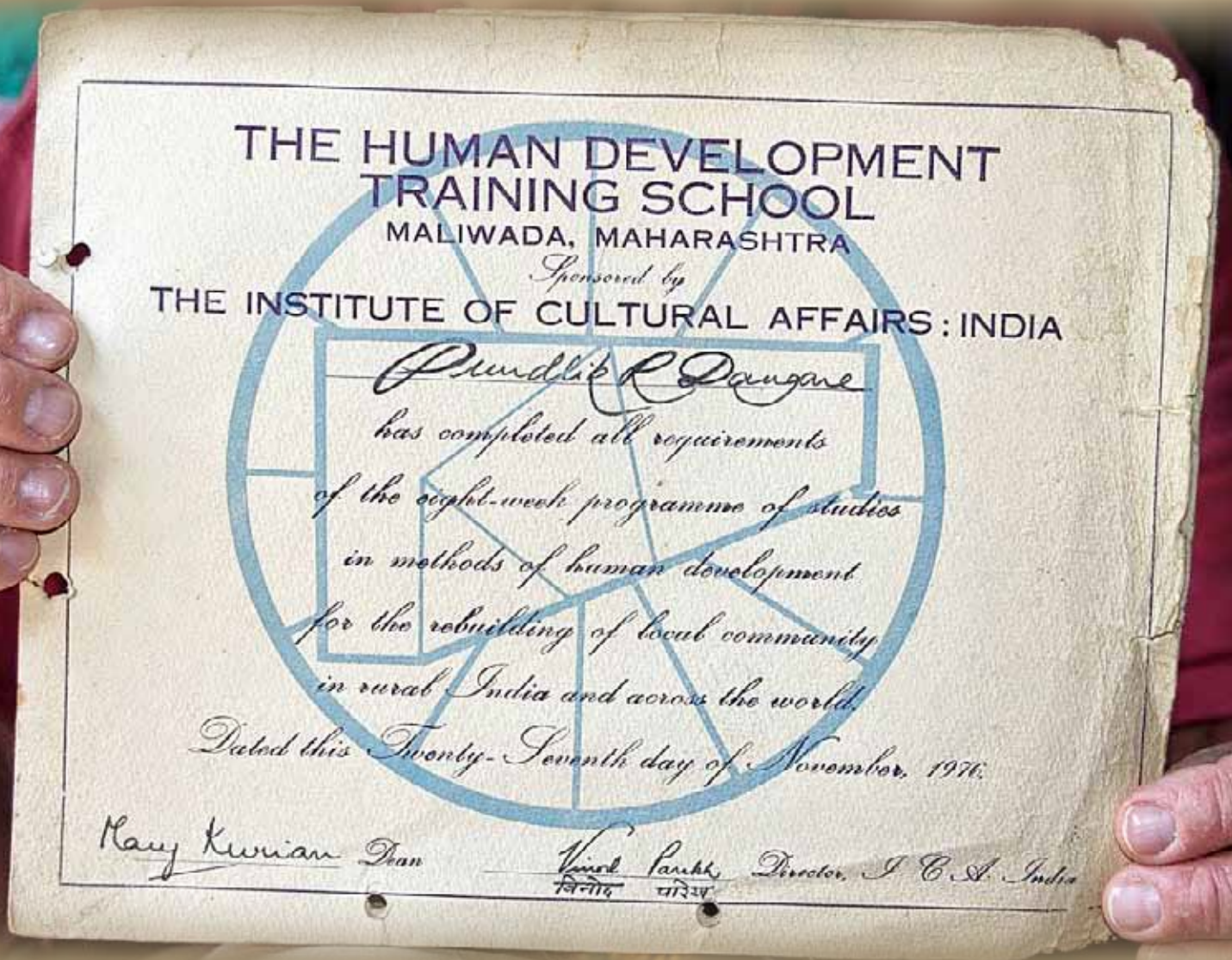


# Winds and Waves

## LESSONS FROM THE VILLAGE



New app for online conversations

Promoting peace across the border

**Also Inside**  
 and more...

The Great March for Climate Change

ICA Nepal – since the earthquake

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## Editors' Note

Dear Readers,

We are glad to present “Lessons from the Village” in this issue. Unlike the previous issues, this theme was not pre-conceived – it emerged from the articles sent in. It so happened that four writers were visiting ICA's projects in India. They kindly responded to our request for a story. Other articles here had a similar beginning – people doing interesting things decided to write about it. So, if you are involved in something that moves you, please consider sharing it on Winds & Waves.

