Making a Difference in Kenya

For 47 long years, every single day Monica was told through words and actions that she was disgusting, ugly, and sub-human.

When other mothers proudly showed off their babies, Monica’s mother shrank into the shadows with her. Covering the baby’s face with a blanket soon became impractical in the heat, and the constant words of ridicule and blame drove the mother and child away from social gatherings.

In many rural Kenyan villages, deformity or disability of any kind is viewed as a curse, and superstition causes the disabled to be ostracized or persecuted. Monica was born with a deformed lip and palate, creating speech, breathing, and digestive problems as well as facial disfigurement. This deformity caused her to be considered unworthy to receive many basic human rights.

Because her survival depended on it, Monica learned to avoid people as much as possible. On occasions when she couldn’t avoid contact with others, she was mocked and treated like an animal. Neighbourhood children were scared of her and thought she was a monster. Family members got nauseated watching the food spill from her mouth as she ate, and wouldn’t share the same table with her. The years of emotional abuse took their toll on Monica causing depression and thoughts of suicide.

Monica got married and had a son, but as he grew, even he turned against her, breaking her heart when he announced he didn’t want to be seen with his mother. Adding to her sorrow, her grandson reminded her daily of her disfigurement.

Several years later when Monisa’s daughter-in-law ran away from her husband and her marriage, Monica’s deformity was blamed.

Sometimes we think that miracles don’t happen anymore, but Monica knows she has experienced a miracle in her life. Thanks to ADRA Canada’s Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program, Monica received corrective surgery in December 2008 at Nyabondo Mission Hospital and her life changed completely.

Monica marvels at the change in her appearance, “I wake up at night and admire myself in the mirror.”

No longer an outcast; for the first time in her life Monica is able to walk freely in public with her head held high and her face uncovered. No longer forced to eat alone, she enjoys socializing with her family at her table. Worshipping as part of a congregation was a blessing denied her for 47 years, but now Monica praises God with her family and new friends.

“I am confident now because I can speak, walk, and pray amidst other people. I see happiness in myself and I am thankful to CBR and the Canadians for the assistance they gave me.”

Thank you for supporting ADRA programs and helping to make a difference in the lives of people like Monica!
Native New Health is an innovative series of health programs designed for Native people by Native people. This series addresses a number of health topics of special concern to Native people including the following:

- Understanding Diabetes
- Managing Diabetes
- Managing Your Weight
- Freedom from Smoking
- Freedom from Alcohol
- Keeping Your Heart Healthy

Each episode has been designed to generate discussion and to assist the viewer in making positive lifestyle choices.

The episodes are hosted by Gina Quiboche and Edward Dunn. Gina is a Canadian of Cree and Vuntut Gwichin ancestry who lives on Opaskwayak Cree Nation, northern Manitoba.

Gina holds a Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy and is currently in a doctoral program in Education.

Ed is a Canadian of Ojibway Nation ancestry from Northern Ontario who currently lives in Alaska. Ed holds a MPH degree in Public Health and is now finishing a doctoral program in Public Health.

The distribution of the DVDs is expected to be a long term effort that will grow over time as contacts and relationships are built. The DVDs are not dated so should serve for many years.

The Native New Health DVDs are available to Canadians by ordering from ADRA Canada.

Single DVD: $20.00
Set of 6 DVDs: $35.00

email: karen@adra.ca
toll free: 1-888-974-9372 ext 142
local: 905-433-8004 ext 142

“Why doesn’t ADRA Canada collect and/or ship clothing and other items overseas?”

Although at first glance it seems like this is a good idea, there are several reasons why it isn’t the best idea.

The first consideration should be whether there is a real need for the items and whether the items are appropriate for the destination country. The cost of packaging and shipping clothing and other items in a container is very high. In addition to the initial shipping expense, there are port clearing charges, demurrage, customs (even when duty-free), forklift, trucking, onward delivery and final distribution fees which quickly escalate the total cost. If that same money was spent in the actual country, perhaps two or three (or even more) times the amount of goods and clothing could be purchased and delivered.

Of course, the information above assumes that the shipment gets through. Sometimes the containers are held up or confiscated and everything is lost.

