robert Guimaraes says Santa Clara de Uchunya is asking the regional government to grant a collective title for 38,000 hectares of its

ancestral territory, and to stop issuing individual titles to land invaders whose sole purpose is to subsequently sell the land to the palm oil corporation.

The plantation on Shipibo territory also violates both international and Peruvian law, Guimaraes says: it was established without consulting the native communities and while the government turned a blind eye. "These areas are for our use and culture, but the government sees them as areas to give away ... and it is driving deforestation," he says.

LAND RUSH IN LORETO

Melka also started a cacao plantation in Loreto province, a two-hour flight north of Santa Clara de Uchunya. It has also run into problems, according to media reports: his investors were not satisfied that he was running the plantation properly. Called Cacao del Perú Norte, the plantation secured title for some 3,000 hectares of forestland and it has already planted some 1,800 hectares, despite legal challenges by environmental groups that Cacao del Perú Norte is clearing land not zoned for agriculture.

In a small riverside community called Panguana, Adriano Panaifo says that after Cacao del Perú Norte bought some

BELOW: Richard Fasabi casts a net on a small lake near Santa Clara de Uchunya, his home village. Nearby forest and farmlands are being grabbed by agribusinesses and individual land invaders who want to take over the forest areas Fasabi and his ethnic Shipibo ancestors have used for centuries.

OPPOSITE: A man from Panguana prays at a grave in the village cemetery. Cacao del Perú Norte says it acquired this land, and although it is not going to force the community to move the graves, it is requesting the community members use a different and less convenient means to access the cemetery. Negotiations continue on this sensitive matter.

PREVIOUS PAGE: An oil palm plantation on the left side of a road crowds out ancient forestlands on the right in this area of Ucayali province in Peru. The ethnic Shipibo village Santa Clara de Uchunya is attempting to gain communal land title for 38,000 hectares (about 93,000 acres) of land here.

ALL PHOTOS: *Diego Perez/Oxfam America*



// MY SOUL WILL ALWAYS BE HERE. //

RICHARD FASABI, FARMER AND FISHERMAN

land next to his village, it suddenly started building a road into his town's farming area. "They knew we did not have title to this land, so the company tried to claim as much of it as they could," Panaifo explains. "We found out when they were building a road on our land, and when we saw them clear-cutting the forest we were mad because we knew the impact of what they were doing would be serious. We're very aware of the need to conserve the forest, and we were really angry."

Panaifo is a village leader, and worked with Oxfam's partner Peruvian Society for Environmental Law (SPDA) to hold a series of meetings with Cacao del Perú Norte to force it to pull back to the area it had actually acquired. Others in nearby Tamshiyacu report that they have had less cordial encounters with representatives from Cacao del Perú Norte who have aggressively tried to buy up their farmland. One farmer named Carlos Diaz says in 2015 he brought a TV film crew to an area of his land the company had seized and was clearing. He says 30 plantation company workers armed with machetes chased him and the film crew off the land and threatened to kill them.

Ruperto Vasquez, a farmer in his early 60s, has also refused offers to sell his land. Vasquez says when he declined a low offer for his 20 hectares, the company agent just laughed at him. "I could tell he knew he had the upper hand," Vasquez says, sitting in his home in Tamshiyacu late one evening, his family cat playing on the dirt floor around his feet. "They tell us they will get our land anyway."

Vasquez says company collaboration with local government officials leaves farmers like him with no allies. He and others like Diaz have been threatened, and have requested protection from the police. "They come around here once a week to see if I am still alive," Vasquez says.



ENFORCEMENT PROBLEMS

José Luis Capella, an attorney who works at SPDA, says local government officials "should not title forestland for agriculture. Companies claim that they own private land, and they can do what they please. But the Forestry and Wildlife Law says our forests are part of our national heritage, and if you wish to touch it you need a permit. Even if you own the land, you are not allowed to just cut down all the trees."

