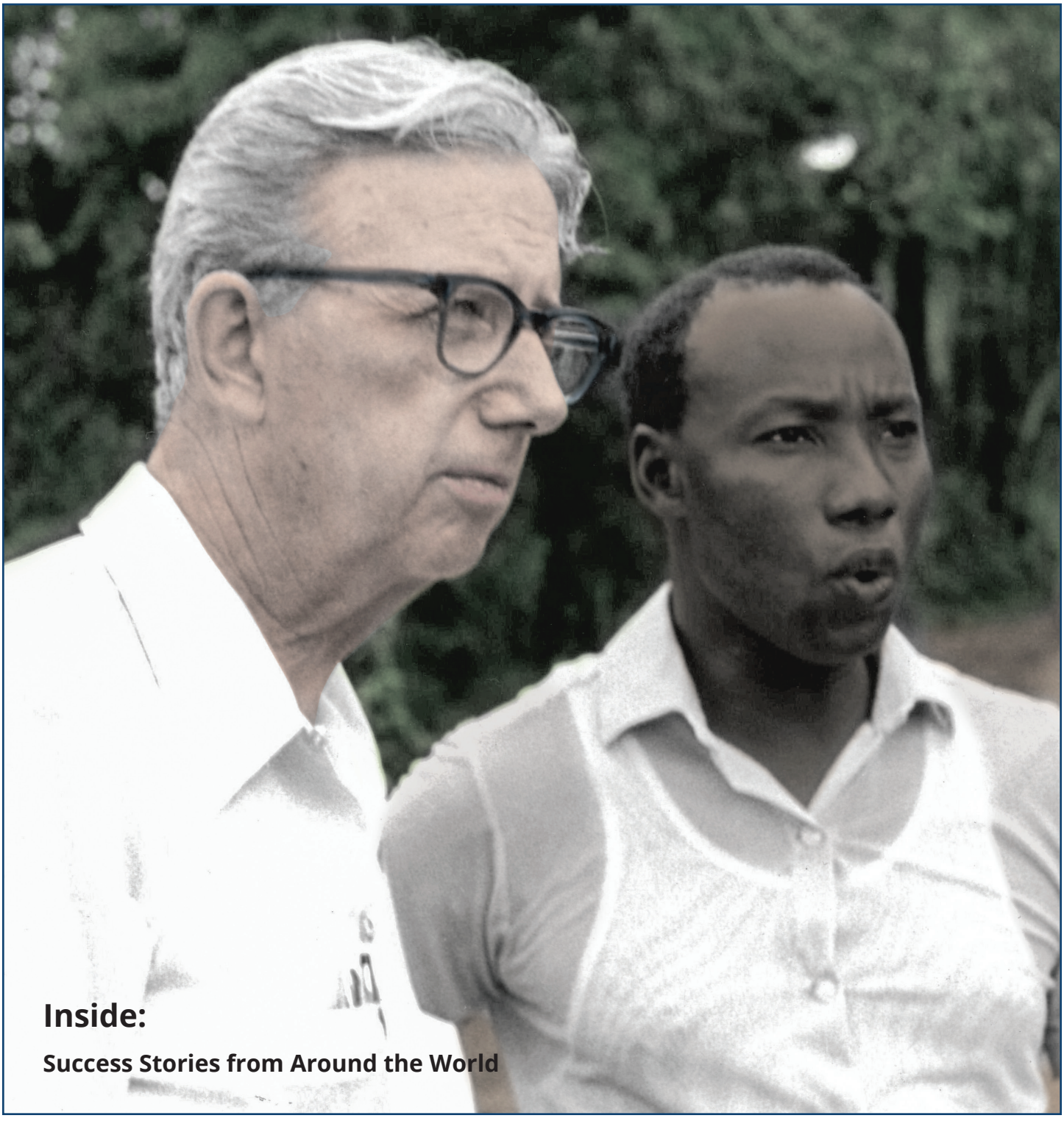
THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

NEIGHBORS

SPRING 2021



Inside:

Success Stories from Around the World

Dr. John L. Peters, the Founder of World Neighbors, and a staff member in 1965

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Journey to India and Nepal in February 2020

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Kate Schecter, Ph.D.
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Dear Neighbor:

On April 22nd, 2021, World Neighbors celebrated its 70th anniversary! Since our founding in 1951, we have reached more than 28 million people in 45 countries!

