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What's New at EPN

The month of July was a busy one at End Poverty Now. We are currently working on the infrastructure for September – we are filling new positions, redesigning, and thinking big for the next year!

Within this falls redesigning EPN materials: Our Development Philosophy, Projects Guide, Chapter Guide, Sponsorship Package, Curriculum, and many other important organizational packages have been re-worked for the coming year.

With this, we encourage your school to consider starting an EPN chapter and/or implementing our curriculum, "Your Classroom, Your World: Poverty 101". There are two curriculums in place (for middle school in addition to high school). These lesson plans engage youth on international issues, poverty alleviation techniques and how your school can become involved in the global movement to End Poverty Now. Email schooloutreach@endpovertynow.ca for more information. We are going to launch the Curriculum this September 2009.

In addition to the above and our continued programming (podcasts, newsletters, the journal, fundraising, etc), EPN's work with the Rwanda Village Concept Project continues. Sarah Wolfe, EPN's intern in Butare is doing amazing work on the project site and her support is greatly appreciated. With her support, EPN will be sending the final instalment for this project. With this final contribution, the project will make its way to sustainability. Also, End Poverty Now is working in conjunction with the International Association for Transformation on a Backyard Gardening Concept in the Philippines.

As the staff at EPN, we sincerely hope that you continue to benefit from our many initiatives including this newsletter. Also, we encourage you to participate in our efforts. It is with your support that we can work together to benefit communities in Canada and abroad.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Sault
Executive Director

Our Mission

End Poverty Now is an organization that is dedicated to the long-term battle against abject poverty. End Poverty Now represents a group of dedicated individuals, mainly students, who want to make a difference in the world through working to address the causes and relieve the effects of poverty. For more information on how to get involved with End Poverty Now, check out our website at www.endpovertynow.ca.

To contribute to the production of the newsletter, e-mail

newsletter@endpovertynow.ca.



Poverty in the News by Valerie Bello

Many stories were posted this month on the [Poverty in the News Twitter](#) page such as: [Anti-poverty protests sweep South Africa](#) July 24th, [Poverty a factor linked to high native jail rates: StatsCan](#) July 24th, [Poverty drives Iraq organ trade](#) July 20th and [50% Indians living below poverty line: Govt panel](#) July 3rd. However, I would like to focus on two of the latest stories that caught my attention.

The first, posted on July 25th, is that of the video entitled "[Can Edible Bugs Solve World Hunger?](#)" which I found on the [UN Dispatch website](#). This video, showcases Mark Dennis, founder of [Insects are Food](#), and discusses the benefits of entomophagy, the practice of eating insects - including arachnids (tarantulas) and myriapods (centipedes). According to their website one of the advantages of entomophagy is that "insects reproduce at a much quicker rate than cattle, are much easier to raise and need far less living space and are able to feed off of much less feed than traditional livestock require". Nevertheless, although entomophagy might be beneficial in some parts of the world, arid/desert regions where hunger and poverty are rampant would obviously not benefit from this practice. Still, I think it would be interesting to try...let me know if you have tried it or visit their website for succulent recipes!

As for our second story, posted on July 26th, it is one which deals with corporate social responsibility, a theme very close to my heart. Indeed, it is about [North South Travel](#), a travel agency which provides travelers with airfare while raising money to fight poverty. According to their website "all net profits earned by ticket sales are held by the Trust and paid out in grants twice a year" to several charities and groups including [Children of the Andes](#) and [AfriKids](#). So, next time you are planning a trip, instead of going to websites such as Expedia, Orbitz or Travelocity, remember that there is an alternative: North South Travel.

For any comments, questions, or suggestions, please feel free to e-mail me at povertyinthenews@endpovertynow.ca or send me a direct message via Twitter at www.twitter.com/epnnews.

Valerie Bello
Poverty in the News Officer
povertyinthenews@endpovertynow.ca

Check out our Poverty in the News section on Twitter where our dear Valerie posts links on the latest poverty related news!