This issue, our 11th, is a turning point for the W&W team – it is the last to be laid out by co-editor John Miesen, who explains below:

“Since my involvement in producing a

magazine for ICA over the past 30 years (first with Australia's *Pacific Waves* and then the past five years with *Winds and Waves*) I have been privileged to be part of sharing our work and imparting through these pages our learnings; the challenges, the miracles, the inspirations and aspirations of local communities and individuals across the globe. For that I will be forever grateful. But now is the time for me to move on. The future beckons in new ways for myself and my family. I hope you will embrace the future too, as it comes to you. Go well.”

Co-Editors  
Dharmalingam Vinasithamby  
John Miesen

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**Winds and Waves**

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## From the President

Welcome to this new issue of *Winds & Waves*, the online magazine of [ICA International](#), entitled 'Lessons from the Village'.

ICA is perhaps most widely known today for its group facilitation methodology the Technology of Participation (ToP). This proven approach is applied by many hundreds if not thousands of professional facilitators around the world, to help groups to connect, learn and collaborate together in a wide variety of contexts. The [International Association of Facilitators](#) was founded in 1994 by some seventy such ToP facilitators, and many ICAs around the world today provide professional facilitation, training and consulting services to clients on a social enterprise basis, specialising in the ToP approach. ICAI members ICA USA and ICA Associates and the ToP Network are proud to sponsor this year's upcoming [IAF North America conference](#) in Banff, Canada, from May 14-16. But what has all this got to do with Lessons from the Village?



The methods and tools of the Technology of Participation have been developed and refined by ICA in over 50 years of experience working in grassroots rural community

development, in villages around the world. Most if not all ICAs continue to apply this approach to empower poor and marginalised people to participate meaningfully in bringing about positive change for themselves, for their communities and for the world, even as these ICAs work with other approaches and in other contexts as well. There is more to the Technology of Participation than the methods and tools, and there is more to ICA than ToP, but it might be fair to say that ToP is among the most enduring of the Lessons from the Village that ICA has learned in its first half century.

This issue begins with a series of stories (pages 4-15) of ICA colleagues revisiting today the Indian villages in which they were involved in ICA's pioneering of the ToP approach in the rural Human Development Projects of the 1970s and 1980s. I began my own journey with ICA (and as a facilitator) as a fresh-faced international volunteer in one of these very villages in 1986, so I share a few of my own archive photos of Jawale here as well. Emerging lessons from these stories include the impact of urbanisation, the importance of connecting communities with local authorities, and the importance of values and methods to inspire, mobilise and empower volunteers.

Also in this issue you will find stories of peer-to-peer collaboration between ICAs today, including a youth media project involving students in Nepal and the USA (page 16); an online event on cross-border peace-building of ICA Ukraine with ICA Taiwan (page 23); and lessons learned by [Global Facilitators Serving Communities](#) on the role that ToP facilitation can play in supporting the recovery process and resilience of communities affected by disaster (page 20).



As our colleagues of ICA Nepal now respond to the impact of April's devastating earthquake, in Kathmandu and in rural areas, we encourage you to **show your support**

by responding to the appeal that they have launched – for details see page 28 and also [ICA Nepal on Facebook](#). Many more of ICA's own Lessons from the Village can be found in the 2012 book of ICA Nepal '[Changing Lives Changing Societies](#)', published in conjunction with the 8th ICA Global Conference on Human Development hosted by ICA Nepal in Kathmandu.

This 11th issue of *Winds and Waves* is the last to be co-edited and laid out by John Miesen of ICA Australia, after some 30 years involvement in ICA publications in Australia and internationally. On behalf of the Board and ICAI as a whole, I thank John wholeheartedly for his years of service, and in particular for his central role in establishing *Winds and Waves* as ICAI's flagship publication and a key tool of our peer-to-peer approach to facilitating mutual support, learning and collaboration among ICAs.

The ICAI Board will meet face-to-face in Tanzania in May, prior to a regional gathering of East & Southern African ICAs. We plan to meet virtually during that time with the ICAI global communications team, to plan for the continuity and development of this magazine and our communications more generally, in the light of the new ICAI website and blog that is now in development in Wordpress.

**Please do contribute** your own stories of advancing human development around the world to the next issue of *Winds and Waves* in August.

**Please also get in touch** if you may be interested in joining the team, to support with commissioning, reporting, editing, layout and design, social media, or in any other way.

**Enjoy this issue!**

*Martin Gilbraith* [president@ica-international.org](mailto:president@ica-international.org)

# ICA's hits and misses in Maharashtra

By Dharmalingam Vinasithamby

**W**hen Chikhale residents laid out their vision in 1979, they wanted a railway station. I tagged it then as a pipe-dream. But when I visited in January, there it was – a station linking it to Mumbai, 33 kilometres away.