While we must acknowledge that the pandemic continues to ravage countries throughout the world, and there are many challenges that lie ahead, we also want to take a moment to celebrate this wonderful achievement. When Dr. Peters first spoke about his ideas, he could not have known what an amazing organization he was starting (nor that April 22nd would also be designated as Earth Day!). Not only have we helped millions of people to lift themselves out of poverty, we continue to disseminate a philosophy that resonates with people from every corner of the earth.

One of the most gratifying aspects of the work we do is when we see farmers taking on the roles of teachers and trainers, and independently replicating our methodology. Many times, all it takes is for a group of farmers to see what their neighbors are doing and to emulate them. Witnessing that process of neighbors teaching neighbors and communities supporting each other to improve everyone's life is a testament to the brilliance of our founder.

With many of you, we have had the privilege and honor to travel the world for World Neighbors. I have witnessed incredible beauty and joy and of course, terrible poverty and suffering. In every village and in every encounter, we have been received with grace and warmth. I am full of deep appreciation for these experiences and look forward to visiting our field operations as soon as it is safe to do so.

I would also like to thank all of you for getting involved, demonstrating your global citizenship and continuing to support World Neighbors during one of the worst pandemics in modern history. We hope you will continue to include World Neighbors in your annual charitable giving plans; as well as, consider including the Organization when making your planned giving decisions. Please know that we are always extremely grateful for all your generosity. Please consider making a gift before June 30th to continue Dr. Peter's legacy, while insuring the Organization's financial wellbeing. Wishing everyone good health and peace in the coming months.

With gratitude,

Kate Schecter, Ph.D.
President and CEO
The May Ayers Milburn Chair

P.S. World Neighbors continues to have the highest ratings with Charity Navigator, GuideStar and Charity Watch for most sound fiscal policies and transparency! Please know that your contribution will always be used with great care and deep appreciation. Approximately 83% of all gifts received directly benefit our field programs.

Greetings from Ugandan school children

Savings and credit group in Kenya

Mangrove planting in Indonesia

Rain water catchment system in Timor-Leste

Classroom in Tanzania

Since our founding, World Neighbors (WN) has followed the philosophy that Dr. John L. Peters espoused. We believe in empowering people to help themselves. We also believe that truly sustainable change can only happen if we address all aspects of people's lives.

It is vital to adapt to the ever-changing communities where we work.

Our holistic approach weaves our five thematic areas together to create sustainable change.

Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods:

- Savings and credit groups
- Farmer's groups
- Sustainable and improved agricultural practices
- Livelihood development and sustainability

Community-Based Natural Resource Management:

- Disaster-risk reduction
- Climate-change adaptation and mitigation
- Soil, water and vegetation conservation

Community and Reproductive Health:

- Nutrition
- Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)
- Access to health services
- Family planning
- Prevention of malnutrition

Gender Equity, which cross cuts all areas of our work

Meladine on her farm

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

HAITI

1966 to Present

Before the January 2010 earthquake, Meladine Dalphinis was a tailor. With her workplace and livelihood destroyed, she went into farming. In 2015, Meladine learned about WN and a local community-based partner organization. She joined a savings and credit group and started to learn about credits and loans. Meladine took out a $35 loan from the group, which she used to expand her leek fields and build a small fishpond. Her family eats the fish, a crucial source of protein, and she sells the surplus in the local market. The initial investments generated enough profit to invest in livestock. The local partner taught Meladine to use animal waste to fertilize her crops – a critical method to reduce costs, increase profit and avoid the health risks of handling chemical fertilizers. Surplus livestock fertilizer is another source of revenue and profit.

Today, Meladine runs a substantial family farm, and many of her neighbors in Odige do the same. WN works with 20 savings and credit groups in the Artibonite region where Meladine lives. Another 28 groups are thriving on their own after graduating from WN's assistance. Each group averages about 30 members, with a total of 1,500 people in Haiti working together to save for their families and communities. These 48 groups grow their businesses, in the process learning financial skills and helping to lift entire communities out of poverty.

Jose on his farm

GUATEMALA

1964-1981, 1999 to Present

Jose is an organic farmer in Camotan, Chiquimula. Despite the dry difficult conditions in the dry corridor, where he and his family live, Jose was able to secure food and generate income using local resources. He uses drip irrigation with rainwater to produce corn, beans, pineapples, plantains and avocados, among other crops, while preserving a thriving forest that protects the soil from erosion and landslides.

