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FROM BOARD MEMBER CRISTINA PÉREZ

BEFORE DISASTER HITS

Investing in Preparedness

Throughout history, the region that encompasses Latin America and the Caribbean has been among the world’s most vulnerable to natural hazards.

Its geographical conditions make it prone to the occurrence of hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and countless other severe events. Yet part of the impact derives from the region’s socioeconomic challenges and inadequate risk management, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

While it is impossible to prevent natural hazards, disastrous consequences are not inevitable. Further, the scale of the impact depends on choices governments, humanitarian organizations and communities make for their lives and environment.

Latin America has made important progress in the areas of disaster prevention and mitigation, but large segments of the population still live in precarious conditions. This situation is intensified by factors such as increasing urban migration and informal urban settlements, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, poverty and insufficient attention to changes in risk patterns. The need for disaster preparedness is especially urgent in the context of climate change, which studies show will continue to cause

the frequency and severity of natural hazards to increase.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) states that funding for prevention “should be understood as a high-yield investment – in economic, social and political terms – for achieving long-term growth.” Although relief and rehabilitation account for most of the spending on disaster-related projects, analyses suggest that appropriate investments in prevention could substantially reduce the impact of disasters, which disproportionately affects poor countries.

Disaster preparedness strategies take many forms, including early warning and temporary evacuation systems, improved local coordination, disaster-resistant infrastructure, wise land and water management practices, and awareness-raising, among many others. Equally important is the fact that for these strategies to be sustainable, they must involve communities in their development.

A number of The Resource Foundation’s local partners have integrated disaster preparedness into their work. MUDE, in the Dominican Republic, promotes citizen participation and builds local capacity to increase vulnerable communities’ resilience to floods and water-borne illnesses.

LETTER FROM OUR LEADERS

OUR FOUNDER-PRESIDENT
& OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS:

Spring is upon us, and we at The Resource Foundation (TRF) can already feel the energy and signs of growth that come along with this welcome season.

At the same time, we are also reminded that spring is a time of unstable weather, increasing the likelihood of severe natural phenomena like floods or storms. Thus, while we celebrate the arrival of warm air and sunshine, we also remain aware of the ongoing need to prepare communities in Latin America to reduce their vulnerability to future natural hazards. As you'll read in our Spring Newsletter, a number of our local partners have integrated disaster preparedness strategies into their work, involving communities in efforts to mitigate the risks and increase their own resilience.

With these natural changes, spring also brings hope for better times. At TRF, our vision for improved living standards and opportunities for Latin America's disadvantaged communities drives every action we take. In March, we are hosting a conference in Panama for the 10 organizations that are participating in our Regional Education and Gender Equity Program, funded by Caterpillar Foundation. The event furthers the program's goal to build a network of practitioners to address the region's most pressing educational issues, which have great implications for countries' futures.

We continue to consolidate our strong relationships with donors to ensure our local partners are able to sustain their work creating lasting change in the region. In our newsletter, we introduce a new series exploring different ways businesses advance social and environmental missions. This first installment looks specifically at how corporate citizenship, impact investing and microenterprise create meaningful community growth.

As always in our newsletters, we want to thank you for your continued support, which makes it possible for us to empower thousands of low-income families with the skills, knowledge and opportunities they need to improve their own lives. We hope you'll take your support one step further by sharing our letter with a friend and urging them to join the TRF family.

Warm regards,



Loren Finnell
Founder, President



Marcela Lopez-Macedonio
Executive Director

EYES ON EDUCATION

Closing the achievement gap in Latin America

In March, TRF is hosting a three-day conference in Panama with the nonprofit partners from 10 Latin American countries that are participating in its Regional Education and Gender Equity Program. The program, launched in January 2013 as a three-year partnership with the Caterpillar Foundation, is consolidating a network of practitioners to address the region's most pressing educational issues. The conference provides a platform for the participating organizations to share experiences and knowledge, as well as to analyze the program's collective impact.

Although great strides have been made toward tackling the diverse educational challenges facing Latin America, there are persisting gaps in education, employment prospects and earnings between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their wealthier peers.

In El Salvador, the 2014 UNESCO report, "Teaching and Learning: Achieving Equality for All," found that only 42 percent of the country's poorest children complete elementary school, compared to 84 percent of the richest students. Likewise, achievement gaps in math and reading between rural and urban students in El Salvador, Panama and Peru exceed 15 percentage points.

In Panama, the UNDP 2014 National Report on Human Development points to the critical importance of investing in children and youth for the country's future. According to the UNDP, the report "calls for urgent action on issues ranging from parenting practices that foster

TRF's 2013
EDUCATION IMPACT:



343,947

INDIVIDUALS

REACHED THROUGH



62 PROJECTS

WITH FUNDS
TOTALING



\$1,681,189

Eyes on Education ▲



and encourage the capacities of children to public policies designed to expand opportunities for young people."

The country's challenges are illustrated by the fact that more than a quarter of Panamanian children do not have a single illustrated book at home, according to the report, and nearly half of children ages four to six do not read even one book per month with their families.

Through its regional program, TRF is partnering with expert organizations in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay to develop a model for enriching elementary education and ensuring a successful transition into high school.

Each of TRF's partners on the ground has a unique context and approach, but they all share the regional strategy's strong focus on engaging parents, teachers and entire communities. The program is expected to outlive its three-year timeline and to extend beyond its geographic boundaries by creating a model that can be replicated in communities across Latin America for an even greater impact.

