Mercy Corps

2003 Annual Report

Mercy Corps exists to alleviate suffering, poverty and oppression, by helping people build secure, productive and just communities.

In 2003, our global resources totaled a record $132.5 million and we reached six million people in 39 republics and countries.

Since 1979, Mercy Corps has provided more than $830 million in assistance to people in 80 nations. With support from donors worldwide, our nearly 2,000 staff, volunteers and partners change lives each day, working hand in hand with those who seek to build a better future.

We renew hope.
We find solutions.
We leave behind a legacy of change.
In the spring of 1980, the work of Mercy Corps began with the provision of humanitarian aid to Cambodian refugees in Thailand. Since then our work has reached millions of people in 80 countries, evolving over the years to meet the challenges of a changing world.

In this year’s report, as we approach our 25th anniversary, we seek to connect the present with the past by tracing the origins of our work. Like an individual approaching a milestone birthday, we are engaging in a period of self-reflection, asking ourselves: How did we get here? What path did we take? And how did the steps we took decades ago shape who we are today?

In this report, we look at three critical areas of our work: fostering economic development; responding to complex emergencies; and building stronger, more self-reliant communities.

In each case, the ideas at the heart of our work today originated many years earlier — often half a world away, in very different settings. In each section, we present the first seed of an idea, and then the full flower that has bloomed today.
village near Kirkuk, in central Iraq. The result: a new irrigation and water system built and managed by the people of Abdullah that is providing clean, plentiful water for farming and drinking to 40,000 people at a cost of $80,000. For just $2 per person, it is the most significant improvement in daily life for generations in a community long neglected by the central government in Baghdad. On Lenzi’s last day as project manager, the people of Abdullah made him an honorary sheik of the community.

Through it all, we have vigorously discussed within Mercy Corps the complex humanitarian, political, and security issues related to Iraq. We have pondered the vast resources devoted to Iraq, knowing full well how much good they could accomplish both at home and in alleviating poverty around the world. And we have worked hard to ensure that other crises, such as Liberia and Afghanistan, are not forgotten.

While we may question or share mixed feelings about the rationale for the war, we know full well that ordinary Iraqi citizens need hope now for a better, safer future. In the end, it comes back to the mission of helping those in need and leaving behind stronger communities — back to the girl on the cover.

What will her life be like in five years? Ten years? Twenty years? Rebuilding and sustaining hope is the ultimate measure of success in Iraq — and everywhere where people suffer from poverty and oppression.

In 2005, we commemorate Mercy Corps’ 25th anniversary. It will be a time for reflection and giving thanks to the people who make our work possible. But most of all it will be a time to look ahead and ask ourselves what we must do today to build a world where every child has the gift of peace and the chance to fulfill their dreams.

Daniel W. O’Neill
President and Co-Founder
Neal L. Keny-Guyer
Chief Executive Officer

2003 was a year in which we learned the importance of building strong partnerships to make a lasting difference in people’s lives. In Iraq, we worked with local leaders and communities to build a new water system that provided clean water to 40,000 people. This was just one of many projects that we supported around the world, including in Liberia, Afghanistan, and many other countries. Through our work, we continued to demonstrate that when people come together to work towards a common goal, they can make a real difference in the lives of those they serve.
In nearly 25 years of work, Mercy Corps has reached millions of children with food, health care, shelter, education, and new opportunities. In this report, we’re pleased to introduce you to 25 children who have a more hopeful future because you cared enough to make a difference.

**Name:** Amanullah
**Age:** 9
**What he wants to be when he grows up:** Perhaps a doctor — he is certainly well qualified!
**Country:** Afghanistan/Pakistan
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** In 2002, Mercy Corps launched a program to combat tuberculosis in Quetta City, Pakistan. But Mercy Corps did not treat Amanullah for TB. He is helping us — by bringing his neighbors to Mercy Corps’ health clinic to be tested and treated for TB.

**Name:** Zahra
**Age:** 9
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** A doctor.
**Country:** Iran
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** After the horrific earthquake in Bam in late 2003, Mercy Corps set up a camp for newly homeless survivors with winterized tents. Zahra and her family now have access to food, potable water, and other household goods, as their town is rebuilt with Mercy Corps’ help.

**Name:** Sahbaz Sinanovic
**Age:** 10
**What he wants to be when he grows up:** A football (soccer) player.
**Country:** Bosnia-Herzegovina
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** Mercy Corps assists Bosnian refugees to return to their pre-war homes if they wish. We help rebuild war-torn communities by encouraging economic activity, job creation and a vibrant civil society.

**Name:** Hasime Sadiku
**Age:** 7
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** An actress.
**Country:** Kosovo
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** Hasime is from a very large, poor Kosovar family, with no steady source of income. Mercy Corps has helped her entire community by providing assistance for families who have returned to Kosovo since the end of the war in 1999.

**Name:** Irsan Ramadhani
**Age:** 5
**What he wants to be when he grows up:** A policeman.
**Country:** Indonesia
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** With a local partner, Mercy Corps has developed the Friendly Community Health Center. The Center monitors the overall health of children between the ages of three and five, and provides them with play equipment that helps develop their motor skills.