Jose promotes agroforestry in these difficult climate conditions. During the recent hurricanes, Eta and Iota, that devastated Central America, his farm was not devastated because the terraces, contour plowing and trees protected his land. He uses the leaves and leftovers of plants to make compost which is then used as fertilizer. In addition to his garden, he also raises chickens and goats in barns and uses the manure for vermicomposting. With the bark and leaves of the trees he has on his farm, Jose makes natural pesticides to control plant diseases without using hazardous pesticides.

PERU

1962-1990, 1995 to Present

Peruvian farmer working on community land

BOLIVIA

1964 to Present

Bolivian farmer displaying his papaya harvest

Thrombin and her chicken farm

WEST AFRICA

MALI

1984 to Present

Screening for child malnutrition in Mali

BURKINA FASO

1974 to Present

"My name is Thrombin Poyombo, I am married and the mother of seven children. I live in the village of Gaanyéla in Burkina Faso. In September 2019, with the support of a WN savings and credit group, I was able to purchase a rooster and four chickens to practice poultry farming. In addition, I received training on poultry rearing techniques. I put this into practice and today I have more than 30 chickens, four of which are brooding.

Thanks to the income from this farm, we are now able to pay for healthcare and send our children to school. We have also seen an improvement in the nutritional status of our family.

Because of the success of our poultry farm, we are now looking to expand our farm to breeding sheep."

EAST AFRICA

UGANDA

1962-1977, 1979-2005, 2007 to Present

Ugandan farmer with his livestock

KENYA

1961 to Present

Students learning agriculture in Kenya

A tree nursery in Tanzania

TANZANIA

1962-1990, 1999 to Present

Michael Abiero Makene, 73, was born in and still lives in the village of Bukama in Tanzania. In 1975, the local government started to promote tree planting in his village and Michael joined this initiative. Over the years, he became more involved in tree planting and the development of tree nurseries, working with government departments and non-governmental organizations. However, the strategies employed by these organizations were not sustainable and his tree planting initiatives failed over time.

In 2007, WN started working with communities in the Rorya District. Michael was impressed by WN's approach to development, especially its strategy of working through community groups. He convinced some members from his village, who were interested in environmental conservation, to join him in forming a group (Muhunda) so that they could work together to improve environmental conservation as well as their livelihoods.

WN supported the Muhunda group by training them in tree nursery development and tree planting as well as budding and grafting. WN also facilitated getting access to materials such as watering cans and tree seeds. Now Michael has planted a wide variety of trees on his farm. Through the training, Michael has become a successful tree farmer and the trees are managed so well that the survival rate is over 80%. The trees provide shade, timber, medicine, firewood and charcoal; they also act as windbreakers, and beautify the homestead. Michael has realized an increase in his farm productivity because he uses tree leaves and other biomatter from the trees as compost.

The diversity of fruit trees means that Michael and his family are able to access different types of fruits throughout the year since the fruits mature in different seasons. Although both the fruit and non-fruit trees have boosted the family income, the income from fruit trees is higher and more beneficial. "Since I have a variety of fruit trees, there is no month when I miss fruits ready for harvesting," said Michael.

Michael's success and commitment to environmental conservation through tree planting has made him a champion in environmental awareness campaigns. He is sought after to provide education and trainings to other community members. Since the start of the program, he has trained over 300 people from within and outside his village on the establishment of tree nurseries, tree planting and tree management. The tree cover of his village has increased so much that it is the envy of the residents of other villages in the district.

Laxmi in her kitchen garden

SOUTH ASIA

NEPAL

1973 to Present

Laxmi B.K., age 35, lives in the rural village of Sindhupalchok in Nepal. She is a member of the Dalit community of Chautara Sangachokgadi Municipality. Dalit persons were once called "untouchables," a very offensive and now unacceptable term in Nepal. But, while the term is gone, many of the attitudes and barriers remain.

Laxmi was married at the age of 13. By 18, she was the mother of three children. Her household chores, including walking three to four hours a day to collect water and venturing into a jungle to collect fodder, left her virtually no time to care for her children.

Laxmi joined a savings and credit group formed by WN and its local partner, where she was able to attend

trainings on water management, vermi composting and basic bookkeeping.

After the training sessions, she constructed a small plastic pond that holds wastewater. She then planted a kitchen garden which is entirely organic and irrigated with the nutrient-rich wastewater from the plastic pond. Water is now available year-round, which lengthens the growing season.

Before training and modest investments, Dalit and others in Laxmi's village did not grow or buy vegetables. Most families lived on rice with chili and salt. Vegetables were occasional treats.