Capella says SPDA is helping Panguana to navigate a complicated land titling process, and he blames the fact that farmers here lack land title to "many years of neglect by the government."

"Enforcement of laws here is really bad," Capella says, citing local officials who "either don't know [the laws] or ignore them. ... They want to give companies investing in land here whatever they want."

Juan Luis Dammert, a program officer at Oxfam, says, "These foreign investors wrongly maintain that if the land they buy is titled already, they are exempt from environmental impact assessments or other requirements such as land use change permits. They just turn up with bulldozers and tear up the forest. This has become their preferred mechanism to skip requirements and grab land."

Oxfam and its partners like FECONAU and SPDA are helping communities like Santa Clara de Uchunya, Panguana, and Tamshiyacu to understand the laws and learn their rights so that they can file land claims and court motions to stop illegal forest clearing.

Dammert says Peru is unlikely to seize land from any company that has legal title, even if it was acquired via a crooked process. But land use violations, claims from indigenous communities, and land grabs are being exposed to legal action, and in the media, thanks to support from Oxfam and our partners and allies who are advocating for justice in Peru. And helping to protect the rights of communities to use the forest in a sustainable manner also helps reduce deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions.

Ana Mendoza, a community health promoter in Panguana, says preserving the forest is a high priority for her community. "I want our children to know the trees, the birds, and animals. We want them to know the forest, and that we did not sell the forest to the company."

A CLOSER LOOK

Land grabs are a problem for many indigenous people. Here's what villagers are up against in Cambodia's Ratanakiri Province: oxf.am/closeup-defenders.



// WHAT KEEPS ME GOING
IS THE FACT THAT I WANT A
FUTURE WITH HOPE. I HOPE
THAT ONE DAY WE LEAVE
POVERTY BEHIND. //

CHRISTINA AWINI, MAIZE FARMER

TOOLS OF CHANGE

IN GHANA, OXFAM AND LOCAL PARTNERS ARE TAKING A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO ENDING POVERTY, FROM HOUSEHOLDS TO LOCAL ADVOCACY. DIVYA AMLADI, WITH REPORTING FROM FRED PERRAUT, DESCRIBES HOW SIMPLE TOOLS CAN INSPIRE LONG-TERM CHANGE.

Alima Fatawu, a resident of Tambalug, Garu, in northern Ghana, smiles as she tends to her crops—and with reason. Her last harvest was exceptional.

“Before I was eating debt,” says Fatawu. “Now I have food to eat.”

What accounts for the difference? Compost, and the skill to make it.

Fatawu has been participating in an initiative launched by Oxfam and its partner in the Upper East Region of Ghana, Presbyterian Agric Station-Garu (PAS-G), aimed at helping farmers cope with environmental change—and at convincing local officials to increase support for farmers’ resiliency. In this case, composting is the secret. It’s just one of several small, but essential interventions now underway in this region where farmers make up about 90 percent of the working population. In Garu, families have limited access to farming technology, fertilizers, improved seeds, and credit, and many crops are lost due to poor postharvest management.

But together with our local partners, Oxfam has been helping farmers in Garu and elsewhere confront those challenges with simple tools: agricultural education, solar-powered water delivery, fuel-efficient stoves, and radio broad-

casting. One initiative called CRAFS, or Climate Resilient Agriculture and Food Systems, selected a community in each of four districts to serve as test locations for projects aimed at empowering women farmers. With 70 percent of the beneficiaries being women, the initiative targeted 4,500 households. Because neighbors are transferring skills to each other, CRAFS’s reach may be much greater. The program wrapped up in March 2018.

Through CRAFS, Fatawu, a mother of seven, learned how to make compost from grass, hay, mud, droppings, and ash—a method simple enough that she can teach others, so they can improve their harvests too. “Before I started using compost, I used to get just about 100 kg [220 lbs] of maize from the farm,” she says. “From the same piece of land, I got 10 bags last year, that’s about 1,000 kg [2,200 lb].” One bag of maize nets enough income to pay for a child’s schooling. With the excess, Fatawu can feed her family.