Link: <https://twitter.com/epnnews>

From the grassroots: Small Light in a Dark Alley

A letter from Sky Bellefleur, Director of Projet Autochtone Quebec

We are an ancient people. The North American continent is known to all our Nations as Turtle Island. People say: "where did you come from?" We came from here. We have always been here. This is home. Only 100 years ago, life in this city was quite different for us all. For most Native and Inuit, we lived off the land. For many Aboriginal persons, we were not considered people 100 years ago. Many ideas of colonialism, racism, and slavery were brought to Turtle Island from Europe and other lands, and were instituted here, imposed upon our Great-grandparents. We have been fighting that kind of injustice for 500 years now.



Small Light in a Dark Alley (continuation)

II

In modern times, drugs and alcohol have become the new challenge to the family structure of the Native person. Residential schools were an attack in the 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's, and were sadly quite effective in the destruction of Native family dynamics as well as Indian and Inuit culture in North America. Native children were removed from their families by social workers and delivered into the hands of church and state-run orphanage schools, in which the children's hair was cut, they were beaten if they spoke their Aboriginal languages. They were often physically and sexually abused, and many were even killed.



The sad effect of this kind of cultural genocide was that the ones who survived were turned back onto the reserves and northern communities at 18, often with no cultural connection to the parents they grew up without. They could sometimes not even communicate, and so the link was broken wherein culture, stories, traditions, wisdom and affection could be transmitted in any kind of normal fashion and with any kind of positive impact.

Many of the parents had taken to drinking in order to medicate and quell broken hearts, as many lost all of their children to these social workers. Many of the parents were loving and healthy, just not living in the standard deemed appropriate by the powers that be. In many cases, there was no justification for the removal of the children. It was all part of a larger plan, to extinguish the Indian.

Jump to 2009, the streets of any major Canadian city. The heart of Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax. A large percentage of homeless and addicted youth and indeed, every age group, is First Nations and Inuit, Metis or of mixed, Aboriginal ancestry. We see the rootless, broken, lost, addicted, alcoholic with little connection to Traditions or Spiritual practices, cultural awareness, and in many cases, even the language has disappeared from their lives. These persons are the clientele of Projets Autochtones du Quebec. We are otherwise known as PAQ. We offer refuge, showers, warm blankets, coffee, a light meal, and a kind of simple, homey atmosphere you might find on the reserve, at your auntie's house.

The people who work there are down-to-earth, practical and in most cases, have a lot of experience with the street, themselves, as a worker or in some cases, having once been on the streets themselves, and know what it's like. The facilities are simple, kept clean by the users, and the food, while simple, is always there, along with a listening ear, compassion and kindness, something in short supply in the world in which the homeless live.

Many government officials scratch their heads, seeking some final solution to the homeless problem. I agree, it is a difficult one. My favourite debate is: by providing shelters, are we enabling irresponsible behaviour, and therefore perpetuating the problem? I think we are. I think the old model for homeless intervention is outmoded, ineffective and needs to be thrown out and entirely revamped.

I won't say I have all the answers. I feel strongly, I know what does not work, and therefore I think I know a few things which MIGHT work better! Long-term, supervised housing, government funded, with programs built in, extensive counselling and therapy, detox, medical facilities, re-training, job-readiness, computers, schooling. Why not? We are throwing taxpayers' money in a black hole now and it is not working.

I could go on. I won't, I promise, hahah! It's just that I am frustrated as year after year, the problem continues, everybody wants to help, but the ones who COULD help, do nothing. Ok, I guess I'm done. But think about it. We could do more. We could make a difference. Not just a handout. A real solution. A radical jump forward. We should try.

Meanwhile, let's be kind and compassionate, until we can do more. Thank you.

Meegwetch.
Sky Bellefleur, PAQ



The eradication of poverty starts with the elimination of illiteracy

By Deni Abdullahi

As the West struggles to uplift public schools to the pedestal of the private ones, there has been an increase in the number of illiterate individuals in the Third World. The lack of literate individuals in developing countries has been a major concern for many government officials from various areas in the world. UNESCO, the United Nation's sector for education, science and culture, has for long been fighting the issue of illiteracy across impoverished areas.

