

# Small WORLD

Issue 69 Winter 2020



**Practical  
ACTION**

**Big change starts small**



Dear supporter,

When I was in high school, in 1987, there was a great flood in Sudan. I started working with a youth organisation distributing tents for people who had lost their homes. It began my lifelong passion and commitment to helping people, which has brought me to Practical Action, where I am Country Director in Sudan.

Today, floods are affecting more and more people, and droughts too, as the climate changes. When it rains heavily, crops are destroyed and people go hungry. When it doesn't rain, crops don't grow, and people go hungry.

We work hard to help communities stand strong against the threat of climate change and its impact on their lives.

In this issue of *Small World*, you can read about an exciting project in North Darfur (Special Feature). We are working with 19 communities here to turn the tables on climate change, and transform barren desert into fertile farmland and forest.

As you know, my country has experienced many years of conflict, with each other, and now with the environment. But together we are working towards a new Sudan, where people live in peace, where no one dies of hunger because of climate change. A place where all children are in school, where women are treated with dignity; the new Sudan is a place of freedom, peace and justice for all.

Your support is so important in making this possible. I would like you to know that your gifts are well taken care of, and are used to make the maximum impact. You are changing lives in a profound way, and the people you help will be forever grateful, to you, and to Practical Action. Thank you.

With best wishes,

Muna Eltahir  
Country Director, Sudan

PS. Please support our *Turning the Tables* appeal (pages 9–13) before 9 March so that your gift can be matched by the UK government. **Thank you.**



Suad (left) and her community are ready to turn the tables on climate change.



**Practical  
ACTION**

**Practical Action**

The Robbins Building  
25 Albert Street  
Rugby CV21 2SD

**T:** 01926 634 400

**W:** practicalaction.org

**E:** supporter.services@practicalaction.org.uk

**Patron**

HRH The Prince of Wales KG, KT, GCB  
Reg Charity No. 247257

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**Cover image**

Turning the tables on climate change. Magdoub, Sudan.

“*Water is life. If you can help us get access to water, then this is going to change lives for everyone in Kafod forever.*”

Suad Allah, mother of three, lives in Kafod, Sudan.

Suad had to flee her village because of the civil war, but now she has returned and faces a new threat: severe drought, caused by the changing climate.

Help us work with Suad's community and turn the tables on climate change by supporting our UK Aid Match appeal – see our special feature on pages 9–13.

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# A farm with ZERO WASTE

Young people in Kenya are learning how to make use of their farm waste and become truly sustainable.

The ongoing drought in Kisumu County, Kenya means many poor farming families are struggling to make a living. As a result, more and more young people are leaving their rural homes to find work in already overcrowded cities.

That's why we're working in partnership with the IKEA Foundation to help 6,000 young people in Kisumu make farming profitable. With training in new agroecology farming techniques, they're discovering that they can make a decent living, while protecting their environment.

The Bridge Youth Group is just one of the groups we helped set up. The 20 members are aged 16–20, and they're applying their new skills with great enthusiasm.

In just one year, the group have established a profitable farm – producing crops, leafy vegetables, poultry, fish, dairy goats and rabbits.

The group maximises their profits by finding a use for

everything that would normally be considered waste. Chicken droppings make great fish food. Recycled water from fish ponds can be used to irrigate their vegetable gardens, and rabbit urine and goat droppings make great fertiliser. Vegetable remains are fed to their chickens and rabbits. And so the cycle goes, with nothing wasted.

We're continuing to work with the group, helping them acquire new business skills to grow their farm even more.

*“There is no need for me to go to one of the big cities to look for employment. We are making enough money to pay our bills and live comfortably.”*

A little knowledge in the right hands really can change the world.

To find out more about our agroecology work visit [practicalaction.org/brighter-futures](http://practicalaction.org/brighter-futures)



The Bridge Youth Group farm works for people and the planet.

## Children speak up about CLIMATE CHANGE

The younger generation are more aware of the dangers facing their planet than ever before. We asked some of the children in our lives what they think...

**Why should we look after the planet?**

“Because if we don't, global warming is going to get worse and worse over the years.”

