Small NORLD

Issue 71 September 2020





Big change starts small

A BETTER WORLD BEGINS HERE

The last six months have been a whirlwind of disruption, chaos, realisation and change for us all no matter where we live. From this common ground, a collective desire is emerging: we don't want to go back to normal - the way things were before. We want and need something better.

The pandemic shone a spotlight on the ways in which normal is failing so many people.

In over 50 years, Practical Action has never settled for normal. Our founder, the radical economist and philosopher EF Schumacher, imagined a better world. A place where we live within the means of our planet, and economies serve people, not the other way around. In short, a world that works better for everyone.

In this issue of Small World, we explore how Practical Action's unique approach is more vital and relevant right now than ever before. We have a chance to share our experience, knowledge and skills with a world

that's now ready to embrace something different. To demonstrate that by bringing communities, local government and partners together, we can create big, meaningful transformation. This is our time.

We begin with our International Director, Amy Mina, who talks about the current challenges and opportunities facing Practical Action right now (pages 4–5).

In our special feature, we dive deeper, showcasing some examples of unconventional change that your support is helping to make possible. We take you from a refugee community in Jordan, to riverside farmers in Bangladesh, to a school in the remote mountains of Peru (pages 6-9).

And then Farida Bulhan-Aliwa, East Africa Director, provides an update on the difference your support is helping to make in Kenya, where communities face the first surge in coronavirus infection rates (page 10). I hope the stories in this issue of Small World inspire you with hope and excitement for a bold new future.

Please share our stories with your family and friends. With your colleagues. On social media. Everywhere you can. Because to make real change we need to build a bigger following of people like you. Let's seize this historic moment and use it to power change for the most vulnerable communities. And for our world.

Thank you so much for your continued support through these difficult times. It's good to have you with us.

With best wishes to you and your loved ones.

Paul Smith Lomas MBE Chief Executive



Esperence is helping bring change that's anything but normal to refugees in Rwanda (Page 8).

In this issue

- **04 Expert opinion:** Turning a crisis into an opportunity
- Special feature: Let's create change 06 that's anything but normal
- Project update: Rising to the 10 challenge of coronavirus in Kenya
- Meet the change-makers 12
- Your questions answered 13
- Vicki's radical fundraiser 14
- In memory of an intrepid supporter 15
- A big thank you from North Darfur 15



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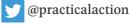
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/practicalaction





Cover image Our founder's book, Small is Beautiful, published in 1973.

Turning a crisis INTO AN OPPORTUNITY

We talk to Amy Mina, our International Director, about what we're learning from the coronavirus pandemic.



What has surprised you about living and working through the pandemic?

In a strange way, I think the pandemic has brought us closer together. Everybody's talking about the same problems and the same solutions. Everybody's talking about PPE – who knew what PPE was before? We all had loo paper shortages, from Bangladesh to Peru, to Bolivia and Zimbabwe. So, something about that is quite unifying.

Has the way Practical Action works changed during the crisis?

The pandemic and working from home has really shown us our strengths and also encouraged new ways of working.

In Kenya, for example, we've reached more than 15,000 people with clean water, handwashing supplies and personal protective equipment. And we've reached more than half a million people with important messages about how to stay safe during the pandemic (see page 10 for more). The strength of our pre-existing relationships with partners, communities and local authorities made this possible, even though our teams were all working from home. We've always valued partnerships but the pandemic has really highlighted how important they are.

Also, in our offices around the world, we had been considering going digital with many of the ways we work together – especially using video conferencing more extensively. The pandemic gave us a big push in that direction. What had been planned for the next few years became a reality in three weeks, and we're already seeing benefits.



Globally, what system failures has the pandemic revealed?

We've seen that the pandemic is disproportionately affecting the poorest people, unsurprisingly. Especially those living in crowded slum communities where social distancing is impossible. In these communities, access to water, soap and hygiene products is wholly insufficient at a time when constant handwashing is essential. Latrines are often communal. Families don't have running water at home. And awareness of handwashing practices is limited.