To learn more about the issue of education in developing countries, visit:

- UNESCO: www.unesco.org
- IRA: www.reading.org

Nine years ago, the average literacy rate for women was 52% and 68.9% for men in Sub-Saharan Africa. These numbers are drastically increasing as Africa's population rises and leaves a generation lacking proper schooling yet alone one who is able to predominantly read and write.

For example, the republic of Congo, like most countries in the continent, is struggling with national turmoil and a government regime that is unable to establish sustainable education. It is of no surprise that the country is affected by an alarming literacy rate which holds natives back from potential social and economic progression. This epidemic most often affects women more than men; within the one in three natives that are illiterate, 44% are women versus 19% that are men. This is generally the case in other African nations, in which there is gender disparity within the issue that is education.

Many view literacy as the key to raise the standard of living in developing countries and some have gone as far as arguing that battling illiteracy would be the only way of eradicating poverty. Illiteracy and poverty are strongly correlated for illiteracy is a root cause behind poverty. Economic hardship can only be fought through major investors who are willing to provide capital to local businesses and this is an unattainable notion for countries in which its people lack basic literacy skills thus making them inefficient workers.

School enrolment is one of the lowest in the world in Africa and today, one in five adult is illiterate. Experts believe that an emphasis on the importance of education from the state will assist in finding solutions to current matters in question. Literacy will help expose communities to solutions towards issues such as human rights, proper health care, economic development and even governmental stability. In order for progression to function at its highest speed, government officials will need to make education accessible for all, thus reducing the cost of schooling, the pricing of books and making proper educational institutes available to even residents living in rural areas. It is no understatement that education serves as the pivotal role towards a brighter world.

An organization that helps: The International Reading Association (IRA)

IRA, is a nonprofit organization which serves the purpose of promoting literacy on an international scale. With over 80, 000 members across the globe, the association supports teachers and volunteers with necessary resources to provide citizens from various countries the necessary reading skills to develop and progress in their local regions.

References:

DDV International. **The Need for Consciousness-raising Literacy in the Democratic Republic of Congo**, Germany, 2009. Link: http://www.iiz-dvv.de/index.php?article_id=732&clang=1.

UNESCO. **Literacy in Africa**, 2009. Link: www.unesco.org



Sunrise Community Link by Maxime Rejouis

Our featured organization this month: Sunrise Community Link, Calgary.

Sunrise Community Link, located at 701 Erin Woods Lane SE, was established in 2000 to help alleviate social problems facing Calgary's east side community. With five volunteers and four staff members, Sunrise provides food hampers, housing, clothing, furniture, and access to emergency social services. Additionally, their advocacy program helps remove barriers to community resources and agencies. Finally, Sunrise helps those dealing with issues such as eviction notices, rental disputes, child welfare and legal matters.

Sunrise Community Link also promotes economic development and helps community members by providing them with the skills and tools required to have a positive impact on their community. For example, they give people access to basic resources such as employment search programs, fax machines, and photocopiers. Tracy Livingston, a staff member at Sunrise Community Link, has seen people go from living under the stairs at their old location to having full time jobs and volunteering for Sunrise Community Link. Tracy, who is originally from Prince Edward Island, said, "I'm very happy that I ended up in Calgary and have been able to contribute something positive to those who need it. To come to such a rich province and to see so much poverty it's quite shocking."

A big Thank You to people like Tracey!