**Name:** Zainab
**Age:** 7
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** An engineer, like her father.
**Country:** Iraq
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** Mercy Corps is building a new school in the village of Numaniyah, as well as repairing roads, providing essential medicines and medical equipment to the local hospital, and rebuilding the local water system.

**Name:** Prema Lama
**Age:** 7
**What he wants to be when he grows up:** A construction worker or a farmer.
**Country:** India
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** Mercy Corps and Tazo’s joint project, CHAI, focuses on improving the lives of tea growers and their families in Darjeeling, India. Prema is a child of a tea grower.

**Name:** Snezana Mraovic
**Age:** 11
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** Perhaps a painter? She likes math, art and riding her bike.
**Country:** Croatia
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** With a local partner, we fund a Community Center in the war-devastated Croatian town of Gvozd, which provides a large range of educational, artistic and sports activities for children. Snezana is a regular visitor to the Center.
Building vibrant, independent communities has been at the heart of Mercy Corps' vision since our earliest days. But years of work with communities taught us a profound lesson: teaching skills and transferring resources are not enough. Enduring change comes only when communities themselves take charge of their futures.

Beginning in Central America in the 1980s, how did Mercy Corps learn to mobilize communities to help ensure lasting change?
In 1982, Mercy Corps helped establish one of the first indigenous non-governmental organizations in Honduras, Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG). The early 1980s were an era of economic stagnation and political violence across Central America. While Honduras was spared the civil wars that raged in neighboring Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, its economy foundered and human rights violations grew. Mercy Corps and PAG, inspired by the human rights movement, sought to build stronger communities as a means to advance social justice for poor people. Mercy Corps' work was small in scale compared to most humanitarian standards — one staff person traveled back and forth between 12 remote, rural villages. Yet, despite an initial lack of resources, Mercy Corps and PAG supported programming in a region of Honduras where few — if any — other humanitarian organizations worked.

The lessons that emerged from Honduras helped shape Mercy Corps' work — the notion that humanitarian assistance must enable its recipients to move away from dependence on outside aid, and re-establish reliance on their own efforts to create stability in their communities.

When Mercy Corps received its first Child Survival grant for Honduras in 1997, this was foremost in our minds. Rather than just building clinics — and staffing them with outside professional health care providers — we educated local community members about proper nutrition and preventive health care. These volunteers then returned to their villages and in turn taught their neighbors how to monitor and advocate for their own health needs.

This is community mobilization in a nutshell — educating and supporting people to identify and advocate for their own needs. It is at the center of Mercy Corps' civil society initiatives, and as such is at the heart of all our efforts. Our work in Honduras has proven to be a well that we return to again and again, taking the lessons we learn in this part of the Mercy Corps world and applying them elsewhere.

A healthy and self-reliant society is built on a foundation of attitudes and behaviors — people believing change can happen, acting to improve their lives, communicating effectively with those in positions of authority, and acting to change and improve their lives, actions they take to do so are often powerful, effective and long lasting.

Enabling communities to solve their own problems — and thus act as agents of social change — is one of the main aims of Mercy Corps' work in Georgia. Eleven decades under Soviet rule left the country ill-prepared for political and economic independence, and many communities faced a dramatic deterioration in basic services such as education, water and sanitation.

To counter the sense of powerlessness caused by the changes, Mercy Corps employs a community mobilization process that gives people a voice in solving local problems. This type of approach recognizes that everyone — men and women, youth and elders, religious and secular — contributes to progress, even though perspectives may differ radically. The process itself helps heal tensions within a community and increases social cohesion.

Shared community projects inspire hope, confidence, and the belief that things can change. To ensure that this process becomes common practice, Mercy Corps works with villages as they complete a total of three separate projects. With each undertaking, the community’s responsibility for securing necessary resources increases. As local contributions reach an unprecedented 75 percent by the third project, community ownership — one that emphasizes accountability over dependence — is assured.

Such strong relationships fostered at the local level create the preconditions for civic and political action at the national level. As part of our overall approach, Mercy Corps helps local organizations advocate for social and political changes that improve community life.

Over time, Georgians have realized that they themselves can initiate change, rather than waiting for assistance from governments or international aid groups. In the process, a new sense of independence has emerged, paving the way for more changes in the years ahead.
When the Soviet Union collapsed, the money to maintain its water system dried up. In the village of Tskordza, Georgia, the community had always taken access to clean, safe water for granted. But not anymore. In addition to the health risks now posed, the loss had a psychologically depressing effect on the village as well. The lack of water caused tension. Residents felt a loss of hope, and many younger villagers who might have stayed felt compelled to leave. The demise of this community seemed inevitable. When the villagers learned they could receive assistance from Mercy Corps, many were skeptical. Other groups had offered help before, but nothing had ever come of it. And even if something came of it this time, perhaps the money and power would end up with specific individuals—not the village. Nonetheless, they decided to risk participation one more time. Working together in groups initially coordinated by Mercy Corps, the residents planned and carried out a project to bring clean water to their village. Based on Mercy Corps’ model, the villagers brought their own resources—in the form of labor, materials and cash—to complete the project. It wasn’t easy. There was often a dearth of hands to do the work. But by allocating specific tasks to each family and getting together into large groups for heavy jobs, the villagers completed the project. The impact has been dramatic. “Before, we thought we couldn’t manage something like this,” said one of the villagers. “But now, we can all see that we have achieved something worthwhile. We’ve changed our minds about what we can do.” A new confidence was born, enabling the residents of Tskordza to take on a second project, fixing the village water distribution system. Bringing water to the village has had another and no less important impact. “Before, people were aggressive and depressed,” said one young man. “Now that we have water everyone is much happier—our attitudes have changed. Improving our water situation has also improved our relationships with each other.”