FROM THE GROUND UP

“Harvest is my favorite time of year,” says Christina Awini, a maize farmer. “It is when you can see your hard work pay off.”

In 2015, she attended a community meeting in Kpatua, Garu, where an Oxfam

staffer explained the benefits of compost and invited participants to join the composting project.

“I [had] the ambition to cultivate maize: one of my constraints was how to fertilize the maize,” Awini recalls. “When I heard of this [program], I was excited and thought, this is what will help me to cultivate my maize.”

Awini received a pickaxe, machete, shovel, hoe, wheelbarrow, and training. This year, her two-acre plot of maize yielded 10 220-pound bags. She primarily grows the crop to feed her family, and sells the rest to pay for her children’s school fees and to keep them healthy. She plans to keep five bags for herself and sell the other five, which will fetch about 300 Ghanaian cedis, or \$66.

Awini, 23, dropped out of school at a young age to get married. With hindsight, she says, she would have stayed in school. Now with her profits, she can ensure her children have more opportunities.

“When you’re poor, you don’t have enough to cover yourself, and you don’t have the means to get what you want,” she says. “What keeps me going is the fact that I want a future with hope. I hope that one day we leave poverty behind.”

STOVES—THE BETTER OPTION

CRAFS has also outfitted homes with fuel-efficient stoves to reduce shea nut tree deforestation and reduce the risk of home fires. These stoves, made of clay, provide an alternative to open-fire cooking: They reduce harmful smoke in the home and allow for more safe and efficient cooking.

Poakurugu Karim, 34, received one such energy-conserving stove, and it has greatly improved her life. "If we didn't have the energy-conserving stove last year, we could have cut down all the trees," she says. By preserving the shea trees, Karim can use their nuts to produce oil, which she uses to cook for her family. She can also make shea-butter products, which she sells at the market.

The stoves don't just save trees, they save homes and people. Karim can point to at least two homes that went up in flames from open-fire cooking. "I have something on the fire," she says, gestur-

ing at the stove, "but the fire is confined; the wind cannot blow the flames onto my roof and set my house on fire."

Karim notes: "If we had had the training earlier, the fire that happened in those two houses wouldn't have taken place."

WATER PUMPED BY THE SUN

Felicia Ayaawin, a seamstress, and her husband, Joseph, are the caretakers of another Oxfam initiative, a solar-powered well in Kpatua, where there is only one rainy season. In 2016, PAS-G installed a solar water pump to help farmers irrigate their vegetables. Though the 300 families residing in Kpatua are using the water mainly for household consumption and for taking care of their animals, its presence has been transformative.

Before, Ayaawin explains, people in Kpatua had to walk over half a mile to find water. Once there, they had to wait in line as others pumped water into their containers. Villagers who relied on other shallow sources rather than wait at the

well ran the risk of catching waterborne diseases, like cholera and typhoid.

"Getting water was a big problem," says Ayaawin. The new pump, she says, has made life a lot easier and healthier. Unlike her previous pregnancies, when she gave birth to her now-3-month-old daughter, procuring sanitary water for the delivery was not a struggle.

Because the water was far away, leaving for long periods of time made her home vulnerable to theft. At one point, when she was pregnant with one of her other children, 10 of her cattle were stolen. Now, they are always within sight. Joseph adds that their guinea fowl are laying more eggs as a result of having more water to drink.

"It has changed my economy," says Joseph. "Now my guinea fowl are many, I'm bringing up the young ones, and they will grow up. From next year I will not have problems with the children going to school."

Ayaawin adds that she spends less time concerned about her family's well-being. "In the months of May and June, there was real scarcity of water," she says. "Sometimes you'd have to look for other sources, like hand-dug wells. At that time, you'd have a lot of stomach upset."

Now, she says, she can bathe her children every day and make sure their things are clean. She says her children seem healthier and happier.