Practical Action has been working in communities like this for over half a century, supporting local authorities to extend services such as water pipelines and sanitation, and increasing awareness of good hygiene. The pandemic has thrown into stark relief the urgency of changing systems that keep people living in these very unhealthy conditions. The poorest communities must be included in urban planning and funding. Access to water, sanitation, hygiene, health care and affordable housing, all of which are basic human rights, must be a priority for planning authorities.

We've also seen mass returns of migrant workers from cities to rural areas, where they have little or no access to land or income. This is placing even more pressure on fragile rural economies. The pandemic has shown that the food supply system is unstable, unsustainable and unfair. We've been challenging it for years, calling for a more sustainable approach to farming that works for the smallholder farmer and for the planet. Now we believe is the time to do so louder and with others.

Where can Practical Action make the biggest difference as we move forwards?

Climate change may have been replaced in the headlines by coronavirus, but it is now more

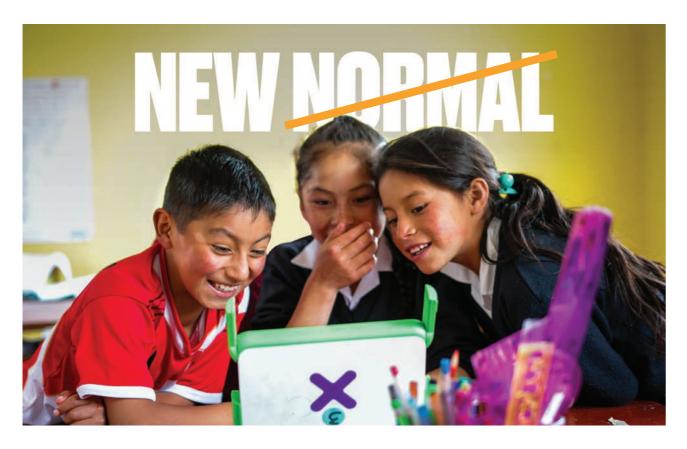


imperative than ever to strengthen community resilience against it. The pandemic has shown that no one was prepared for a crisis on this scale. We all saw how easily supply chains and healthcare systems toppled over. And it was the poorest people who were hit hardest.

Now more than ever we will focus on how communities can rise to the bigger, slower, and less immediately visible crisis of climate change.

The entire world has been put to the test this year, Practical Action included. I believe we'll emerge from this crisis even stronger as a global organisation than before. And I hope that the world will too. We can help make that happen.

We have big ambitions for a world that works better for everyone. Please help make them possible with a gift at: **practicalaction. org/smallworld**



Let's create change that's anything but normal

We have a unique opportunity to build a post-crisis world that works better for everyone. Let's take a look at what a little ingenuity can make possible.

A tiny virus has turned the world upside down. It has exposed just how fragile our modern economies are. So as we start to emerge from the crisis, how can we create systems that work better, for people and planet?

Practical Action has always thought differently. Rather than get back to the old 'normal', let's do better than normal. Over the next few pages, let's look at three of our recent successes.

What if a little ingenuity could transform education on remote mountain tops?



It's hard to get a good education in the mountains of Peru. Only 20% of children finish school with basic numeracy and literacy skills. This is mostly because more than 70% of schools are unhealthy places to be, lacking essentials such as electricity, water and sanitation.

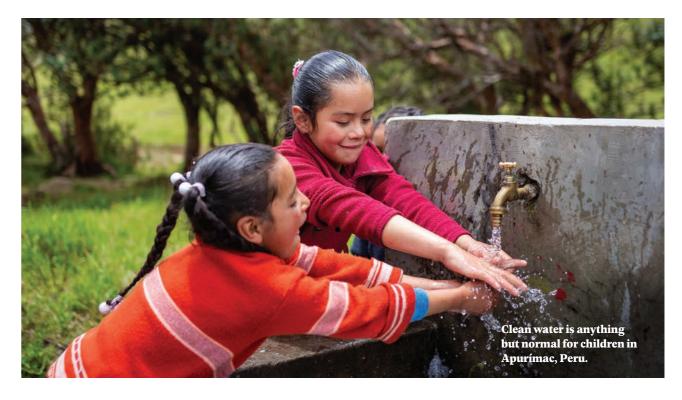
This has a big impact on the health and wellbeing of the students, and on their ability to learn. Anaemia, respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases are common because of contaminated drinking water, poor nutrition, and the inadequate disposal of waste and in the cold mountains, the water often freezes, making handwashing impossible.

