

The Hunger Project

Report of the Office of the Global Board Chair

1. Executive Summary

Since the time of our last meeting, The Hunger Project (THP) has been undergoing a period of transition. Since the resignation of Jill Lester, effective February 28, 2010, a leading specialist non-profit search firm, Isaacson Miller, has launched the search for a new President and CEO. The Office of the Global Board Chair, comprising Steve Sherwood and Sheree Stomberg, has been working closely with the Leadership Team at THP's Global Office to ensure a smooth transition period. Åsa Skögestrom Feldt, Country Director of THP-Sweden, has joined the Leadership Team to ensure Partner Country representation.

Despite this challenging transition time and the lingering effects of the global financial downturn, the work of THP in ending hunger and poverty around the world has continued, unabated. The establishment of new partnerships with institutional and governmental funders within our Program Countries continues to be an area of great achievement. The most significant highlight of the period comes from Uganda: during a visit to Mpigi Epicenter in February, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda pledged to provide financial support in the amount of US\$10 million over five years for THP-Uganda to work in partnership with the National Planning Authority to scale up its Epicenter Strategy. While this agreement has yet to be formalized, such a recognition of our work is indeed an exciting precedent that may help convince other African governments to emulate the example by involving THP in their national planning commission, or equivalent body dealing with issues of hunger and poverty.

In addition, the Office of the Global Board Chair (Steve Sherwood and Sheree Stomberg) held a successful meeting with the new president of the Robertson Foundation regarding our scale-up demonstration in Ghana.

During the period, the 2010 budget and the 2009 Consolidated Audit were completed. A draft is ready for Audit Committee review and acceptance at the May Board Meeting.

Our global fundraising totaled at \$11.72 million for the year 2009. Overall, this represents a 20.5% drop in funding from 2008. First quarter results are also significantly less than the same time in 2008, due almost entirely to the fact that we came into 2010 with \$1.05 million less already raised for the new year. One of our biggest and most important challenges is to revitalize and expand unrestricted funding, particularly in the United States. As we begin to establish larger designated funding agreements, this puts a demand on us for stronger core capabilities in advocacy, policy analysis, program monitoring and evaluation that must largely be funded with unrestricted funds. In order to address these issues, the US fundraising team held a set of strategy meetings during the first quarter, including with Partner Country representatives to look at best

practices. Included in the recommendations for moving forward is to hold a reenergized Fall Event in the United States.

THP has continued playing a leadership role in policy discussions to fulfill the strong G8 commitment to food security, particularly as it relates to gender. During this period, THP also participated in policy discussions on reforming overall U.S. Development Policy, in the Global Health Initiative and the Global Education Campaign.

Moreover, THP's exposure was significantly broadened during the period, which was marked by unprecedented media coverage around the world, in part due to the success of the book *The Power of Half* by the THP investor and father-daughter team of Kevin and Hannah Salwen. In addition, staff members received numerous awards and accolades and took a number of opportunities to present our work in various forums.

2. Highlights of Achievements

A. Programs

The establishment of new partnerships with institutional and governmental funding sources within our Program Countries continues to be an area of great achievement. In addition to the aforementioned declaration by President Museveni, THP-Malawi was recently informed of an accepted proposal for US\$90,000 from the National AIDS Commission (NAC) for Malawi to support HIV/AIDS work beginning February 2010 for a one-year period in our seven epicenters. Following on their 2009 partnership, THP-India and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) expanded their collaboration to further build the capacities of elected women leaders around the issue of climate change in Maharashtra and Uttarakhand. In late March, THP-India also signed a grant agreement with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for a US\$60,000 grant to support our program in the state of Bihar, one of India's poorest states and the first state to implement a 50-percent reservation for women panchayat leaders.

The grant of US\$1.275 million, from a partnership with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) to carry out food security work within our Epicenter Strategy, has already enabled THP-Burkina Faso to generate significant results, including training 3,100 food producers in new techniques; rebuilding, expanding or building 31 food banks; and establishing 31 village shops to make farming inputs available at the village level.

Among the most exciting work we are doing in Africa is the Scale-up Program in Ghana. There, over the last four years, THP-Ghana has succeeded in building eight epicenters per year since 2007 and is expected to produce 36 epicenters by the end of the Robertson grant in June 2011. Monitoring teams from the Foundation are again expected to visit the Ghana in August 2010.