Leonie

*“Because it's a special place for people and animals and the next generation.”*

Tilly (10)



**Whose job do you think it is to take care of the planet?**

*“The world belongs to everyone, everyone should look after it.”*

Leonie (7)



**How do you think climate change is affecting people in other parts of the world?**

The sea levels are rising and people are losing their homes and land. Tegan

It means that there is less food for people. Tilly

**If you were the Prime Minister, how would you fight climate change?**

I would try to make people think more about their transport choice and restrict ones that are worse for the planet. Tilly

**What do you think we could do to take better care of the planet?**

*“I think we should use more renewable energy, plant more trees, recycle more and waste less.”*

Tegan (14)



It's so reassuring to see the next generation already taking responsibility for their world, taking action, attending marches and raising awareness of climate change.

Turn to page 9 to read about our exciting project to help families turn the tables on climate change.



# Building resilience **TOGETHER**



David Nash of the Z Zurich Foundation explains Practical Action's vital role in the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance.

For families living in the foothills of the Himalayas, the monsoon means sleepless nights. Heavy rain falls in the mountains, then hurtles down the slopes, gathering speed and volume, until it crashes into the community.

Flash floods destroy homes, livestock, crops, lives and livelihoods. The changing climate means floods are becoming more common all around the world.

The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is a partnership of nine organisations, including Practical Action. We came together five years ago to find ways of helping communities build resilience to floods. And the truth is, we didn't have all the answers.

That's the point of the partnership: to share knowledge and find solutions together. As the Z Zurich Foundation's Senior Flood

Resilience Alliance Manager, my job is to connect the partners and facilitate that learning process.

Building flood resilience is incredibly complex. There's no one-size-fits-all resilience package. What I've learned over the last five years is that every community is unique. Even communities living within a few miles of each other will experience the same flooding event differently.



We're helping build resilience to landslides.



There are a huge number of factors that affect the impact of flooding. The landscape, the infrastructure of the area, local government systems, the financial situation of the community, and the knowledge and skill levels of the people within it. So we devote the time needed to understand each community, and identify the root causes of their vulnerability, before we work with them to implement solutions. It takes a holistic approach.

The first step is making sure that when a flood comes, communities can get themselves, their portable property and their livestock to safety. To do that they need time. Practical Action has achieved great success in Nepal working with national weather services and mobile phone companies to create an automated early warning system. When there is flood risk, free text alerts are sent out to everyone in the community.

**This system has increased flood warning times from as little as two minutes to seven hours.**

Getting out of the way of the flood is just one part of the challenge.

**When the flood has rushed through it leaves behind sediment, damaged crops and property. For farming communities this has a devastating impact.**

When I visited the project in Nepal, I was excited to see how Practical Action were helping the community grow mushrooms as a flood-resilient crop. Mushroom farming is pretty easy to set up, and can be done at home. The crop is grown on raised platforms, so it isn't exposed to flood water.

Once the community has flood-resilient crops, we work with them to get the crops to market and make a decent income, providing long-term financial security.

This chain, from increased warning time, to alternative crops, to income generation, is what helps build resilience.

Nepal is just one of the countries we're working in together. We're also building community resilience in Bangladesh and Peru. Across these three countries we've learned so much. And that knowledge helps influence change on a national and international scale.

Recently, Practical Action helped encourage the government in Peru to invest \$13m in flood resilience. This is an important step forward, as we've found that every \$1 invested in resilience saves on average \$5 in disaster response.

Helping communities adapt to climate change is at the core of Practical Action's work. They have staff working solely on flood resilience, so they bring a very high level of expertise to the Alliance. They punch well above their weight in terms of the influence they are able to have.

The real strength of the organisation is their desire to think about how we can do things differently to make the biggest possible impact. By engaging with the Alliance so strongly, they're throwing themselves not just into delivering innovative projects on the ground, but into developing guiding principles that benefit the wider world.

To find out more, visit [practicalaction.org/resilience-that-protects](https://practicalaction.org/resilience-that-protects)





The success of our biogas project inspired the Bangladesh government to begin rolling it out across the country.

## Inspiring change for better lives

Ute Collier, our Head of Energy, explains the power of small successes to influence big change as we work towards a world where everyone has access to clean cooking and sustainable energy.

Although I've only been at Practical Action for a year, I've spent my entire working life in the field of sustainable energy. Right now, three billion people have no access to clean cooking, and almost a billion people live without electricity. It's my passion and a privilege to work with colleagues and partners around the world to change that.