For more information on the organization:

Sunrise Community Link
2nd Floor, 3509 - 17 Avenue S.E.
Calgary, Alberta
T2A 0R5
www.sunriselink.org

The Nation 15th Anniversary Gala by Sky Bellefleur, PAQ

I would like to welcome all who hear my voice on this night, to stand with me for a moment. I would like you to imagine a world where the dollar is the highest power and none can stand against it. Where nobody is higher than those who make decisions based on how many dollars will come. Imagine a world where a river has no value, and is drained to make way for the power of the dollar. Imagine a world where a lake is only an obstacle to progress, and where all the flourishing life within it, will be made to disappear as if it never was...to make room for progress, in the face of the almighty dollar. Imagine a world where there are no rivers to fish, and no lakes to paddle. Imagine a world where there is no more forest, and no place to hunt. Imagine a world where the trees in that forest are not respected, except for selling by the board foot for profit.

Without the rivers, where will the fish go? Without the lakes, how will beavers continue to live, frogs, minnows...where will the ducks land, and where will they return to in spring? Without the forest, where will the animals live? The moose, the deer, and the silent fox? Where will we go to find those special plants, known to only a few, which heal our bodies and our Spirits? And where will we go when we need a vision? Solitude? The peace only green spaces can give to us?

Now imagine a world where all of these things are threatened every day, and there is no one to speak out against it. Fifteen years ago a few brave souls came together with an idea. With courage, audacity, and determination, they forged that very voice, that tonight we celebrate.

Our ancestors trapped those forests and fished those rivers. If we look carefully back through time we can see the chapped hands of a trapper, setting his snares in the bitter cold to feed his family, hoping for a little extra to pay the store. Our hands are smooth as we type these words. But our words have power and we honour him in this way. We tell his story.

The Nation remembers him, The Nation tells his story and the story of the rivers, of the lakes and of the forest. The Nation has a voice that has been heard for 15 years. It must continue to be heard. I honour that Voice tonight. Well done, and never stop. Never be silent!

Our Ancestors expect us to speak out. The generation of those young ones to come expects us to. If we do not speak out, who will? I salute the Nation for 15 years of courage! Aho!



What has Jennifer been up to?

By Laura Nhem

You probably don't know this, but our Executive Director, Jennifer Sault, has been in India since the beginning of summer. And although she has continuously been in touch with us and made sure End Poverty Now is doing well, she is hours away and doing her own thing over there! So, what has she been up to? Well, no one know exactly but we know she has been helping out Asha, an organization dedicated to helping people that live in the slums of Delhi and the surrounding areas.

Since we want you to know more about this organization, here is there latest Press Note followed by some of there success stories.

ASHA'S PRESS RELEASE

For the first time in India's history, 135 children from our city's most impoverished slums have found a place at one of the highest institutions of learning in India – Delhi University. Another 41 slum students will be pursuing degree courses at highly reputed private colleges. Asha's commitment to these students has made this extraordinary feat possible.



In order to celebrate this unprecedented achievement Asha is holding an event on the evening of Saturday 8th August, with the Honourable Home Minister, Shri P Chidambaram serving as the chief guest. Mr Jack van Ham, the General Director of the respected development agency ICCO, will be presiding over the ceremony. Other honoured guest will include Professor Deepak Pental, the Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, and David Hempton, the Alonzo L McDonald Professor at Harvard University.

Never before has an organised effort been made to provide educational opportunities to slum students on such a large scale. With Asha's support, these students overcame the debilitating financial and social constraints of slum life. Moreover, many of these college bound students are girls - regularly marginalised in such settings – which demonstrates Asha's dedication to gender equality. This is just the beginning of a new journey for these inspirational forerunners, and Asha firmly believes many others will follow in their footsteps.

Asha is a community health and development society that works with over 300,000 people in nearly 50 slums colonies of New Delhi. Founded by Dr. Kiran Martin in 1988, Asha's multi-sectoral approach focuses on five main areas: education, healthcare, financial inclusion, women's empowerment, and environmental improvement. Through its initiatives, Asha is providing slum dwellers with the tools necessary to break out of their cycles of poverty and transform their lives. In 2002 Dr. Martin was awarded the Padma Shri, one of India's highest civilian awards, by the President of India for her achievements in the field of community service.