She and her family now have abundant and nutritious vegetables to eat. Laxmi sells her surplus produce in the local market. She earns hundreds of dollars a month from her vegetable sales. This is a substantial sum in her village. She no longer asks her husband for money, nor does the family need to turn to moneylenders with their exorbitant interest rates.

Over the years, Laxmi has borrowed from her savings and credit group to purchase additional land for vegetable cultivation and sales. Other people in her village have received training and started their own kitchen gardens.

Led by Laxmi, they have come together in a group to promote their activities and receive training on water, sanitation, reproductive health and other topics. She recently registered her community development group with the municipal and tax offices, which makes them eligible for public funding. This integration into public structures is a key component of ensuring that the communities' investments will be sustainable.

Laxmi's financial and leadership success has been transformative, it has significantly improved her living standards and created opportunities to interact with people well beyond her village.

Kitchen gardens can be the first step to economic and social development for many communities, including those that have been historically marginalized.

INDIA

1952 to Present

Dr. Peters in Ernakulum, India in 1968 with other staff

Pak Burhanudin at a handwashing station

SOUTHEAST ASIA

INDONESIA

1972 to Present

Pak Burhanudin is the chairman of the Seruni Mumbul Village's disaster management group and leader of the COVID-19 Task Force.

Pak Burhanudin has received training over the previous few years by WN through the USAID-funded Disaster Risk Reduction for Eastern Indonesia Project. Since the start of the pandemic, he has helped bring together parties from the regional government, private sector and village community to work together to prevent the spread of the virus.

Pak Burhanudin's background belies his achievements since he was elected the head of the disaster management group. This father of four works as a fisherman and in the village government's office. Despite his busy life supporting his family, when WN first came to Seruni Mumbul Village on the island of Lombok, and began running disaster management and climate change adaption trainings, he showed great enthusiasm to learn and succeed. When it came to forming a village disaster management group, he was the sole nomination for the position of group chairman.

As first responders during the 7.0 earthquake in 2018, Pak Burhanudin and his team of 56 led the evacuation of the village ensuring at-risk groups (such as the elderly and disabled) received the support they needed to reach the pre-planned safe point. They then collected data on everyone affected and recorded the damage to the village, quickly reporting it to the government, fast-tracking much needed emergency assistance. They established first-aid posts and provided tents, food and drinks, ensuring provisions for those most in need. The group then acted as the bridge between the village government and East Lombok's Disaster Management Agency (BPBD) to ensure the longer-term recovery process was conducted properly.

Despite the increase in COVID-19 cases throughout Indonesia, which in January 2021 hit the one million mark, by putting into practice the disaster management skills he and his team had learned over the previous years, Pak Burhanudin has managed to keep his village of Seruni Mumbul a green zone – completely free of any positive cases since the start of the pandemic.

Pak Burhanudin says that it is not enough to just rely on him and his team. He says that what is most important is for the whole village to participate and rely on each other, in order to break the chain of transmission. It is this principle of self-reliance and being responsible not just for yourself, but also for your neighbor, that guarantees Pak Burhanudin will remain vigilant – not only against the current pandemic – but for all future challenges he will face.

TIMOR-LESTE

2006 to Present

Working together to protect a water source

Commemorative Gifts Received

July 3, 2020 – April 15, 2021

IN MEMORY OF:

William Alexander
- John Alexander
- Rebecca Ensworth
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- Van and Joni Peters
- Mary Lynne Portman
- Sue and Reuben Rainey
- Harbour and Mickey Winn

Richard Buck
- Betsy Buck

Sara Caskey
- John Caskey
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Vlad Sambaiew
- Royal Govain

Natalie Joy Stoddard
- Barbara Rosenthal

Carol Wenzl
- James and Kathleen Worley

Piper Killough West
- Bob and Peggy Northcott

Jody Wighsweng-Crawford
- Jaleah Brynn

Barbara Worley
- James and Kathleen Worley

Dr. Peters with program participants in the Philippines

Because of your support, millions of people are living better, healthier lives. You can help future generations too! Continue improving children's health and make other lasting changes in communities around the world with a legacy gift to WN. A gift in your will or trust, or naming WN as one of the beneficiaries of your retirement asset or life insurance ensures lives will be changed for years and years to come. Sustaining the future work of WN is one of the greatest gifts you can give. To learn more about the many ways to make a legacy or planned gift, please contact Robert Lachance at 405-286-0805 or rlachance@wn.org.

WORLD NEIGHBORS

Inspiring People • Strengthening Communities

OUR MISSION

World Neighbors inspires people and strengthens communities to find lasting solutions to hunger, poverty and disease and to promote a healthy environment.

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