**TSKORDZA VILLAGE: NEW WATER AND A SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE**

**Name:** Edin Okanovic  
**Age:** 8  
**What he wants to be when he grows up:** A policeman.  
**Country:** Bosnia-Herzegovina  
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** The war in Bosnia left hundreds of communities shattered—and children like Edin hoping for a better future. Mercy Corps provides jobs so families can earn an income and provide better nutrition and education for their children.

**Name:** Pema Sherpa  
**Age:** 9  
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** A teacher.  
**Country:** India  
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** For young people in the tea-producing region of Darjeeling, India, there are few economic opportunities to look forward to. Mercy Corps is working to provide vocational education to give children like Pema the chance to learn skills, find jobs and live fuller lives.

**Name:** Ali  
**Age:** 12  
**What he wants to be when he grows up:** A shopkeeper.  
**Country:** Iraq  
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** For children like Ali, the chance to go to school is a precious gift. Mercy Corps built a school in his village and helped provide school supplies so he and his classmates will have better educational opportunities and a brighter future.

**Name:** Shadi  
**Age:** 5  
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** A mother.  
**Country:** Iran  
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** Shadi’s family lost everything in the earthquake that leveled Bam in 2003. With help from Mercy Corps, her family received food, shelter, water and basic supplies. Today Mercy Corps is helping restore jobs and health services in Bam as part of a longer-term recovery effort.

**Name:** Sofa  
**Age:** 13  
**What she wants to be when she grows up:** An artist.  
**Country:** Georgia  
**How Mercy Corps has helped:** Sofa was homeless on the streets of Tbilisi when a friend told her about the Mercy Corps-funded Child and Environment Center. There, she found food, clothing and a place to live. Today she’s back in school and working toward a brighter future.
Delivering emergency relief has been part of Mercy Corps’ mission since our founding in 1979. But in the past decade, more complex humanitarian crises have emerged, involving ethnic conflicts and economic collapse. Beginning with the Balkans in the early 1990s, how did Mercy Corps learn to rebuild shattered communities in ways that brought ethnic groups together?
The war that swept through Bosnia in the early 1990s left a land in ruins. More than 200,000 people were killed and two million more were displaced from their homes. Roads, schools, housing, and the economy were all severely damaged.

Mercy Corps arrived in Bosnia to begin rebuilding homes in Brcko, a region that had seen heavy ethnic fighting. Mistrust, grief, and anger were still prevalent among the residents who remained, as well as among the refugees beginning to return home. Tensions were so high in the area that in the first few weeks, several of the homes Mercy Corps rebuilt went up in flames — a warning from local residents that they would not take kindly to returning neighbors of “different” ethnicities.

It was clear that simply getting roofs over people’s heads would not lead to any kind of lasting stability if simmering hatred and mistrust still ruled the day. A way needed to be found to get past the trauma that had been caused by the war.

A primary concern of people who have lived through conflict is how to again provide for their families when peace is restored. If it will help improve their own situations, formerly warring neighbors are often willing to consider working together. And for countries undergoing any kind of transition — whether because of war and conflict or because of changes in economic or political systems — improving collective and individual livelihoods is a crucial means to a lasting peace.

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RESTORING SHATTERED LIVES

In the Maluku province of Indonesia, four years of conflict divided the population, leaving nearly 6,000 dead and close to 700,000 displaced. Once peacefully coexisting towns and villages were divided and segregated along Muslim and Christian religious lines. At the same time, extremists pressured individuals to “take sides,” further heightening the tensions.

Since beginning work in Maluku in 2000, Mercy Corps’ approach was to recognize that local Indonesian organizations, when given an opportunity, were in the best position to apply the energy, creativity and skills needed to tackle conflict-affected communities. By providing technical and financial assistance, we supported the direct efforts of these organizations to implement their own solutions in conflict-affected communities.

Not only did this strengthen the local organizations’ skills, it helped rebuild relationships between Christians and Muslims that had been torn apart by the violence. Mercy Corps’ integrated Muslim-Christian team encouraged local organizations, government and individuals to cross religious boundaries — physically, mentally and emotionally.

One critical factor was creating neutral meeting space where people from all faiths could converse peacefully, share information and ideas, and build new relationships — without the pressure of having to align themselves with one side or another.

The people of Maluku saw dramatic changes in 2003. The Indonesian government lifted the state of emergency. Checkpoints and borders disappeared. Most displaced people returned to their homes as the intense violence subsided, and reconciliation and peace building became a priority.

Emergency assistance is no longer an imperative for residents of Maluku. People now envision a healthy, peaceful society. Mercy Corps continues to work with local organizations, but with a different focus now — rebuilding education facilities, providing clean water and sanitation, and enabling people to once more go about the business of making a living. Maluku is now a province where people look toward the future with a measure of hope.