### So how can an organisation like Practical Action transform the lives of billions of people?

One of Practical Action's strengths is our ability to inspire others. We work with communities to come up with ingenious solutions to the problems they face, and then we inspire others to adopt those solutions. Let me give you one of my favourite examples.

In Bangladesh in 2009, Practical Action began a small project looking at the potential for turning organic kitchen waste into energy. The waste is fed into a 'digester', which converts it into biogas. This biogas can then be used to power cookers. The success of that project helped us get funding for a number of larger projects that also found different uses for biogas, such as irrigation pumping.

We took the results of these projects to conferences around the country, and invited members of the Bangladesh government to come along. When they saw how well things worked, they realised that biogas could make

a big difference to Bangladesh's energy problems. Now, they are developing an action plan for rolling out biogas production around the country.

### This is the power of small to change the picture. And it's why each of your gifts makes such a big difference.

We also gather evidence from our own energy projects and those of other organisations and partners to produce *The Poor People's Energy Outlook* report. Basically, the report is a summary of what works and what doesn't work in helping poor communities to access clean energy.

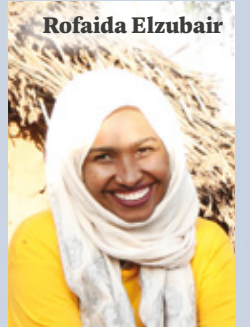
We share this report around the world, aiming to influence governments and many other organisations.

This is just one of the ways we can transform the lives of millions of people.

To find out more, visit [practicalaction.org/energy-that-transforms](http://practicalaction.org/energy-that-transforms)

# Turning the tables on CLIMATE CHANGE

We're working with communities in North Darfur to turn desert into fertile fields and forests. Rofaida Elzubair from our Sudan office introduces this year's UK Aid Match appeal.



The people of North Darfur, here in Sudan, are going through the toughest time of their lives. After surviving years of civil war, they have returned to their homes only to face an even bigger challenge: climate change.

Droughts and flash floods have become increasingly common. Growing crops and raising animals has never been harder.

I've visited struggling communities in North Darfur, and talked with families who cannot grow enough food to survive. Fathers have been forced to leave their families to find menial jobs in Khartoum, just to make enough money to feed their children.

The new climate situation is breaking up families and destroying lives. It's heartbreaking.

But with your support, farmers in North Darfur can turn the tables on climate change.

Together we can help 19 communities turn desert into fertile fields and flourishing forests. I've seen this happen for myself, in villages where we've already worked. And the difference is breathtaking.

To support our *Turning the Tables* appeal, visit [practicalaction.org/smallworld](http://practicalaction.org/smallworld)



With new skills and training, hungry families in North Darfur will be able to grow abundant crops once more.

**URGENT**

Please give today and every pound donated before 9 March will be matched by the UK government.





## North Darfur is one of the most **DROUGHT-PRONE AREAS OF SUDAN**

And it's getting hotter. Rains are unpredictable, and the desert sands are invading community farmland because trees that used to form a protective barrier have been chopped down for shelter and cooking fuel.

The land is so hot and dry that when the rains do come, the water just runs off and cannot be captured. As the condition of the land worsens, farmers are forced to cultivate bigger and bigger plots of land. But this leads to new conflict with pastoralists, who find the land where they've traditionally grazed their livestock under threat. Families are hungry, and desperate to help themselves out of this situation.



### **Ismael is struggling to grow food**

During the war, Ismael's village of Kafod was burned to the ground and he had to flee. He returned a few years ago, but now faces new challenges due to the changing climate.

As a farmer, Ismael relies on rainfall, but now the seasons have become erratic. The droughts and loss of neighbouring trees has caused the quality of his soil to degrade. And the little food he can grow is under threat from neighbours competing for land for their livestock:

*"We have a big problem with crop destruction. When we are growing the harvest, the pastoralists bring their animals into our farms and destroy our crops."*



### **Drought is threatening Asoul's goats**

Asoul is part of a pastoralist community in Sehtol. During the war her community was attacked and had to flee. They returned eight years ago as the conflict reduced, hoping for a better life.

Now, Asoul and her family rely on their goats to survive. But the drought is making it hard to care for her precious animals and gather enough water for them to drink:

*"We have to go really far every day to collect water – about 8km. Even during the rainy season, the water just passes by and there is no way of keeping it."*

Visit [practicalaction.org/smallworld](https://practicalaction.org/smallworld) to make a life-transforming gift today.