What has Jennifer been up to? (continuation)

How Asha makes a difference



- **Giving** children textbooks
- **Preparing** pupils for their high school exams
- **Listening** to their interests and **recognising** their abilities
- **Advising** them of career options
- **Arranging** visits to various universities and colleges
- **Guiding** students through the entire college application and admission process
- **Granting** scholarships
- **Covering** college tuition fees
- **Facilitating** access to bank loans
- **Preparing** them with workshops on studying techniques, stress management, and college life
- **Counseling** and **reassuring** parents who are reluctant to let their children finish school or pursue higher education
- **Providing** guidance and support to the students through their college years
- **Assisting** students in finding a job after graduation

Bina Kumari

Proving That She Is No Burden

Slum: Kalkaji,

College: Motilal Nehru College, Delhi University



Bina's life has been hard even by slum standards. Her father has been an alcoholic for many years and is unable to stay employed, and her mother works long hours to bring in what little money she can. Food is scarce, and her father is often violent. The combined effect of experiencing domestic abuse and feeling alienated from the community because of it made it difficult for Bina to concentrate on her studies. Most of her relatives were unconcerned, as they felt that educating girls was a waste of time.

When Asha stepped in, Bina received counseling from various members of the Asha staff; the academic support was coupled with mechanisms to cope with her father's situation at home during such a crucial academic year. Bina says of her final year at school, "Things took a complete turn for me that year, I felt like I had a new family that was behind me every step of the way." With appropriate guidance, Bina has been able to perform very well in her Class 12 National Board Examination. She has been accepted into the Bachelor of Arts Program at Delhi University, after which she intends to become a teacher. Bina is the first girl to have ever gone to college from her family. She has very high hopes for herself, and is determined to pull her family out of the poverty that she has lived in all her life.

"I want to become my family's strength, and not their weakness. Just because I am a girl does not mean that I will always be a burden on my family. I will show them that I too, can help change our lives for the better."



What has Jennifer been up to? (continuation)

K r i s h n a K u m a r

Succeeding After His Home Was Destroyed

Slum: Savda Gevra

College: Atma Ram College, Delhi University



Krishna's motivation to succeed academically has endured through seemingly insurmountable obstacles. He faced not only enormous financial constraints and family pressures, but also the demolition of his slum colony, Thokar No. 8, in April 2006 two months before his crucial Class 10 Board examinations. Krishna and his family were forcefully evicted from their home as bulldozers attacked the community from all sides. Without having time to gather their belongings, the family was driven onto the streets. It was a year before they were able to resettle in a different slum.

Despite these circumstances, Krishna received an outstanding score on his Board examinations. Unfortunately, because of his family's desperate condition, he was not able to attend school, instead working several part-time jobs. To keep up with his schoolwork, Krishna tutored young children without pay and studied each night after his family had gone to sleep. Striking the balance between school and work was a constant struggle for Krishna; financial circumstances forced him to continue working even during his Class 12 National Board Examination. The numerous setbacks Krishna faced in his last two years of school left him on the verge of relinquishing his dream of one day completing a postgraduate degree in chemistry. He said, "Had Asha not helped me during my last two years of school, I would have certainly discontinued my studies in order to work, as it seemed like the natural thing to do."

A strong science student, Krishna is excited about starting his Bachelors of Science degree in Industrial Chemistry at Delhi University. He will also be working on his English speaking and writing skills in order to apply for competitive jobs after he graduates. Asha's support has made Krishna's aspiration a reality, and he is ready to enter the next phase of his life with confidence and enthusiasm.

"I will definitely graduate... the most important thing is how I use my mind; where I live or what I wear everyday does not matter."

To learn more Asha, you can visit there website at www.asha-india.org.

My Poverty Plan Campaign

Contribute to EPN's **My Poverty Plan** campaign! Send in a short video (approximately 1 minute) on how you think poverty can be alleviated.

Contact alternativemedia@endpovertynow.ca for more information.