In April, the new President of the Robertson Foundation met with the Office of the Global Board Chair and THP senior staff. We received a strong affirmation that the foundation has been pleased with the results of their significant investment in our programs, and they invited THP to submit a new proposal for the years beyond the current grant period that will be required to bring all 36 epicenters to self-reliance.

In India, THP completed a major United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-funded campaign to educate impoverished rural people about India's Right to Information Act, and what it can mean for improving lives and overcoming corruption.

In Bangladesh, THP's Youth Ending Hunger (YEH) program conducted two trainings of trainers and 80 training courses, in which 2,400 youth participated. The youth activists have already launched 50 social action projects carrying out campaigns in their communities. This work was undertaken in partnership with The British Council.

In Mexico, our first government partnership in Zacatecas, with SEDESOL (the Secretary of Social Development), met its targets of building rural women's enterprises that met government standards for future support. We will continue to provide follow-up support with government funds this year for those enterprises.

B. Finance and Administration

We have, since October, launched and successfully completed two major annual priorities, which required the full participation of all Program Countries: the 2010 budget and the 2009 Consolidated Audit. A draft is ready for Audit Committee review and acceptance in time for the May Board Meeting.

In addition, after a lengthy and complex conversion, we have nearly completed the "clean-up" of our database, and we have begun using automated features related to monthly pledge reminders and acknowledgements, which will streamline our work tremendously. The Global Office also smoothly upgraded to Office 2007.

C. Fundraising

In 2009, THP raised \$11.72 million, of which \$6.67 million was from the US and \$5.04 million was from the Partner Countries (PCs): Australia, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (UK), Canada, Japan and New Zealand. Overall, this represents a 20.5% drop in funding from 2008. As a reference point, according to the Association of Fundraising Professionals, 46% of charities raised less in 2009 than in 2008, and 43% reported raising more.

The biggest challenges facing the US fundraising team in 2010 are: reversing the downward trend of the last couple years while still dealing with the continuing effects of the recession, acquiring brand new investors and expanding our fundraising capacity.

Our three largest PCs – Australia, the Netherlands and Sweden – provided 81% of the total funds raised in all of the PCs in 2009. It is likely they will continue in this strong position in 2010.

Each PC and the US have set a fundraising target for the year. These targets are somewhat aspirational, meaning they go beyond what we are certain we can raise. The global fundraising target for 2010 is \$13,586,300. In addition, our finance department has created a fundraising projection for each country, which is a more conservative number based, in part, on target fulfillment rates in recent years. The total global projection for 2010 is \$11,915,000 (in line with a global revenue budget of \$11,900,000).

In order to address these issues, the US fundraising team held a set of strategy meetings during the first quarter, including with Partner Country representatives to look at best practices. Included in the recommendations for moving forward is to hold a Fall Event in the United States to galvanize and reinvigorate the constituency, with the possibility of having a portion of that event program packaged to be held as separate events in various cities. The fundraisers are looking to the rest of 2010 with a spirit of optimism, in spite of the continuing challenges the global economy presents.

D. Impact Assessment

THP is committed to creating a fully integrated program planning, budgeting and reporting system based on our Theory of Change.¹ There are three major phases in this project. The first phase, to develop Logical Frameworks (logframes) for all programs with simple output indicators, and align budgeting to this framework, was completed by the time of the last Board meeting. The second phase, to develop outcome and impact indicators consistent with the logframes, was launched during this period, in partnership with a highly regarded consulting group, ActKnowledge. In addition to this work, several independent impact assessments are underway, and we participate in the InterAction Evaluation Working Group as a way to ensure we stay connected to the cutting-edge conversations in this arena.

E. Strategy and Advocacy

The rapidly changing development environment calls for an update of our Strategic Direction document. A broad, participatory, global set of consultations was to have been launched during this period; however it has been put on hold pending the CEO transition.

In all our countries, we are seeking (a) to gain direct influence with governmental and multilateral policymakers; and (b) to influence the voice of civil society coalitions, as these carry more weight than any individual organization. THP has continued playing a leadership role in policy discussions to fulfill the strong G8 commitment to food security, particularly as it relates to gender. During this period, THP also participated in policy discussions on reforming overall U.S. Development Policy, in the Global Health Initiative and the Global Education Campaign.