Meeting basic needs is just the beginning.

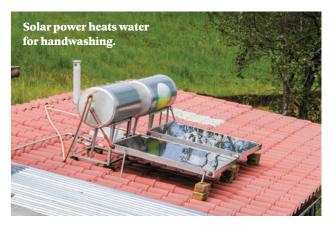
A 'normal' solution might be to help fix one of these problems. But we're working with schools in Apurímac, Peru, to introduce holistic solutions that address the full needs of the students. By introducing a clean water supply, children and teachers can drink without fear of illness. Solar and thermal energy lights up classrooms, and it heats water for handwashing. Vitally, it enables internet connection. Head teacher Fryda Caytuero at Tupac Amaru primary school says,

"The introduction of computers and the internet makes me very excited because we are quite behind in that area."









The solutions we're implementing with the community are all designed to be easy to maintain, so the community can manage the facilities themselves. But this isn't the most revolutionary part of this work.

To make this work possible, we brought the Peruvian Ministries of Education, Technology and Health together, working in ways that they had never considered before. Having seen the benefits of this approach, they've been eager to do more. And now the benefits can spread far... We began this work in Apurímac with seven schools, and now we're working with the Ministries to roll this out to 2,000 schools in Peru.

When we agree that normal isn't good enough, and reach for something better, incredible change is possible.

Create change that's anything but normal by making a gift at: practicalaction.org/smallworld

What if clean energy could help refugees to thrive, not just survive?



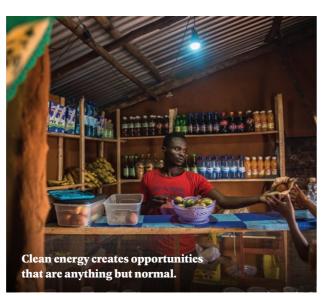
Around the world, more than 70 million people have been driven from their homes and are living as displaced people - many as refugees in neighbouring countries.

In humanitarian crises like this, the normal solution is to provide food, shelter, water and sanitation. But energy is rarely considered a priority - after all, the refugee camp is a temporary situation, isn't it?

In fact, many people live in refugee camps for years, even decades, without lighting, electricity or clean cooking, and with no way to make an income. They are trapped in poverty, dependent on aid, and afraid to move around the camps at night as they fear theft or violence. Energy for heating and cooking most often comes from burning firewood and charcoal, which are hazardous to health and the environment. Can we do better than this?

What happens when you challenge convention and use renewable energy to help refugees live, learn and work better?

In Rwanda and Jordan, we are working with 60,000 refugees to introduce clean, affordable energy. It powers homes, schools and health clinics. It powers appliances and tools, creating opportunities for small businesses. It provides the community with a means to make an income, flourish, and free themselves from reliance on aid. And it allows the camps to be lit at night, making them safer places to be, especially for women, girls and those living with disabilities.



When people have no choice but to live in a refugee camp, often their lives are put on hold. But our work proves what many people thought was impossible - that when refugee camps have electricity, the residents can be self-sufficient, run successful businesses, improve their quality of life, and thrive.



When Bisore Tuyishime was just 10 years old, he and his family were forced to flee the Democratic Republic of Congo to escape the conflict. He has lived in Nyabiheke Camp, Rwanda, ever since.