Mercy Corps is a private, international nonprofit organization that leads the way in helping poor people help themselves out of poverty and disaster. Since 1956, Mercy Corps has been working in some of the world’s most challenging environments, helping people in more than 70 countries rebuild their lives after disaster, move from dependency to self-sufficiency, and transform their futures — often in the face of tremendous odds.
HATUMETE was once a prosperous and religiously mixed community on Seram Island, Indonesia. But the village suffered widespread destruction during the conflict in Maluku, and many residents were forced to flee. An externally imposed curfew prevented people from leaving or returning to their homes. In partnership with the local organization LKAB, Mercy Corps began working with the people of Hatumete to rebuild their school — a project that would provide the hope and practicality of rebuilding homes.

It is not easy to encourage people who have been trapped in recent conflict to once again meet in friendship. But in July 2003, Mercy Corps found a way. In partnership with the local organization LKAB, Mercy Corps began assisting the people of Hatumete to rebuild their school — a project that would provide the hope and practicality of rebuilding homes.

All segments of village society — community and religious leaders, youth, their parents, the village elders — contributed opinions on how to make the school rebuilding project successful. The high level of involvement lent remarkable support to the project. Mosso and Hatumete villagers worked shoulder to shoulder to complete the school, and Mosso villagers even hand-carried materials to Hatumete.

“I am truly grateful that our brothers and sisters from Mosso could help us rebuild our school,” says C. Lilihata, the Raja of Hatumete. And when Mosso began work on its own water system rebuilding project a few months later, Hatumete villagers were in the trenches along with them.
Microcredit loans proved an essential way for Mercy Corps to re-introduce a measure of stability into Central Asia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Poor families could improve their lives during vast social and economic upheaval.

But despite this early success, it became clear that loans were not enough. How did Mercy Corps’ economic development programs evolve to meet the new demands of a changing, globalizing world?


In countries free from war or natural disasters, political and economic transitions can create their own types of upheavals. Economic opportunity plays a significant role in laying the groundwork upon which democratic principles can thrive — everyone wants to be able to support themselves and their families. Everyone wants a job.

Access to economic opportunity is a cornerstone upon which a stable society rests, and the states of Central Asia are a classic illustration. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Central Asia was left in disarray. With state central planning and decision making gone, and many state institutions abandoned, the ensuing chaos created huge disruptions in people’s lives. Fear and confusion were widespread, as was the potential for conflict.

Mercy Corps started working in Kazakhstan in 1992, initially to support local organizations attempting to provide the services previously offered by state institutions. It quickly became clear, however, that straightforward aid delivery would be entirely inadequate for a country facing radical political and economic transition. So Mercy Corps began offering economic assistance, providing access to microcredit loans for Kazakh individuals, small businesses and associations. Our strategy differed significantly from other lending programs. Rather than being purely a vehicle for poverty alleviation, Mercy Corps’ loans were coupled with a business development program that helped increase economic security for entire communities.

As Mercy Corps’ microcredit program developed, it encouraged those responsible for its day to day running to incorporate themselves as an independent, local non-governmental organization. The resulting association, the Asian Credit Fund, is now a leader in small scale lending in Kazakhstan. No longer reliant on Mercy Corps’ assistance, ACF is constantly revising its knowledge of local markets and trade. ACF regularly introduces new financial loan products for customers, as well as improving existing ones. As part of these efforts, we helped establish an independent, full-service commercial bank called XacBank, offering products specifically tailored to the needs of rural customers.

An ability to provide programming that addresses the needs of the people of the Gobi has enabled Mercy Corps to help this rural population on the road towards real economic growth. As the rural economy continues to diversify and expand — helped by policy changes, improved production skills, and access to financial markets and important business information — it will help to ensure that rural Mongolians are not left behind in today’s modern global economy.

In Mongolia, understanding that rural populations have significant potential for growth and development is critical to national stability. Viable businesses, thriving trade and access to jobs are all necessary to keep at bay downward spirals of economic depression — which if unchecked, could lead to social and economic chaos and upheaval.

Just as importantly, there needs to be give and take between urban and rural economies within countries. If a society supports laws and policies that favor one type of economic endeavor over another, an imbalance can occur, as one region of a country progresses only at the expense of another.

More than twelve years ago, Mongolia shook off its remaining ties with the Soviet Union and embarked on a far-reaching set of political and economic reforms, making significant steps toward establishing a market economy. Yet huge challenges still remain.

One of Mongolia’s central tasks is to ensure that rural Mongolians are not left behind as the economy continues to grow. To that end, Mercy Corps’ Gobi Regional Economic Growth Initiative is tailored for Mongolia’s rural people. Our goal is to support the growth and development of the rural economy, and by extension, economic independence for rural residents.

The Gobi Initiative identifies the constraints to economic growth, and then works to repair or eliminate them. Activities center around agriculture and small business development, rural financial services, and access to accurate market information.

Mercy Corps’ understanding of the challenges faced by Gobi entrepreneurs has enabled us to address the problems of a “one product” economy — cashmere — and the need for better financial services and market linkages. As part of these efforts, we helped establish an independent, full-service commercial bank called XacBank, offering products specifically tailored to the needs of rural customers.