F. Media and Communications

The Media and Communications Unit, which now resides within the Fundraising Department, continues to make great strides in introducing our work to a wider audience, particularly online through our public website and expanded social media campaigns. This has resulted in significant funds raised from people who are new to THP. For the year 2009, total new investment from the public website was: \$154,163 from 611 new investors. The team also works to keep our current investor base engaged through a wide variety of platforms – whether through Facebook, the website, Twitter, publications or new online videos. During the period, THP received unprecedented coverage in the media, in large part due to the book *The Power of Half* by THP investors Kevin and Hannah Salwen.

¹ THP's Theory of Change is that clusters of rural villages can achieve sustainable progress on the Millennium Development Goals through social mobilization for self-reliance, empowering women as key change agents and forging an effective partnership between the people and grassroots-level government.

3. Other Global Items

Executive Search

As mentioned, leading specialist non-profit search firm, Isaacson Miller, has been retained to launch the search for a new President and CEO. The process is running smoothly. All of THP's constituents, including the Global Board, Partner Country Advisory Council, Partner and Program Country Directors and staff at all levels, provided input into the search memo, which has been publicized by the search firm and is posted on our website. A strong pool of candidates has already begun to emerge for review by the Governance, Nominating and Human Resources Committee of the Global Board.

Partner Country Advisory Council

On January 21, the first Partner Country Advisory Council (PCAC) meeting of 2010 was held. It covered the 2010 budget and fundraising plans, a discussion of the Code of Conduct and how often meetings of the PCAC should be held. The PCAC also met on March 1 regarding the executive transition.

Building Our Team

New additions to our global team include: on the Dutch team, a new Board Chair, Caroline Wouters, and a new Country Director, Evelijne Bruning; in the UK, a new Country Director, Tim Holder; in Australia, a new Chief Operations Officer, Elizabeth Sanderson; in Sweden, Ylva Munkhammar, who will concentrate on institutional funding, investor administration, and Stockholm-specific projects; and in New Zealand, a new Communications and Fundraising Coordinator, Charlotte Reynolds.

In the previous report to the Global Board, it was mentioned that a search firm was engaged to hire a Director of Development. Though someone was brought on for the position in mid-January, after a short period, it was determined that it was not a good fit and that person departed in early March. Lee Stuart, Director of Institutional and International Fundraising, also left THP during the period to take up a leadership role as Executive Director of New Yorkers for Parks. In the interim, Joanna Ryder, Lead US Fundraiser and Regional Director for US Funding, has agreed to take over the management of the department, which includes individual fundraising, institutional fundraising, Partner Country coordination, and media and communications. Joanna now sits on the Leadership Team.

Dr. Fitigu Tadesse will stay on board prior to his retirement as Vice President for Africa until a replacement can be found for his position. The Office of the Global Board Chair is in conversation with the Leadership Team to determine the best way to structure senior staff support of our programs, and in doing so, the team has sought out the perspectives of program staff throughout the organization.

For our search for a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Program Officer, we received applications from many very well qualified candidates; however it was decided that we would be best served during this next developmental phase by engaging the external expertise of

consultants. A team has been hired with extensive experience in M&E for bottom-up development.

Staff Meetings

Immediately following the Fall Event weekend in October 2009, THP's Global Staff met, with approximately 55 staff members in attendance. The three-day meeting included a number of presentations from a variety of global staff members. Topics discussed included: an overview of our Strategic Direction; partnership; impact assessment; advocacy; strategic planning going forward; our global culture; the 2009-10 budget and other financial management items; global communications; global fundraising and intellectual property. In addition, we named our intranet – "TIP" (which is short for The Intranet Project) – and throughout the course of the meetings it became clear that the intranet will play an increasingly important role in the way we communicate and achieve our work as a global team.