Another important factor to consider is that shipping clothes to another destination often disrupts the local economy. It is preferable to purchase items locally, thus supporting the local economy.

It is better for the environment to avoid shipping clothes originally made overseas and purchased in Canada, back overseas again!
• Some of the gardeners developed friendships as they worked together and helped each other. Many of the gardeners shared their produce with people outside the gardening community.

One gardener took the time to teach others new techniques, a second took many of the borage leaves at the end of the season and dried them so they could be made into soup mixes. She also dried garden herbs and gave them away.

Another gardener was successful in growing her grandfather’s potato seed, thus propagating that particular strain of potatoes.

A number of gardeners were excited that they grew enough to share and could take produce home to store for the winter.

Normally, gardeners are asked to respect other’s garden beds without interfering either to weed, harvest, or comment. One of the gardeners was a client of the local mental health clinic and used his garden for part of his therapy. It became noticeable that his garden was choked with weeds, and attempts to contact him were unsuccessful. Risking the non-interference policy, several people cleaned up his garden and added peat moss and manure without his permission so that his food plants could grow.

A week or so later when he was at the garden, he came to the fence and asked, “Are you my secret garden helpers?” When he heard the answer, he got so excited he said, “Oh, I could just hug you! Thank you, thank you, thank you!” Later, this same man asked how he could help more around the garden and in the Fall for the first time he “put his garden to bed” for the winter. It was obvious he was taking more pride in his accomplishments.

The Terrace Community Gardens are an excellent example of a Food Security program in Canada.

Thank you for helping ADRA Canada to make a positive difference around the world and in Canada!

www.kermodeitourism.ca

Please accept my gift of:

$_________ for Kenya CBR Program

$_________ for Canadian Program

$_________ for Emergency Management

$_________ for wherever needed most

OR  Donate online: www.adra.ca
Imagine a place where majestic mountains reach the sky, magnificent rivers flow through vast valleys and wildlife peeks around every tree. A place where waterfalls take your breath away, First Nation legends come alive, the mysterious white Kermodei bear roams the rainforest and the fish draw anglers from around the globe. This is our world... Terrace, BC!“

This pristine world temporarily disappeared in 2007 as the runoff from the Spring thaw rushed down the mountains, causing mudslides and flooded rivers.

CBCnews.ca reported on June 7, 2007,

While flood threats have eased in the Fraser Valley east of Vancouver, main rail lines and major highways through the north have been washed out, cutting off Terrace, Prince Rupert, Kitimat and a number of smaller communities such as Telegraph Creek and two Nisga’a communities.

Flooding has closed the highway on the west of Terrace, while Highway 16 to the east side of the city is blocked off by a huge pool of water and what’s left of last week’s mudslide.

Officials say the water on Highway 16 is 1.4 metres deep and 1.2 kilometres long, deeper and longer than it was on Wednesday.

Terrace Deputy Mayor Marilyn Davies warned earlier Thursday that supplies of food and gas may soon run short, which is already the case in Prince Rupert.

“We are cut off, we’re totally isolated,” Davies said at a news conference. “We’re actually the only part of the province that can’t be reached by an alternate route.”

The flood and mudslide made people realize the necessity of a local food supply for times of disaster; and rising food prices confirmed the need for community food security. In simple terms, food security is defined as the condition in which people can both physically and economically access food that meets their dietary needs as well as their food preferences.

With the support of ADRA Canada, Terrace Community Gardens were upgraded and began to thrive. A report on the project indicates how the Gardens benefited the people of Terrace:

- Improvements were made to the Gardens so they are now wheelchair accessible.
- Gardeners were supported through mentoring and assistance where requested.
- The Gardens provided three times the previous year’s amount of food to the community.
- Garden produce was taken to the Anti-Poverty Society where many low-income families and street people pick up food.
- Produce from the Gardens was used to make soup for the Bread of Life Soup Kitchen, which serves 80-150 people weekly.
- The Anti-Poverty Society is looking at the possibility of turning the Food Share cooperative program into a social enterprise so that low income people can work in the Gardens with the profits going back to the poor through the Anti-Poverty Society.
- Individual gardens each averaged an estimated 34 kg. of produce.
- The communal plot produced approximately 136 kg. of food.
As the end of her pregnancy drew near, Barla and her family eagerly awaited the birth of the baby. Like most other traditional families, this family from a remote, mountainous region in Sichuan, China, had long cherished the dream of a boy to carry on the family name.