At 22 years old, Bisore was determined not to fall into the same poverty trap that caused so much suffering for his older siblings. So when he saw an opportunity for training in electrical engineering with Practical Action, he jumped at the chance. Now Bisore is one of the engineers helping install and maintain lighting at Nyabiheke Camp, Rwanda. His work is transforming the lives of the community now and in the future.

"This opportunity is a game changer for me. I have many responsibilities in my family. I can help in buying food and clothes for my brothers and sisters."

What if planet-friendly solutions could hold back the floods and build climate resilience?

In the low-lying, flood-prone area of Bangalipur, Bangladesh, the monsoon season is a time of fear. When heavy rains come, the Aurahi River swells, swallowing the community's agricultural land and washing away livelihoods.

Rhongali Tharu is a farmer who has always lived in Bangalipur. He has seen the flooding worsen each year:

"The river erodes our fields and sweeps away crops. It erodes 4–5 metres every year."

One solution might be to build big concrete dykes to hold the river back. These are appropriate in some situations, but they are also expensive to build and maintain, and they can impose on the local environment and people.

Working with the community, we've created a cost-effective, sustainable solution. 'Biodykes' are essentially a wall of plants that help bind the soil in



LET'S SHAPE A BETTER POST-CRISIS WORLD

The coronavirus poses extraordinary challenges for the whole world. But also opportunities. This is a unique chance for us to change path, to rethink and to reset.

We need a world where schoolchildren are full of vitality because they have fresh water to drink and wash with. Where villagers can sleep without fear of flooding in the monsoon season. Where droughts a riverbank, providing a highly effective and natural protection from flooding.

Biodykes have multiple benefits over engineered flood defences. They are low-cost to build, using local materials. They are easy to maintain. They increase biodiversity. And they can be planted with crops or trees to provide food or fuel, or generate an income.

Phularam Chaudhary, chairperson of the Bangalipur community disaster management committee, said,

"Two people from each household worked for 25 days to build this biodyke. This year there has been no soil erosion at all."

Simple, locally-made biodykes are a win-win solution, building long-term climate resilience and providing numerous benefits to people and planet.

do not stop farmers from feeding their families or making a living. Where slum communities can live with health and dignity.

Together we can help shape a world that works better for everyone.

Help create radical change, by making a gift today at: practicalaction.org/smallworld

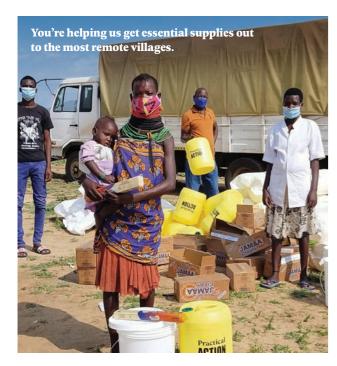


Rising to the challenge of **CORONAVIRUS IN KENYA**

Farida Bulhan-Aliwa, our Regional Director for East Africa, updates us from Kenya, where coronavirus is now spreading.

Coronavirus is beginning to take hold in Kenya, with 30,000 cases and 470 deaths at the time of print (mid August). No lockdown has been implemented yet, but there is a night-time curfew, as well as restrictions on movement into and out of many counties. Schools, bars, places of worship and many businesses are closed. Cases continue to rise.

As with all our Practical Action country offices around the world, we have been working with communities and local authorities since the start of the pandemic to do everything we can to lessen the impact and save lives.



The challenge here is limiting the spread of the virus in a region where water and sanitation are scarce. In urban Kisumu, 50% of people have limited or no access to clean water. In rural Turkana the same applies to 80% of the population.

Of course we've been working with communities here for many years to enable access to water, soap, and life-saving hygiene advice. You may have supported or read about our 2018 *Safe Pair of Hands* appeal and programme of work. This continues as the backdrop to our coronavirus response, in addition to a new set of priorities and targets.

In limiting the spread, behaviour change among the communities is essential: 67% of people we've talked to believe that water alone is adequate to clean hands, and 43% say soap is a luxury that they can't afford. So we've been spreading messages as widely as we can about the importance of handwashing, social distancing, PPE and what to do if you're ill.