Every pound you donate to our *Turning the Tables* appeal will be matched by the UK government, up to £2 million, going directly to bring lasting peace and prosperity to communities in North Darfur.

## Tough problems need **INGENIOUS SOLUTIONS...**

With your support, we can work with communities living in poverty in North Darfur to restore the health and fertility of their land. Families will have food to eat, a decent income, and they'll be secure, knowing they can thrive in the face of climate change.

### **Trees to protect the land**

Planting community forests will regenerate farmland previously lost to the changing climate by shielding it from the encroaching desert and encouraging rainfall. This will improve the environment for families, enabling them to grow crops again so they can build successful livelihoods.

### **Storing precious water**

Rains in North Darfur are erratic, so we will work with communities to capture and use what little water there is. This means repairing dams, building new reservoirs and establishing efficient irrigation methods – connecting the stored water to where it's needed most and using it to make the land fertile once more.

### **Make the desert green**

Re-seeding lands to provide food for livestock, will enable pastoral communities to nurture strong and healthy animals. This will restore the balance of land and resources available to pastoralists and farmers, and help establish peace between them.

### **Life-transforming skills**

We'll share knowledge and train farmers in new techniques such as crop spacing, rotation and crescent farming. By improving their harvests and diversifying, farmers will be able to grow varied, abundant crops to feed their families and make a decent income.

Please support our *Turning the Tables* appeal by visiting [practicalaction.org/smallworld](https://practicalaction.org/smallworld)



Donate before 9 March and you will enable the communities Practical Action works with around the world to turn the tables on climate change.

**URGENT**



Together we can make the desert  
**GREEN AND FERTILE**

Practical Action has already worked with nearby communities in Magdoub, and for them everything has changed. Farmers now grow ample and diverse crops several times a year, when previously they had struggled to reap a single harvest. Families have tripled their production of sorghum and millet.

Now that the barren desert is fertile once again, 1,000 displaced families have returned to their homes. Our success here is just the beginning. **With your support today, we can work with many more communities around the world.**



**Al Hafiz's crops are flourishing**

Al Hafiz grew up in the village of Magdoub and started a family there. But when droughts and desertification began to kill his crops, he had no choice but to leave.

Now Al Hafiz has returned, and everything has changed. Practical Action has worked with his community to rebuild the local dam and install irrigation canals to rehabilitate huge swathes of farmland. The difference between Magdoub and other villages waiting for support is astonishing.

*“Although the climate is changing here, the new ways of farming we are learning are allowing me to continue to sow and harvest. I am optimistic for the future.”*



**Jawaher is running a successful farm**

Jawaher's farming community was suffering the effects of climate change and struggling to survive. But water management, forest planting, and training in new farming skills have helped transform Jawaher's life. She now runs a successful farm, can feed her family, and is looking forward to the future.

She is an active member of the Women's Development Association, which ensures that women's voices are heard in the community. The Association was instrumental in creating the community forest that keeps the encroaching desert at bay.

*“Now I have money and all my children are in school.”*

Visit [practicalaction.org/smallworld](http://practicalaction.org/smallworld) to make a life-transforming gift today.



Every pound you donate to our *Turning the Tables* appeal will be matched by the UK government, up to £2 million, going directly to bring lasting peace and prosperity to communities in North Darfur.



**35,600 FARMERS**  
from 19 villages will benefit from this work.

**30,000 SEEDLINGS**  
will be propagated during the project, and tens of thousands more after.

**500 ACRES**  
of grasslands will be rehabilitated, and five community-owned forests will be established.

Household income will **DOUBLE**  
improving farmers' livelihoods.

Catastrophic climate change is affecting people in Darfur right now. Unless we act immediately, they will be forced to leave their villages again, meaning families lose their homes, their crops and their livelihoods. This time for good.

By supporting our appeal, you'll help turn the tables on climate change around the world. Donations matched by the UK government will enable communities in North Darfur to transform desert into green, fertile farmland and forests.

Our ingenious combination of irrigation technology, farming training and peace-building will not only help communities adapt to the effects of climate change, it will bring long-term peace and prosperity.