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O
n the steppe of Mongolia, a nomad feed-
ing family sits in its round ger, a traditional
felt covered tent made of nomad tent foul.

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song they are making; it’s not even
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The World of Mercy Corps

Where We Work

In 2003, the global resources of Mercy Corps and its partners totaled a record $132.5 million. We managed 39 ongoing worldwide programs, assisting six million people in need.

This map highlights where we currently work (shown in color), where we have operated in the past (shown in beige), and the location of the partners that form the Mercy Corps family.

Africa
1. Eritrea
2. Liberia
3. Sudan
4. Zimbabwe

Americas
5. El Salvador
6. Guatemala
7. Honduras
8. Nicaragua
9. United States

Worldwide Programs

The Mercy Corps Family

- Mercy Corps (Portland, OR, USA)
- Mercy Corps Scotland (Edinburgh, Scotland, UK)
- Mercy Corps DC and Pax World Service (Washington, DC, USA)
- Mercy Corps Seattle (Seattle, WA, USA)
- Proyecto Aldea Global (Tegucigalpa, Honduras)
- Peace Winds Japan (Tokyo, Japan)

Mercy Corps provided material aid to the following ten countries, where at present, we have no ongoing development programs. Material aid shipments — food, construction supplies, emergency relief — totaled more than $20 million in fiscal year 2003.

I
1. Cambodia
2. Cuba
3. Haiti
4. Kenya
5. Laos
6. Latvia
7. Lithuania
8. Mexico
9. Thailand
10. Uganda

Balkans
11. Albania
12. Bosnia-Herzegovina
13. Croatia
14. Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)
15. Macedonia
16. Montenegro (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)
17. Serbia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia)

Central and South Asia
18. Afghanistan
19. India
20. Kazakhstan
21. Kyrgyzstan
22. Pakistan
23. Tajikistan
24. Turkmenistan
25. Uzbekistan

East Asia
26. China
27. Indonesia
28. Mongolia
29. Nepal
30. North Korea
31. Russia

Middle East/Caucasus
32. Azerbaijan
33. Chechnya (Russian Federation)
34. Georgia
35. Ingushetia (Russian Federation)
36. Iran
37. Iraq
38. Jordan
39. Lebanon
40. West Bank
In 2003, Mercy Corps reached six million people in 39 countries and republics with relief and development programs that build stronger communities and more vibrant civil societies. We began operations in three new countries, while ending our programs in three others. The following provides a closer look at our work country by country in 2003.

CHANGING LIVES

By design, the types of interventions we use vary significantly from country to country. What works in the Middle East may prove of little use in Central America. But one common thread links our efforts: the focus on leaving behind a stronger civil society as a means of ensuring that positive changes endure. We weave participation, accountability and peaceful change into all our programming — from emergency responses to long-term development to every stage in between — supporting a process of transformation that helps people build more secure, productive and just communities.
Developmental Relief, Peaceful Change and Rebuilding Economies

Mercy Corps recognizes a special synergy between developmental relief, peaceful change and the rebuilding of fractured economies. We introduce tension-reducing programming in the early stages of assistance that helps facilitate a smoother transition to rebuilding activities.

In the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and North Korea, Mercy Corps worked to rebuild shattered societies and economies in 2003 by providing emergency relief in ways that help build stronger communities. Working from a regional or “cluster” development model, Mercy Corps concentrates its efforts in Lebanon on generating jobs and income. By providing assistance to communities based on their geographic proximity, we help revitalize regional rural economies. We focus on private sector partnerships and programs designed to link consumers with producers. Mercy Corps is also focusing on creating business opportunities and jobs to a voluntary return to Afghanistan. Mercy Corps also responded to the December 2002 earthquake in Bam, Iran, by providing shelter, water, Urgent relief houses and other vital supplies to “Earthquake Relief in Iran” on page 38.

In all of these efforts, we seek to reinforce secular and society principles of accountability, participation, and peaceful change.

In Jordan, Mercy Corps supported health training, water access projects, and drug rehabilitation in the Baluchistan Province of Pakistan. Currently, our staff advise five local organizations and governments, helping to strengthen their service delivery. One of Mercy Corps’ greatest successes in Pakistan in 2003 was furthering the fight against tuberculosis by bringing together 175 stakeholders — Mercy Corps Programs Around the World

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Grassroots groups to local government officials—to exchange strategies for rural TB eradication.

Since 1996, Mercy Corps has played a leading role in North Korea, leading 18 delegation trips, and chairing the US Private Voluntary Organization Consortium on North Korea. Mercy Corps’ programs in North Korea have focused on distributing food and medical aid, rehabilitating agricultural systems to minimize future food emergencies, and increasing the exchange of visitors between North Korea and the United States. We also work with agriculture specialists to introduce new crop varieties and farming techniques to boost food production.

A Regional Approach to Conflict Prevention

Mercy Corps sees itself as a bridge between relief and development, and nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than through our work in the Ferghana Valley. A highly populated region with limited resources and arbitrary borders spanning three Central Asian countries—Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—has created the potential for regional conflict.