Early on, we identified opportunities for getting lifesaving advice to communities virtually. In Kenya, over 50% of the population is under 35 and highly connected via social media. So as well as sending push messages through mobile phones, we've been using social media platforms like Facebook to get the message out. We've also trained community health volunteers, and created murals in public areas to communicate preventative measures.

The corporate partnerships we've developed during the crisis have been essential in maximising our impact. Partners have helped us distribute water storage tanks, handwashing stations, sanitisers and soap. We've also distributed sanitary pads to 4,300 women and girls who are struggling to access essentials like this during the pandemic.

In partnership with the county governments of Turkana and Kisumu, we've participated in virtual Coronavirus Response Meetings. These are an opportunity to influence plans and responses at the county level.

We're making great progress, but there's still a long way to go. We're yet to reach the peak of coronavirus infections, so the biggest period of uncertainty and economic impact is still to come.

For more, watch an interview with Farida at: **practicalaction.org/smallworld**



Helping Apoo protect herself

"I heard the virus kills the aged and I didn't have money to purchase the required face mask, so I ended up making one for myself."

Apoo lives in a very remote part of northern Kenya. Her children left her to find work in bigger towns, and so she usually relies on neighbours for food. In the past few months, she told us, it has been a struggle, and she has gone to bed hungry on many occasions.

YOUR IMPACT

100 community health volunteers provided with PPE and trained to spread coronavirus safety advice.

800,000 people across Kenya given information via mobile and social media to help keep themselves safe.

4.7KM of water pipeline extended, providing 250 new household connections, plus five new community water points each serving 100 people.

698 handwashing stations being built for health centres, dispensaries and vulnerable households.

Around the world, we're all depending on the same measures to stay safe.

Apoo wanted to protect herself from coronavirus, so she made her own face mask from plastic. As part of our response, our community health volunteers gave her a proper, safe mask and a water storage container, along with a lesson on handwashing and advice on how to keep herself safe. This kind of work makes a big different in remote communities that have no access to water, and who can't afford to buy some of the preventative items that are needed.

At this time, your support is more vital than ever before. Please make a gift today at: **practicalaction.org/smallworld**

Meet the **CHANGE-MAKERS**

In this issue, we talk to two of Practical Action's talented and passionate staff to find out what they do and what makes them tick. Let's meet Yvonne, our new Chair of Trustees, and Lee from our Learning and Development Team.



Dr Yvonne Pinto Chair of the Board of Trustees

What does your role involve?

I lead the Board to ensure Practical Action delivers on its charitable objectives, through effective teamwork that uses individual's skills and experience. The board shares collective responsibility for the decisions it makes, and it is important that we are always open, accountable, and act with integrity.

How did you come to be working in governance?

I was born and brought up in Ethiopia and Kenya and have worked in many parts of the world where Practical Action operates. I'm deeply interested in technology, development, and non-profit governance - having been a member of a number of different boards internationally.

What drives you?

I've lived through a civil war and a famine and all the associated insecurity of political instability. So my motivation is to use my skills and abilities to improve opportunity, equality and choices for many vulnerable people around the world.



Lee Piarroux Global Learning and Development Manager

What quality is most important in vour role?

Learning and development is always about change - helping people evolve, developing organisations, so being able to embrace change is important. I have to be a real driving force, a positive agent for change within Practical Action.

What has the pandemic taught you?

It has become clear that technology is core to learning. Learning is something that can happening anytime and anywhere. Our live virtual learning events through coronavirus have been so popular globally, and we will keep these going, as well as looking into smartphone learning apps and having our first virtual global learning conference.

Both coronavirus and the Black Lives Matter movement have given us some powerful and wonderful gifts – to do things differently. This is exciting to see, because it aligns with what I'm already doing. In the last year, I have designed and delivered diversity and inclusion training in almost all of our countries, and I continue to work with staff in how we engage and communicate.

Read more about the Practical Action team at: practicalaction.org/smallworld

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED...