In addition, to help Global Office staff establish a way forward during the transition period, the Global Office staff team came together for a one-day workshop on March 11. The workshop was co-led by Country Directors Badiul Majumdar and Lorena Vazquez, and was launched by Sheree Stomberg, of the Office of the Board Chair. Charlie Deull participated in the session as Secretary to the Global Board. Much of the workshop involved a frank and engaging discussion about how we can work most effectively as one team. After creating a list of such issues, Global Office staff agreed to divide into three working groups: Organizational Culture and Professional Standards, Future Directions/Messaging, and Structural Issues (particularly around ways to facilitate information sharing). The working groups have reported back with solid recommendations about how to move forward, a number of which have already been implemented. Regular staff meetings are being held to keep one another informed of progress.

In addition, weekly Leadership Team meetings are being held with the Office of the Global Board Chair.

We have also launched in 2010 a series of staff brown-bag workshops at the Global Office. Each month one staff member delivers a presentation on an area related to her or his work. The aim is to facilitate cross-departmental information sharing and promote professional development.

Increasing Our Presence

The period was marked by unprecedented media coverage around the world, in part due to the success of the book *The Power of Half* by the THP investor and father-daughter team of Kevin and Hannah Salwen. In addition, staff members received numerous awards and accolades and took a number of opportunities to present our work in various fora.

Awards and Accolades

- Tarcila Rivera Zea, President of Chirapaq, our partner organization in Peru was awarded the Women's Order of Merit by Peru's Ministry of Women and Social Development in recognition of her work to assert and defend indigenous peoples and women's rights (March 2010).

- Iganga Rural Bank in Uganda was named the “Best SACCO of 2009” (SACCO is an acronym for Savings and Credit Cooperative) by the District Commercial Office of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry (February 2010).
- Kevin and Hannah Salwen’s book, *The Power of Half*, was released and the THP investors immediately embarked on a book tour around the country. Media coverage ensued on ABC World News with Diane Sawyer, CBS Sunday Morning News, Public Radio International, the New York Times, the Boston Global, Voice of America News, and more (February 2010).
- President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, made a bold endorsement of our work by publicly expressing his willingness to commit \$10 million to expanding our work in Uganda (January 2010). In April, THP-Uganda received a copy of the letter by which President Museveni has asked the treasury to pay the \$200,000 he also pledged to THP-Uganda for 2010.
- Award-winning journalist, Nicholas Kristof, mentioned THP in one of his columns, describing THP as “a New York City-based international development organization that has a good record of tackling global poverty.” Thousands of new people visited our public website as a result (January 2010).
- During National Farmers’ Day celebrations in Ghana, five rural partners from two THP-Ghana epicenters won various municipal and district-level awards (December 2009):
 - Comfort Amofa, who has participated in our VCAW, the Women's Empowerment Program (WEP), and agricultural training, won the "Best Plantain Farmer" award;
 - Margaret Dankwa, a member of Odumase-Wawase Epicenter's Food Security Committee, won the "Best Cocoyam Farmer" award;
 - Peter Omari Agyapong, Odumase-Wawase Epicenter's Vice Chairman and the "Nkosorhene" (Development Chief) of the community, won the "Best Yam Farmer" award;
 - Isaac Attah, a partner who has participated in various VCAWs and agricultural programs, won the "Overall Municipal Best Farmer" award; and
 - Comfort Twumwaa, a trainer of trainers (TOT) and WEP animator at the Adensua-Besease Epicenter, won the "Best Maize Farmer" Award.
- THP Global Board Member, Former President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique, joined the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Global Development Program as a program advisory panel member (December 2009).
- Margarita Ruiz, THP-Mexico staff member, was awarded the State of Chiapas’s State Prize for Youth for her community mobilization efforts (December 2009).
- Micaela Sanchez, THP-Mexico staff member, won the first prize in the category “Researchers or Academics Writing Stories of Indigenous Women” in a literacy contest on “Oral Stories of Indigenous Women” hosted by INMUJERES, National Women’s Institute for a story about one of THP’s partners in Chiapas (December 2009).

- Rita Sarin was nominated to the government's core group to evaluate the vision, mission and goal for the "National Mission for the Empowerment of Women" in India (December 2009).