Mercy Corps’ work in the Ferghana Valley has been designed with a regional, rather than national, approach. Our goal is to create a climate that encourages people in this small, crowded area to deal with problems together. With a multinational and multi-ethnic staff, we have instituted projects that benefit participants from all three countries. Repairing a school shared by villages on both sides of the Tajik-Kyrgyz border, constructing a water pipeline that provides water to towns straddling the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border, and helping build a health clinic for two Kyrgyz villages deep within Uzbekistan are only a few of the projects that Mercy Corps has undertaken.

Mercy Corps has also organized numerous cultural activities, including the formation of the Ferghana Basketball League that participates in international tournaments and holiday celebrations. The Ferghana Valley Women’s Microcredit program has helped rejuvenate the regional economy. Loans are dedicated to “solidarity groups” of women who guarantee payment for each other, further reinforcing notions of community.

Reconciliation Via Community Determined Economic Development

Mercy Corps believes that community determined economic development is one of the most viable ways to promote peace and stability in countries torn apart by war or natural disasters. Our work throughout the Balkans is geared to help promote trust, respect and peaceful interaction across ethnic lines.

Because the ability to sell their agricultural products is the most viable way for many families in Kosovo to make a living, Mercy Corps’ work reconnecting ethnic Albanians and Serbs—many of whom had strong economic ties in the past—is essential. We provide technical assistance, training and financial support, encouraging them to do business with members of the “other” ethnic group. Not only have the economic gains been substantial, but the interaction between Serbs and Albanians has allowed neighbors to rekindle relationships that have been troubled for nearly 20 years.

Reconciliation through economic development is also at the heart of Mercy Corps’ programming in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where many families have lost relatives and homes when they find their futures will be secure. Small and medium-sized microenterprise endeavors have been key to helping rebuild local economies in Bosnia. Peace building is indirectly promoted by re-establishing economic links between formerly divided communities.

Mercy Corps initiated—and now independent—microcredit institution, Partner, has emerged as the largest lending institution in Bosnia, making available...
entrepreneurs to start or improve businesses. Partner's staff is multi-ethnic, and presents a model of what Bosnia can become.

Mercy Corps' work in Serbia helps citizens identify common needs and devise their own development projects. By fostering increased cooperation and a sense of mutual ownership, the project builds public support for democracy and the rule of law. We help people plan and implement projects that revitalize essential infrastructure, create jobs, and improve environmental conditions. Projects include building and repairing roads and bridges, expanding water and electrical services, providing health facilities, and improving the conditions of schools.

In Croatia and Macedonia in 2003 also focused on revitalizing war-affected communities to build their own peaceful and stable futures. Through local partner organizations, we promoted economic recovery and growth in conflict-affected areas, increased community participation, and improved levels of inter-ethnic cooperation.

Innovative Partnerships

Contributions from individuals, foundations and corporations have long been a critical funding source for Mercy Corps. But in recent years, hands-on involvement from private donors has blossomed. These new partners are fully involved in specific projects where they each have significant knowledge and expertise.

In 2003, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Company, a consortium of oil companies headed by British Petroleum (BP), began funding a Mercy Corps community investment program in the Kvemo-Kartli region of Georgia. This three-year program empowers communities through activities that improve social service infrastructure and livelihood options. Our program will benefit nearly 41,000 people in communities in eastern Georgia, adjacent to BP’s new oil/gas pipeline which originates in Baku, Azerbaijan, passes through Georgia and ends in Ceyhan, Turkey.

Community-Determined Health and Economic Programming

Mercy Corps' umbrella grant mechanism enables local organizations to function independently and better support community mobilization. We provide technical assistance and program oversight to local and international partners, and offer broader programs that result in stronger humanitarian impact.

Mercy Corps' Azerbaijan Humanitarian Assistance Program is one such umbrella grant, providing leadership and support to the largest humanitarian assistance initiative in Azerbaijan. The program aims to help thousands of families in need of emergency assistance, including food, shelter, and non-food items.

In partnership with a private family foundation, Mercy Corps works in Cambodia to improve health services among the indigenous Khmer Krom and Cambodian people in the rural municipality of Takamak. We support health centers in collaboration with local organizations, health practitioners and government health officials. The long-term program currently helps 25,000 people, 70% of whom are rural, indigenous women, and is committed to someday eliminating traditional medical practices in all of Mercy Corps-supported health centers.

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Mercy Corps’ Child Survival program, the first of its kind in Azerbaijan, benefits three underserved mountainous districts in southeastern Azerbaijan. We help strengthen the ability of mothers, caretakers and communities to take responsibility for their own health and the health of their children. To date, the program has helped more than 3,000 mothers and children.

Economic Development and Civil Society Initiatives
As in the Balkans, the Ferghana Valley, and elsewhere, economic development has proven to be a strong and viable way for Mercy Corps to introduce civil society principles to Central Asia. In Tajikistan, we have helped build a network of local organizations and strengthened small businesses. We promote dialogue, improve standards of living, and facilitate cooperation among communities and local government through groups that determine their own priorities and design their own social and rehabilitation projects.

In Kyrgyzstan, Mercy Corps’ work includes microfinance and community-driven development programs, enabling local citizens and organizations to improve their lives and communities. We work with four women’s microcredit organizations to help poor, rural women start or expand their own businesses, and work with a local partner to increase access to credit for small- and medium-sized businesses. These organizations started life as Mercy Corps programs, but now operate independently with limited support from us.