BUSINESS WITH A MISSION

TRF believes in local talent. TRF also believes that nonprofits and businesses alike can advance social and environmental missions. This ongoing series will cover different ways in which businesses – big and small – create meaningful community growth. This first installment is a snapshot of three approaches to align business interests with social missions.

Corporate Citizenship and Shared Value: The “Greening” of Value Chains

When large companies demand from their providers high standards in terms of environmental stewardship and social footprint management, a positive ripple effect occurs.

When industry leaders like Starbucks began to pay premiums for ethical and environmental sourcing, the industry as a whole paid attention. Coffee farms absorbed fewer harsh chemicals. Coffee farmers and pickers lived in better conditions. Coffee drinkers consumed healthier coffee.

TRF enables corporations to strengthen their connections to the social and environmental stakeholders they work

a wide variety of breads. As a single mother, she’s putting her children through school.

Reliable, local organizations, like ACODEP, with the necessary business acumen and awareness of the socioeconomic context, play an important role in equipping motivated individuals with financial education, services and insights. These entrepreneurs, in turn, generate new small enterprises, strengthen existing businesses and create a vibrant, entrepreneurial community.

Impact Investing: Businesses Designed to Solve Social Challenges

Impact investments are investments made into companies, organizations and funds with the intention of generating social and

“INNOVATION IS
THE SPECIFIC
INSTRUMENT OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP...
THE ACT THAT
ENDOWS RESOURCES
WITH A NEW CAPACITY
TO CREATE WEALTH.”

-PETER F. DRUCKER

economy and inspires entrepreneurship. In terms of health, Miel Pat promotes nutrition through the consumption of quality honey.



Microenterprise ▼

Impact Investing ▲



photo credit:
Erick Monterrosa

with, helping convert natural ecosystems and community well-being into competitive advantages, not just an additional cost.

Microenterprise: Access to Financial Education, Services and Insights

When a family lifts itself out of poverty, neighbors and children observe and learn what is possible.

Adela del Carmen Loasiga, in a difficult family situation, decided to start producing bread in her home in rural Nicaragua in the mid-1990s. With her hard work, and with the support of TRF affiliate ACODEP, Adela now employs about 20 people and produces

environmental impact alongside a financial return. Here’s the story of an entrepreneur and his mission-driven business in a rural Mayan village in the Yucatan Peninsula.

Despite his community’s limited access to formal education, markets and health services, Vidal Pat developed a small enterprise, Miel Pat. It produces an unadulterated organic honey from a variety of bees including the near-extinct Mayan stingless Melipone.

Miel Pat’s business model offers solutions to multiple challenges. In a marginalized community, the enterprise generates income, provides access to a global

Environmentally, Miel Pat fosters a thriving ecosystem insofar as the most efficient and effective pollinators of crops and natural vegetation are bees, whose declining global population poses a threat to agriculture worldwide.

Why would TRF invest in a business? Since its founding in 1987, TRF has empowered individuals to improve their lives and communities through nonprofit microfinance and capacity building programs. Impact investing harnesses the power of business to advance the same mission, simply through a different vehicle: purpose-driven businesses.

To learn more about TRF’s work and how you can help, contact us at inquiries@resourcefnd.org, or call (212) 675-6170.

FROM THE BOARD

A MEMBER'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

For over 26 years, The Resource Foundation has implemented the vision of one man, Loren Finnell, to improve the lives of individuals, families and communities in Latin America and the Caribbean by providing direct financial support and other forms of assistance to local nonprofit organizations that are working to help communities build a better future for themselves. The love, commitment and insight of its founder have inspired and fueled the work of TRF and significantly impacted millions of people in 29 countries.

Since joining TRF's Board of Directors in 2010, it has been evident to me that Loren's vision, wisdom and courage have been transmitted to and are present in the professionalism, skill and dedication of TRF's staff, led by Marcela Lopez-Macedonio, its Executive Director. Managed and driven by an outstanding group of people (and an admirable group of Board members in which I have the honor of serving), TRF continues to be a labor of love focused on supporting and empowering local development organizations while maximizing the economic impact of donors, big and small alike.

As TRF grows both financially and programmatically, Loren, Marcela and the entire staff of nine are equipped with the necessary experience, professionalism and vision to build on the success and grow its wonderful partnership of bringing together donors and fully-vetted recipient organizations and initiatives, and, most critically, to do so by strengthening managerial and operational policies and procedures, refining controls, ensuring accountability, increasing transparency and updating technology. I am confident that TRF has developed the infrastructure, expertise and personnel, and committed Board, to consolidate its sustainability and venture into new and advanced ways of promoting and financing development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Sincerely,

Cristina Pérez

DID YOU KNOW

in 2013

THE RESOURCE FOUNDATION

REACHED

1,984,531
Individuals

THROUGH

213
Projects

IN

26
Countries

THANKS TO YOUR
SUPPORT

THE RESOURCE FOUNDATION

A 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, TRF is a leader in philanthropic giving to Latin America and the Caribbean. It partners with corporate, foundation and individual donors, and experienced NGOs in 29 countries in the Americas and the Caribbean to increase opportunities and improve living standards for the region's disadvantaged.

WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK

Please send comments or suggestions to:

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PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.