Chikhale was a “model village” set up by the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA). Our target was 232 such pilot projects across Maharashtra state, one in every *talukh* or sub-district.

The first was the Maliwada Human Development Project, near Aurangabad, in 1976. To “replicate” this in other villages, we set up a Human Development Training School. The eight-week course was to motivate villagers and train them in leadership methods. Many of them joined the ICA and were sent out in batches with a few ICA veterans to villages in the scheme. Their mission: live there for two years and help residents organise themselves and develop the village.

After almost 40 years, I wanted to see what these places were like. Our *Nava Gram Prayas* (“New Village Movement”) was a life-changing experience for me. But what was its impact on rural development in Maharashtra? I also wanted to meet people I had worked with and hear their stories. I visited some of these villages with Hiranman Gawai and his wife Mangala who live in Pune. The following are some impressions and reflections.

---

*Dharmalingam Vinasithamby, who spent several years with the ICA as a village worker in India, is a freelance journalist based in Johor Baru, Malaysia. He can be contacted at pulai100@yahoo.com*



*Children coming for the flag-raising ceremony in Chikhale. About 700 children spend up to 12 years in the residential school that serves tribal communities in the vicinity.  
Photo: V. Dharmalingam*

## Republic Day at Chikhale

We drove to Chikhale on January 26<sup>th</sup>, India's Republic Day. The main landmark, a large moss-covered pond, was still there. Next to it was a residential school that we had built. About 700 children from tribal communities in the vicinity live and study there for 12 years. Many were taking part in a flag-hoisting ceremony, belting out patriotic songs and slogans, as we arrived. The tribal communities are among the poorest in India. The tribal school, one of several run by the government, helps some to make the leap from subsistence labour to more remunerative employment.

Other parts of the village had changed. The mud hovels of the poor and large houses of the well-to-do had been replaced by multi-storied buildings. Much of the farmland had gone as well.

The village is now a dormitory for workers in Panvel, 6 km away.

When we began the project, access was a key problem. The road into Chikhale (the name literally means mud) was a sticky, slippery mess in the rainy season. The bridge across the stream was too narrow for trucks to enter the village to support any industries.

The railway station and other improvements solved these problems. But, ironically, they also led to the village being swallowed by Panvel.

## Meeting Maliwada's elders

The situation was similar in Maliwada. Previously, you could see the village from the road. A bus stop with a tea vendor marked the road junction. But when we drove up, commercial buildings lining both sides of the road blocked our view.

Several villagers we had worked with recognised us, including



Lakshmi Bai. She and her late husband Pandit Udawant, the village goldsmith, had been pillars of the project. His son, then a child, now runs the business. He invited us to his goldsmith shop. Another elder was Pundlik Dangare. He spoke a smattering of English and took us on a tour.

The central square or chowk looked the same. The area around it was now packed with more houses. A water tower obscured the famous view of the ancient Daulatabad fort in the distance, showing that the village now has piped water.

The grounds were strewn with shreds of white Styrofoam plates and cartons. The village used to look cleaner – rubbish was more organic without the everlasting quality of plastic and quickly disintegrated. The large building where we lived had returned to its state of rubble. When we started the project, we rebuilt the *haveli* for staff quarters and village meetings. Stripped of its timber and roofing, it now reeked of human waste. Previously, villagers would nip over to the nearby fields to take a dump. Now that those had been built over, the abandoned *haveli* with the privacy its walls afforded had made it a convenient open-air toilet.

The Human Development Training School, another large building next door, was a recycling factory. It was packed with mountains of used plastic bags to be turned into plastic pellets.

Pundlik and the others recalled the changes. The population had grown with many villagers working in Aurangabad, 20 km away. Outsiders also lived in Maliwada. The village, once politically part of another village called Abdi Mandi, now had its own *gram panchayat* or village council. The younger generation

was now in charge with better access to government resources for development.

### Jawale's progress

We also visited Jawale, a former project in the Khandala sub-district of Satara. Here the village identity was intact, perhaps because of its remoteness. The village is about 60km from Pune and 9km from Shirval, a small town.

Mangala, who had worked here, and village elders who greeted us described the changes. Also with us were Jeroen Geradts and Rokus Harder, both of the Netherlands. They had worked here as volunteers for six months in 1983 (*see their report, Journey back to Jawale*).

The access road, originally gravel, was tarred. What was once a bare plot on the right of the road was now a grove of trees. Small bunds built during the project years had elevated the ground water table. After the village got electricity, pumps and an irrigation system linked to a nearby dam had made

farms more productive. Piped water was also available.