When you're solving the world's toughest problems, no question is too small. Here's what's been on your fellow supporters' minds this month.

How does Practical Action choose which communities to work with? Do you approach them, or do they come to you?

Answer by Ute Collier, from our Influence and Impact team.

We can't work with every community in need, of course. We try to select communities where there are important needs that our programmes can address.

After reading the last issue, I wondered why local authorities aren't solving the problems slum communities face?

Answer by Uttam Saha, Strategic Lead on Urban and Energy.

Often local authorities want to do more to meet the needs of their residents, but they have competing priorities. For example, the need to raise finances to run public services, which could mean prioritising the needs of their business community. Or they may be trapped in systems that leave them very little flexibility for change. If they are spending a lot of time and money maintaining waste vehicles and systems that only just allow them to reach the central

What would you like to ask our experts about Practical Action's work?

Send your questions to: supporter.services@practicalaction.org.uk with the subject line of "Small World questions", or write to Small World questions, Practical Action, The Robbins Building, 25 Albert Street, Rugby CV21 2SD.

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If we are approached by a community from another location, we consider whether it is pragmatic for us to start new work in their area as part of our broader strategy. Deciding to work in a given location is not just about supporting an individual community, but about working with all the local partners, so there are many factors to consider.

All of our work begins with a process of developing a relationship with the communities. From there, we identify who we need to work with to bring about the positive change the community needs.



business district of the town, they struggle to imagine how they could stretch their resources to do any more.

They may also fear criticism if they are seen in some way to 'legitimise' the presence of slum communities on land which doesn't belong to them – even if that community has been there for generations.

We help build lines of communication between slum communities and local authorities so they can each understand the challenges the other faces. We aim to build trust and respect where before there was suspicion and accusation. We help show local authorities and communities new ways of doing things that work within the limits they face, and start to push the boundaries.

Vicki's radical FUNDRAISER

We love it when people come up with ingenious ways to raise funds for Practical Action, and Vicki's bold move just knocked our socks off!



Vicki Bromwich, a personal development coach from Rugby, asked family, friends and colleagues to sponsor her for an unusual fundraiser.

"Practical Action's radical thinking and actions prove there's an alternative to how we lived before coronavirus, where people no longer live in poverty and we take care of the planet. So I decided to do something radical to support them."

Vicki's husband, John, admits he didn't really want her to shave her hair off, or to be the one to do it, but he was behind her all the way: "When Vicki decides to do something, she does it with passion. I think it's incredible what she's achieved, and I am very proud to support her.'

Vicki became a Practical Action supporter a couple of years ago and sees a shared sensibility between her work and our approach.



"In my work, I help clients to become more self-sufficient, and I really admire the way Practical Action creates lasting change so people can generate their own prosperity. Some of my friends are guite shocked, but, for me, shaving my hair off at this time seems an effective way to raise money for an important cause."

Vicki has raised over £1,700, which will go towards our work to make a world that works better for everyone.

A big thanks to Vicki for her brave fundraiser, and to all her family, friends and colleagues for sponsoring her.

If you'd like to raise funds for Practical Action, find out more and contact the team at: practicalaction.org/fundraising

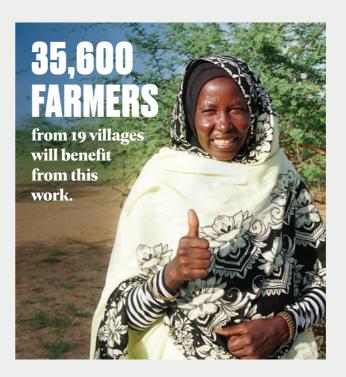
In memory of an intrepid supporter

We were saddened to learn of the death of Richard Crane, who undertook many sporting challenges around the world to raise funds for Practical Action's work.



In 1983, Richard Crane and his brother Adrian walked into our London office to tell us about their idea to run 2,000 miles along the Himalayas in a record-breaking 101 days. That was the beginning of a long relationship with Richard, and the first of many fundraising adventures.