Mercy Corps has been providing small loans to entrepreneurs and farmers in Uzbekistan since 1994, along with business training and legal advocacy. Our current work has expanded to address the underlying causes of social tension and conflict in Ferghana Valley communities that straddle borders with neighboring Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

In Portland, Oregon, United States, Mercy Corps promotes self-sufficiency and self-employment with microenterprise for low-income individuals, women, minorities, refugees and immigrants. By supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs, we encourage financial security and offer economic options for low-income people. We educate participants in basic business training, as well as provide ongoing mentoring and one-on-one business counseling, helping participants build their assets. We also offer matching grants to low-income clients when they save at a designated rate for a specific time period.

Long-term Solutions
Mercy Corps expanded its work in Africa in 2003 and laid the groundwork for new initiatives there.

In Eritrea, Mercy Corps improved child nutrition while promoting self-reliance through parent-teacher associations and village health committees. Rather than simply providing food, we trained local residents to promote school improvement and girls’ education, and helped supplement school meals. We also supported private water vendors to improve water quantity and quality.

In Liberia, Mercy Corps helped increase food security as an engaged community in revitalizing local markets and social networks through civic action and political change. We provided water rehabilitation committees with food and supplies, and trained community members to use in building wells and latrines that improved hygiene standards.

Once a major exporter of grains, Zimbabwe now faces a severe food shortage. In comparison, Mercy Corps helped Zimbabwean farmers set up full self-sufficient vegetable gardens, enabling children and families to grow enough food to sustain the community. Additionally, we are equipping nutritionists with tools to meet 40% of the country’s minimal nutrition standards, improving the quality of school lunches.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To our Mercy Corps supporters, compassion knows no borders. From the Middle East to the Balkans, Central Asia to Central America, your generosity was overwhelming in 2003. Without each one of you, our work would simply not be possible.

Together, we are doing the things that matter most. Thank you.

THE MERCY CORPS FAMILY: Two Headquarters; One Global Organization

With headquarters in the United States and Scotland, and vital partnerships and alliances around the world, Mercy Corps’ global resources totaled a record $132.5 million in 2003, enabling us to reach six million people in need. Both our Portland, Oregon, and Edinburgh headquarters play a critical role in managing Mercy Corps programs worldwide. The two headquarters — along with the other partnerships that make up the Mercy Corps family — give us the ability to secure resources, recruit staff and advocate policies on a global scale.

Proyecto Aldea Global
Mercy Corps/Proyecto Aldea Global (PAG) has been working in Honduras since 1982. We are recognized there for our high-impact programming in underserved communities, particularly in the areas of health care and civil society activities. Mercy Corps’ PAG program currently serves more than 200 villages in 17 municipalities. We are one of the few non-governmental organizations working in rural north and central Honduras.

Pax World Service
Pax World Service formally affiliated with Mercy Corps in January 1998, creating a partnership that couples Mercy Corps’ civil society expertise with Pax’s interest in peace and reconciliation. The Mercy Corps/Pax merger also augments a unique relationship with the Pax World Fund, the first socially responsible mutual fund. Pax World Fund investors are able to designate a portion of their investment earnings to Pax World Services, providing vital support for relief and development programs around the world.

Peace Winds Japan
In 2001, Mercy Corps concluded an alliance with Peace Winds Japan, an international humanitarian organization based in Tokyo, Japan. Under the terms of the alliance, our two organizations work together in selected humanitarian crises, such as post-earthquake reconstruction in Iraq and earthquake relief in Japan. In addition, we support each other in our efforts to secure resources and advocate policies that enhance humanitarian efforts around the world.
The Arab American Institute Foundation's (AAIF) noted Mercy Corps' generosity and capacity to raise funds and quickly place an experienced disaster response team on the ground. Mercy Corps also received generous support for earthquake relief in Iran from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The Foundation's support enabled Mercy Corps to provide 5,000 people with potable water, hygiene kits and other supplies.

Every Click Counts
In 2003, support from The Hunger Site helped thousands of families live healthier lives. The Hunger Site, a Mercy Corps partner since 2001, generates vital resources that enable our teams to continue to serve. Each FirstHand Expedition experience allows our supporters to come face to face with the community members we serve. Each FirstHand Expedition includes briefings with country experts about economic and development issues, plus time for personal and group reflection. There are also visits to unique cultural sites and outdoor adventures. For information, contact Traci Schick, Private Resource Coordinator, at 1-800-292-3355, ext. 339, or tschick@mercycorps.org.

FirstHand Expeditions
In 2002, Mercy Corps responded to a frequent request from donors and friends to experience our work up close. Mercy Corps’ Firsthand Expeditions, launched with a visit to our Mongolia program, inspires people to global service and philanthropy through personal experience. FirstHand Expeditions allows our supporters to come face to face with the community members we serve. FirstHandExpedition

GlobalEnvision, continued to examine opportunities worldwide can offer new solutions to global poverty. Through GlobalEnvision, we share the stories and challenges of improving the lives of the poor. The more we know, the better our chances are that the global economy will create prosperity for all. To find out more or contribute your opinion, visit globalenvision.org.