Book and Movie Suggestions

A Thousand Splendid Suns (book)

Khaled Hosseini, 2007

As the follow up to his critically acclaimed book *The Kite Runner*, Hosseini tells the story of two women living in war-torn Kabul. From the cultural and religious backlashes following Afghanistan's revolution and the rise of the Taliban, families of Mariam and Laila face horrific living conditions and both women are forced out of their country, where they must find new memories, leaving behind their home and loved ones.

Suggested by Deni Abdullahi

The Story of My Experiments with Truth (book)

Ghandi, 1983

Ghandi's life is an inspirational story. Framed as a collection of stories with his confrontations with different aspects of life, it gives a recollection of Ghandiji's life. He writes with special attention to how he has developed as a person, his mistakes, his successes and gives inspirational suggestions and thoughts for how we each can improve the ways we live to come closer to "truth". It is a great read!

Suggested by Jennifer Sault

A Long Walk to Freedom (book)

Nelson Mandela, 1995

The New York Times summed up very well, "The Nelson Mandela who emerges from his memoir...is considerably more human than the icon of legend." Nelson Mandela's life story is one well worth reading. He was born in rural South Africa during a time of colonialism and apartheid and his refusal to bow under extraordinary circumstances went on to change the world. This inspirational work is worth our recommendation.

Suggested by Jennifer Sault

The Voice of Hope (book)

Alan Clements, 2008

This book is a collection of interviews with Aung San Suu Kyi conducted by Alan Clements during his time in Burma. Aung San Suu Kyi is the inspirational leader of the Burmese Democracy Movement and, still currently under house arrest, stands as a strong symbol for the continued hope the Burmese hold for their future. Patient, kind, strong and without fear, Aung San faces life with a smile and hope. She speaks eloquently on the challenges the Burmese have and continue to face and holds strong hope for the future.

Suggested by Jennifer Sault

YOU CAN ALSO FIND LINKS TO INTERESTING THINGS ON OUR [TWITTER PAGE](#) : links to book or documentary reviews and to short movies for example. Go take a look!



How YOU can contribute to the newsletter!!!

End Poverty Now is always looking for articles to include in our monthly newsletters. We are looking for articles of about 1000 words long. It can be a story, an informational article, the profile of an organization or a person, etc. The possibilities for writers are very broad. If you are interested in writing an article for us or having something you already wrote published, the deadline for submitting your subject is the 1st of every month and the article should be sent by the 20th.

Also, there is a new **Book and Movie Suggestion** section of the newsletter. Therefore, if you have read a book or seen a movie or documentary that talks about a poverty related issue and want to recommend it, anyone can send us a short description (about 50 words) of what it is about. Don't forget to include the title, the name of the author, director and/or producer and the year it was released.

We are currently looking for volunteers who are willing to contribute regularly to the newsletter. Here are the positions that need to be filled:

- **In the Spotlight** section : The volunteer will need to write an article of about 300 words monthly about a person that is involved in the community. He/she will be responsible for doing the research and contacting the person.
- **Put this in your agenda** section : The volunteer will be responsible for finding different events (conferences, fund raising events, etc.) that are taking place across Canada so we can post in our newsletter. He/she will simply need to mention the name of the event, there website, the city and the date.
- **Editing:** The volunteer will take care of editing articles and/or various text.

Please contact us at newsletter@endpovertynow.ca for more information.

End Poverty Now is hiring!

Public Relations

The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for establishing the Corporation's communications and marketing strategies with the local community and the public at large. This will enhance the EPN's participation and position within the community by building and maintaining sustainable relations with the public, government agencies, news media, and other affected parties. This will also include synchronizing the design of EPN materials.

Webmaster

This officer will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of End Poverty Now's website. Experience in html and web design is not necessary, but is an asset. There will be opportunities for graphic design and other additions to the website as well.

Please email your resume, a brief description of intent, and your position of interest to apply@endpovertynow.ca.

Special thanks

Many thanks go to the EPN team who have been of great help in making this newsletter!

Thank you to our writers, to Sky Bellefleur from PAQ and our editor Nina McCurdy.

Laura Nhem, Newsletter Officer