After an exhausting labour, 25 year-old Barla gave birth to a tiny* baby girl in December 2008. When her husband and mother-in-law realized the baby wasn’t a boy, they were so disappointed that they offered no help and wouldn’t even look at the newborn or her mother.

To make a difficult situation worse, Barla had inverted nipples that prevented the baby from being able to nurse effectively. Exhausted from the delivery, this young Tibetan woman didn’t have the strength or emotional support to breastfeed her baby.

As she watched her precious newborn grow weaker, Barla gave in to desperation and borrowed money from her neighbour to purchase powdered milk. Unsure how to prepare the milk correctly, she added too much water to the powder, so although the baby drank the milk, she didn’t get full, and constantly cried with hunger.

When ADRA Maternal and Child Health Service field staff heard about Barla’s situation, they immediately visited her small home. After assessing the situation, the field staff educated the family in the proper way to treat the mother and her newborn baby. They also taught Barla the importance of breastfeeding and showed her how to care for her inverted nipples. In addition to the training, the ADRA staff also gave Barla a package of materials containing supplies that provided her real comfort.

The family was very grateful for the care and knowledge they received.

*The baby weighed less than 1,750 grams (4 lbs)

ADRA Canada used money received from donors** and the Canadian government after the earthquake last year to fund the ADRA Maternal and Child Health Service. This Service continues to provide rehabilitation assistance to families in small villages in the remote areas of Sichuan.

In early 2009, ADRA staff and project assistants performed a spot-check on the Service and found the field staff doing an excellent job. Most of the beneficiaries of the program live in remote mountainous areas requiring 2-3 hours of foot travel over rough, aftershock-damaged roads. In spite of these difficult conditions, the field staff always arrive on time and successfully complete their duties.

** through the Emergency Management Fund
If you are one of the many Canadians who collect Aeroplan miles whenever you travel or use your credit card, during the month of July 2009, you can help ADRA Canada turn plastic into water!

Simply download the “Aeroplan Charitable Pooling Program” form from our website (www.adra.ca), print it off, fill it in, SIGN it, and fax, mail, or scan and email it to us.

Here’s how it works:

- Aeroplan transfers your donated miles to the ADRA Canada account.
- ADRA Canada redeems donated miles to purchase air travel to projects around the world.
- ADRA Canada takes the dollar cost of the travel and allocates that amount to the Darfur Wells project.
- Cold, clean water is accessed through new wells funded by ADRA Canada supporters.
- Refugee and displaced men, women and children in Darfur, Sudan have better health and a chance at longer, better lives.

THANK YOU for your generosity! Together we can create just and positive change through empowering partnerships and responsible action.

GLOBAL IMPACT

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ADRA Canada was officially established in Oshawa, Ontario, in 1985 and, in the 25 years since then, has partnered with projects in over 80 countries around the globe. Part of a professional, learning, and efficient network, ADRA Canada reaches across boundaries, empowering and speaking out for the at-risk and forgotten; achieving measurable, documented, and durable changes in lives and society.

ADRA Canada’s development work helps to break the poverty cycle. Income generation programs, water and sanitation initiatives, agricultural improvement seminars, micro-enterprises, cooperatives, basic shelters, literacy, and health programs are all an integral part of ADRA’s work. Many of the projects accentuate the role of women and the protection of children as they grow.

ADRA Canada responds to disasters by providing funding for food, clothing, water, medicines, and temporary shelters to those suffering from famine, hurricanes, cyclones, earthquakes and floods.

In 2010, as we celebrate where we have been, we invite you to consider how you can increase your support of ADRA Canada.

If you’re looking for a new kind of support opportunity, you’ll be excited to know that on January 24, 2010, you can depart on a fabulous Caribbean cruise vacation that will benefit ADRA Canada. Check our website or call Grant at 1-888-860-8370 to find out more about the ADRA Canada Anniversary Cruise.