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Earthquake Relief for Iran
Just hours after a deadly earthquake struck Bam, Iran, in December 2003, Iranian-Americans rushed to support Mercy Corps’ relief efforts. The National Iranian American Council (NIAC) mobilized individuals and groups to assist Mercy Corps. The quick response of NIAC was critical to Mercy Corps’ ability to raise funds and quickly place an experienced disaster response team on the ground.

In all, private contributions totaled more than $10.5 million in cash and more than $5 million in commodities and services. In addition, more than 130 volunteers donated nearly 14,000 hours of work.

Clean Water and New Hope in Darjeeling The partnership between Mercy Corps and Tazo continues to bring new opportunities to villages throughout Darjeeling, India, the source of some of the world’s finest tea. Now in its second year, the joint project called Collaboration for a Better World, or CBI, focuses on improving access to safe, clean water, strengthening community groups, and developing young people’s life skills. CHAI, a generous supporter of the initiative, who has a stake in the production and selling of tea. Tazo, based in Portland, Oregon, is owned by the Arab American Institute Foundation (AAIF) focuses on improving access to safe, clean water, strengthening community groups, and developing young people’s life skills. CHAI, involves a coalition of growers, traders and brokers — everyone who has a stake in the production and selling of tea. Tazo, based in Portland, Oregon, is owned by Starbucks, which also has been a generous supporter of the initiative.

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Marry Corps is pleased to honor our Partners in Mercy, who put their faith into action with generous gifts each month to help children and families in need. Nearly 2,500 Partners in Mercy provide Mercy Corps with steady, vital flows of private income to help us respond eagerly to disasters around the world, as well as implement long-term projects that help people help themselves.

The number of Partners has more than tripled in the last seven years as more and more donors find monthly giving the most convenient way to help build the kind of world they want to live in. The Partners in Mercy provide food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless and care for the sick. This committed group of donors enables Mercy Corps to do more to alleviate the suffering and poverty we encounter as we strengthen communities worldwide.

For more information on becoming a Partner in Mercy, please call 202-416-3210, or visit www.mercycorps.org/partners.
High-value Giving

When you support Mercy Corps, your gift helps generate significant additional resources to help families in need. We use your gift to ensure expert teams generate more resources from other donors. In 2011, every dollar donated to Mercy Corps helped generate $16.51 in additional resources, an average increase of over 10:1.

Here’s your chance to put your beliefs into action and change a child’s life for good. Give For Kids matches 100% of your donation to support the children you care about most. This is the most efficient way to support children whose lives they are changing. What you give will be matched dollar for dollar with a one-for-one gift, up to $100. It’s the perfect way to support us and make a lasting difference.

Give for Kids

Donations are tax-deductible, and we will send you a year-end tax receipt. Give For Kids is coordinated by CharityUSA.com LLC. For more information, visit GiveForKids.org.
Macy's

An Exemplary Stewardship Record

Every dollar donated to Macy's goes to other growers, small and large, and donated grants from governments, international organizations, church groups and other partners under $16.51.

Global Financial Summary

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support &amp; Services</th>
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How Our Resources Were Spent

- Total Global Support Services: 8.4%
- Total Global Programs: 91.6%

Material Aid

Donated goods from governments, international organizations, church groups and other partners under $16.51.

How We Stretch Your Dollar

Every dollar donated to Macy's goes to other growers, small and large, and donated grants from governments, international organizations, church groups and other partners under $16.51.
In recent years, humanitarian aid workers have faced new dangers as they seek to bring assistance in regions torn by war and conflict.

In our first 20 years of work, one Mercy Corps staff member was killed in the line of duty; in the past five years, five have fallen, even as rigorous security measures designed to protect our staff have been implemented.

In this Annual Report, we wish to honor the memory of the Corps staff who died as they strove to make a more peaceful and just world.

Dr. Haileab Simret Yusief, who worked for Mercy Corps' OFDA funded Water Program in Eritrea, originally as our Nutrition Program Officer, dedicated to his work, was newly promoted to Program Officer for ‘Mercy Corps’ OFDA funded water program, helping provide local rural villages with safe, clean water. Friendly and outgoing, Haileab Simret loved music and jokes and shared his experiences with his colleagues.

In late summer 2003, his colleagues and his colleagues, Hailiab Simret Yusief, were travelling to a village in northern Eritrea to discuss the construction of a reservoir. Their vehicle was ambushed, and they were killed.

Yusief left behind two wives and two children.

Hakim Kuchumzada

Hakim Kuchumzada was Mercy Corps’ warehouse manager in Mikhora, Kosovo. During the height of the Kosovar conflict in April 1999, he remained on his post to secure humanitarian supplies and was shot and killed.

Kuchumzada left behind a wife and four young children.

Haileab Simret Yusief

Haileab Simret Yusief loved children. When asked once why he became a pediatrician, he replied, “because I believe children are the hope and the future of the world.”

In our first 20 years of work, one Mercy Corps staff member was killed in the line of duty; in the past five years, five have fallen, even as rigorous security measures designed to protect our staff have been implemented.

Raz Mohammad never tired of driving his truck for Mercy Corps all over southern Afghanistan, no matter how harsh the conditions. A lover of music, he treasured his cassettes of Indian, Afghan and Iranian songs, which he always had on hand to help pass the time on his journeys. Raz Mohammad was honest, generous and well loved by many.

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