Oxfam hopes to use this example to prove the efficacy of solar-powered water pumps and lobby the Ghanaian government to adopt the system in communities where reliable sources of clean, safe water are in short supply.

"Oxfam's work has a great impact not only here, but in the entire community," says Joseph. "Apart from the water, there's the training in compost making. If you look at my farm, ... there's so much organic manure on it. Women can use the training to improve themselves."





THE POWER OF RADIO

Each district in northern Ghana encompasses at least 100 smaller communities. To raise awareness about some of the climate adaptation techniques that can help local farmers, we have paired with one radio station in each of the four districts where CRAFS has a presence. Together with local organizations, we have been training radio station staffers, who then design their own programs.

Weekly, their shows feature interviews or soundbites from farmers, providing information and inspiration. Because each CRAFS activity requires only raw materials found locally, families in remote areas can replicate these activities with materials from their own backyards, says Naana Nkansah Agyekum, Oxfam's media and communications officer in Ghana.

SCALING UP

The long-term goal of Oxfam's work in northern Ghana is for communities to become self-sufficient, so that after the project is phased out, community members can continue farming without outside guidance and can also train their neighbors to make small changes to improve their yields.

Throughout the three years we have been working in the test communities, we have involved local government—members of district assemblies—in our training sessions and discussions



about how communities can do more, so those officials can see the projects in action and use the evidence to scale up the activities. Agyekum reports that there have already been positive strides in this direction as some of the lessons learned from CRAFS activities have been incorporated into district planning.

A CLOSER LOOK

Learn more about how solar power in Kpatua is also helping students improve their academic performance. With light, they can now study at night: oxf.am/closeup-solar.

OPPOSITE: Since participating in compost-making training, Alima Fatawu, a farmer in northern Ghana, has improved her harvest, enabling her to pay her children's school fees.

THIS PAGE, TOP: Joseph Ayaawin takes care of the solar-powered water pump that Oxfam and local partner PAS-G installed in Kpatua to help farmers endure dry seasons.

THIS PAGE, BOTTOM: Felicia Ayaawin bathes her 3-month-old with water collected from the new pump. She says it has made her life much easier.

ALL PHOTOS: *Nana Kofi Acquah/Oxfam*



OXFAM AMERICA
226 CAUSEWAY STREET, 5TH FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02114-2206

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OXFAM
AMERICA

© 2018 Oxfam America Inc. All rights reserved. *Oxfam* is a trademark of Oxfam America Inc., and the Oxfam logo is a registered trademark of Stichting Oxfam International. None of the trademarks may be used without permission of the owner. Oxfam employees are represented by UNITEHERE, Local 33 (Boston), and Service Employees International Union, Local 500 (Washington, DC).

♻️ Printed on 30 percent postconsumer recycled paper. 1802024

Oxfam America respects the privacy of its supporters. We have developed a rigorous privacy policy that reflects that respect. Periodically, Oxfam makes the names of its supporters available to other organizations working for social change. If you would like us to exclude your name from that process, we would be more than happy to honor your wishes. If you have not already done so, please write to Oxfam America, List Preference Service, 226 Causeway Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02114-2206, and be sure to include your name and address. Or, email donorinfo@oxfamamerica.org or call (800) 776-9326 and ask for the List Preference Service Desk. You may read our complete privacy policy online at oxfamamerica.org or we can mail our privacy policy to you at your request.

PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

As an Oxfam Partner, your monthly gift ensures that we have steady income. That means when a disaster strikes, Oxfam has the resources to respond quickly and effectively without cutting support to other people working to overcome poverty.

For as little as \$15 a month, you can join our community of Oxfam Partners and help create lasting change. Use the enclosed envelope or make your gift at oxfamamerica.org/partners.

Christina Awini, a farmer in Tamalug, Ghana, who participates in Oxfam's Climate Resilient Agriculture and Food Systems program, collects water from a well. Read more about Awini on page 10.

Nana Kofi Acquah/Oxfam