*“From the bottom of my heart, thank you for helping bring peace, prosperity and dignity to communities in North Darfur by making a gift to our appeal.”*

Muna Eltahir, Country Director, Sudan

**Please help turn the tables on climate change**



Donate before 9 March and you will enable the communities Practical Action works with around the world to turn the tables on climate change.





# Planting for Progress begins

You are helping us end hunger and poverty in rural Zimbabwe.



Thanks to the generosity of our amazing supporters who responded to our *Planting for Progress* appeal last year, and matched funding from the UK government, the project is now underway.

Specially selected seed varieties and new farming techniques will mean **29,000 people can beat the ongoing drought, wave goodbye to poverty**, and build their resilience to the changing climate.

The first step is to meet with farming families in Gwanda and Bulilima and begin planning the community gardens. Soon these gardens will be bursting with nutritious vegetables – plenty for the farmers to feed their families and make a decent income from the surplus.

Last year, thanks to match funding from the UK government, our *Planting for Progress* appeal raised £3.1 million. Please help us raise even more for our *Turning the Tables* appeal in Sudan at [practicalaction.org/smallworld](http://practicalaction.org/smallworld)



# THANKS TO YOU

You made such a big difference to so many communities last year. Together we are helping create a world that works better for everyone.



**YOU HELPED...**

- protect the lives and livelihoods of **182,000 PEOPLE**
- 1.13M PEOPLE** gain life-changing farming skills.
- make cities healthier places for **185,000 PEOPLE**
- transform energy use for **245,000 PEOPLE**

# Green the desert

Our education resources give young people the chance to use their skills to take action on climate change.

Many children growing up in the UK are aware of the challenges that face people and the planet today (see page 5). But rather than leaving them with the feeling that little can be done, Practical Action's education work provides opportunities for young people to learn about and take action on issues such as climate change.

*Green the desert* is our latest Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) challenge for primary and secondary pupils. Based on our work in Sudan, it introduces young people to the problems that farmers living in North Darfur experience when trying to grow crops during a drought. The pupils are then challenged to use their skills to develop a range of ingenious solutions to capture rainwater then irrigate crops that could help farmers in Sudan overcome the impact of climate change.



To access our education resources, or for further details about our support to schools go to: [practicalaction.org/STEM](http://practicalaction.org/STEM) or email: [schools@practicalaction.org.uk](mailto:schools@practicalaction.org.uk)

# The gift of a lifetime

Create a world that works better for everyone, with a gift in your Will

We're so grateful to everyone who remembers Practical Action in their Will. It really is the gift of a lifetime, creating lasting change.

We were touched to receive a recent legacy gift from Doreen Polley. She had asked The Caterham Overseas Aid Trust (COAT) to leave part of her final donation to us, as she knew what a big difference it would make. COAT have supported Practical Action for 25 years, and we are extremely proud of the connection.

Doreen's gift in her Will was doubled through last year's *Planting for Progress* appeal, which was match-funded by the UK government, making her gift go even further.

Please consider leaving a gift to Practical Action in your Will, to ensure the work you care about today can continue long into the future.



To find out more, contact our Legacy Officer at [Liz.Webb@practicalaction.org.uk](mailto:Liz.Webb@practicalaction.org.uk) or on **01926 634484**, or visit [practicalaction.org/leave-a-legacy](http://practicalaction.org/leave-a-legacy)



# Will you make a gift today to put ingenuity to work?



The Kafod Women's Development Association in Darfur make sure women's voices are heard in the community.

Please accept my donation 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick here if you would prefer us not to acknowledge this gift.

Please tick here to receive information about how to leave a gift to Practical Action in your Will.

All funds donated to the *Turning the Tables* appeal will be used wherever the need is greatest.

Matched funding from the UK government will be used to fund our work in Sudan.



## My personal contact details:

19/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: \_\_\_\_\_

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.

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.

You can find out more about how we collect and use your personal information by reading our privacy notice at [practicalaction.org/privacy](http://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](mailto:myprivacy@practicalaction.org.uk)

## Maximising the impact of my gift

**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.

*giftaid it*

**Thank you**

**Please return in the envelope provided:** Practical Action, The Robbins Building, 25 Albert Street, Rugby CV21 2SD

You can also give online at: [practicalaction.org/smallworld](http://practicalaction.org/smallworld) or by calling **0800 389 1624** (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)