Richard and Adrian successfully completed the Himalayan run, raising £60,000 for Practical Action



– a huge sum in the 1980s. We created a newspaper and sent it out to their donors, and that was the start of Small World magazine, 71 issues ago!

Richard and his cousin - explorer and TV presenter Nick Crane - took on two more physical challenges: cycling up Mount Kilimanjaro, and then cycling 3,000 miles in 58 days to the point on Earth furthest from the sea: a desert in China near the Russian border.

All three of their adventures spawned books, with all royalties going to Practical Action. And the huge amount of media attention they received brought in lots of donations and new supporters.

The Himalayan Run spurred Richard and Adrian to continue their adventures and charitable efforts throughout their lives and helped usher in an era of people fundraising through sporting challenges.

We will always be grateful for Richard's amazing contribution to our work. We offer condolences to Richard's wife Michele, his brother Adrian and cousin Nick. Without all of these amazing people, we would not be where we are today.

A BIG THANK YOU from North Darfur



Thank you to everyone who supported our *Turning the Tables* appeal earlier this year. Thanks to your generosity, we raised over £3.15 million, including £1.48 million of match funding by the UK government.

The matched income will go directly to funding our work with communities in North Darfur to re-green the desert, creating fertile fields and forests. And your donations will help us work with communities around the world. We'll keep you updated on progress once the project has begun, later this year. Until then, please watch a special thank you video at: practicalaction.org/ smallworld

Your gift to create change that's anything but normal

Giving online is quick and easy at practicalaction.org/smallworld

Please accept my donation by post of: £25 £35 £50 £100 or my own choice of £		
I enclose a cheque / postal order / charity voucher made payable to Practical Action		
OR please debit my: MasterCard / Visa / Charity Card		
Card number: Expiry date: /		
Signature: Date:		
So that more of your money goes directly towards our work we do not automatically post gift acknowledgements. Please tick here if you would like to receive one.		
Please tick here to receive information about how to leave a gift to Practical Action in your Will.		
Small World features examples of Practical Action's many projects around the world, and funds raised will be used wherever the need is greatest.		

My personal contact details:	20/SB-CS002
Title: First Name:	Surname:
Address:	
	Postcode:
We will post you information about our work, fundraising activities and ways to get involved. If you are happy for us to provide this information by phone or email please provide your details: Email:	To do this, we may analyse your data and obtain further information about interests, preferences and level of potential donations using publicly available sources. We sometimes ask carefully selected companies to do this for us.
Telephone: We take protecting your personal information seriously. We will never sell or swap your details with another organisation. We aim to provide you with a great experience of Practical Action and to communicate with every supporter in the best way possible.	You can find out more about how we collect and use your personal information by reading our privacy notice at practicalaction.org/privacy . To change how we manage your personal information or opt out of receiving communications from Practical Action, call us on 0800 389 1624 or email myprivacy@practicalaction.org.uk

Maximising the impact of my gift

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Yes, I would like Practical Action to treat this donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years as Gift Aid donations. I am a UK taxpayer and I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in the tax year it is my responsibility to pay the difference. Gift Aid will be used to fund all of Practical Action's work. Date: _____/ ____/ ____/

Please note HMRC requires us to have your full name and address above to Gift Aid your donation.

Thank you

LASTING CHANGE

ACTION

Please return in the envelope provided: Practical Action, The Robbins Building, 25 Albert Street, Rugby CV21 2SD You can also donate by calling **0800 389 1624** (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

Make a Will MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The uncertainty of the last few months has led many people to re-evaluate what matters most to them.

Making a Will ensures the people and issues you care about are taken care of, and not left to chance. So if you're looking to take control of your affairs, and write or update your Will, our free guide can help get you started.

And if you're shielding there's no need to put it off, as new legislation means Wills can now be witnessed over video links in some instances – your solicitor will be able to advise.

To request our free Wills guide visit **practicalaction.org/leave-a-legacy** or email: **Liz.Webb@practicalaction.org.uk**