Presentations and Meetings

- John Coonrod, Vice President for Strategy and Advocacy, represented THP at an International Women's Day reception at the White House, hosted by President Obama and his wife, Michelle. Earlier in the day, John consulted with White House officials on the gender components of their food security strategies (March 2010).
- Jill Lester spoke at a lunch of the American Australian Association at the New York offices of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, highlighting the important role of partnerships between the non-profit and corporate sectors (February 2010).
- Sriparna G. Chaudhuri of THP-India spoke at the National Dialogue on Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions in India on the importance of women's leadership in panchayats and creating an enabling environment for elected women representatives (February 2010).
- THP co-chaired with CARE a consultation at the US State Department on the US government's "Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review," with other NGO representatives and US State Department and USAID representatives in attendance. John Coonrod represented THP at the meeting (February 2010).
- Jill Lester attended the UNDP Roundtable on "Rethinking Human Development" in Washington, DC (January 2010).
- A Chinese delegation of 13 officials from the Poverty Alleviation and Resettlement office from provinces across China visited THP's Global Office for a 90-minute briefing on THP by John Coonrod (January 2010).
- Rita Sarin and Sriparna G. Chaudhuri of THP-India represented THP at a three-day United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) and UNIFEM conference in New Delhi on "Women Deepening Democracy: Transforming Politics for Gender Equality" (January 2010).
- John Coonrod held meetings with an NGO working group providing input to the State Department on "Building Blocks for Sustainable Development," and World Bank officials on our work in Bangladesh (January 2010).
- Jill Lester was interviewed by Lonnie Isabel, a journalism professor at the City University of New York who hosts a radio show, "Reporter's Notebook," which focused on hunger both in New York City and in the developing world (January 2010).
- John Coonrod attended a luncheon with World Bank Senior Vice President for External Affairs and held private meetings with senior officials of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), CARE, the Global Health Council and the Global Network on Neglected Tropic Diseases. These meetings positioned advanced our goal of

being a key implementing partner in the Global Food Security Initiative and positioned THP within the Global Health Initiative (December 2009).

- Rita Sarin participated in the India Economic Summit, organized by the World Economic Forum (November 2010).
- Jill Lester was the keynote speaker at the Serious Women Business Forum in Australia and presented to the Responsible Investment Association of Australasia (November 2010).
- Naana Agyeman-Mensah, Country Director of THP-Ghana, presented her paper “Making Aid Effective: An NGO’s Experience” at a seminar hosted by Cornell University’s Institute for African Development (October 2009).
- THP-Sweden launched a film highlighting the difference between hunger and famine (produced pro bono by the company Animero) at the European Development Days Conference in Stockholm (October 2010).
- Jill Lester presented to the New York staff of Macquarie Bank staff (October 2010).

Other

- Badiul Alam Majumdar, Country Director of THP-Bangladesh, authored a new book, *Local Government and Political Reforms: Keys to Poverty Reduction*, a compilation of his columns and essays (April 2010).
- THP-Germany wrote a short article on THP’s strategies that was published in a special supplement of Germany’s Financial Times (December 2010).

4. External Challenges/Opportunities

The movement of the aid community towards "country ownership" of development strategies is continuing, and will determine how billions of dollars will be spent. We need our voice to be heard in these decisions. This will require our Program Country Directors to devote more time and energy to advocacy and the forging of partnerships, and this will require greater backup support from the Global Office as well as greater coordination with Partner Countries.

Similarly, as we seek and obtain additional in-country designated funding partnerships, this places additional burdens on field staff for field visits, meetings, report and presentations by diverse stakeholders.

"Social Business" is a fast-emerging approach to development that we have not fully analyzed or incorporated into our own thinking. This does *not* refer to philanthropy, but rather to businesses that are established to achieve anti-poverty goals through businesses that support the poor, such as pay toilets in Kenya and treadle pump sellers in India. We need to come to grips with this new phenomenon in a way that enhances our work, rather than pitting us as competitors to this approach.

5. Conclusion

During this time, members of THP's global staff have truly shown dedication to our mission and to moving forward together, tackling difficult challenges and bringing their skills and commitment to bear on making this transition successful. Overall, our programs throughout the world are running very smoothly and moving forward as planned. Fundraising in our Partner Countries is strong. During this transition, we find our biggest challenge in fundraising in the United States. However, the Leadership Team and fundraising staff are very dedicated to finding and implementing strategies to address this challenge.

We are confident that an incoming President and CEO, with the right skills and experience, will provide the visionary leadership needed to build on our current successes and assets, identify future opportunities and challenges, and adapt and grow as needed for THP to have maximum impact in achieving its mission.