Among other changes: village paths which used to get muddy in the rainy season had been surfaced. Open drains beside them had been covered as well, with grill-covered inlets here and there for runoff water. Several brick-built homes stood next to ones of mud and rocks. Some were double and triple-storied. Several motor-cycles, once a rarity, were parked outside.

Another change – a woman was village chief. Poonam, who gets a meagre salary as *sarpanch*, spends most of her time dealing with infrastructure glitches like a breakdown in the irrigation system. Husband Ravindra Patil does some of the running around for her.

The improved political status of women is due to the Panchayat Raj policy changes in 1993 by the late prime minister Rajiv Gandhi. These require state governments to enact laws empowering panchayats in various ways such as reserving a third of the seats for women, proportional reservation of seats

(Continues ▶)



Potali project teachers Sangeeta Ovhal (from left), Prithi Bhavar and Yogita Bhavar explaining their work to Mangala Gavai (right). Photo: V. Dharmalingam

(▶ Continued ▼)

for disadvantaged minorities, direct elections and gram sabhas (village assemblies).

The changes give panchayats political clout in the district level. But village elders in both Maliwada and Jawale said local involvement in decision-making is not as keen as before.

One factor was new – the satellite dishes sprouting on the roof tops of even humble homes. People are reluctant to attend meetings and prefer to watch TV, said a Jawale elder, Vinayaka Dhondeba Patila, 72. “Jawale population has grown, programs continue but they do not have the spirit of those days,” he said. Another elder, Mahadev Baburao Patil, blamed the growing individualism on mobile phones that everyone seems to carry. “Before, everyone would show up for *shramadans* (voluntary work sessions). Now people are more materialistic,” he said.

On the positive side, people seem more aware of the larger metropolitan community, the nation and the world, and interact more with these realities.

The urban influence also empowers the panchayat. Small factories



*Gavai and Mangala (right) talking to village elders at the chowk in Maliwada. The well does not gather crowds anymore now that piped water is here. The satellite dishes sprouting on the rooftops keeps people indoors rather than at village meetings. Photo: V. Dharmalingam*

and industries on the outskirts of Jawale, for example, pay taxes to the gram panchayat, enabling it to carry out various infrastructure maintenance and improvements. It also seems to have more access to development funds from the government. Credit is more readily available. Previously, villagers had to go after bankers. Now they come offering loans.

different priorities. The world had moved on.

But other issues gained focus. One was the absurdity of having chosen places where urban growth would obliterate our work, something an economist could have foreseen from the map. In Chikhale, for example, we should have helped villagers plan their future as part of an urban rather than a rural reality.



*Chikhale pond – This moss-covered pond, where villagers still come to wash clothes, was one of the few landmarks that had not changed much in Chikhale. Photo: V. Dharmalingam*

### A village servant force

I did not get all my questions answered during my brief tour in Maharashtra. But I realised that some came from a dated perspective. Things I found jarring such as rubbish and haphazard urbanisation were present in non-project villages as well. There was a new generation of leaders in charge with

It was also clear that the main driver of development is the government. Its various schemes for individuals and backing for infrastructure development have made a big difference in both project and non-project villages.

Where we played a useful role was in closing the gap between the village and the government structures. We did this by having a residential team that coached and encouraged villagers to visit government offices and banks to make use of the available schemes. This, rather than



any funds we poured into the village, left lasting changes.

In addition, it was the presence and commitment of some of the volunteers that seemed to inspire villagers and others; and it still has a role today.

I saw this dynamic at a project run by former ICA staff Mary and Cyprian D'Souza in Mawal sub-district, near Pune. The main activity is a learning centre for school. But what stood out for

me was a secondary project – an educational outreach program run by young village women. The Potali Project, based on the Learning Basket program developed by Keith Packard and other ICA workers, aims to boost brain development among infants which is at its peak in the first three years. The team of young teachers, equipped with books, cards and other materials, tour villages in the area. They hold meetings once a week for parents and grandparents in a village and show them how to interact with

their infants and thereby release their full potential.

When we began our work in Maharashtra, a part of the vision was to raise a servant force for development. Instead of ICAs focusing on infrastructure projects preferred by donors, equipping youth with methods to play a catalytic role in India's villages would have a more lasting effect. That would also have a broader effect on society by providing youth a channel for plugging in their creativity. □



## Cutting through corruption

**By Dharmalingam Vinasithamby**

Pratibha is 25 years old and sharp as a knife. Slim, bright-eyed and fast of speech, she works as a *thalathi* (land tax collector) in a sub-district of India's Maharashtra state. Pratibha (not her real name) is part of a team that fans out across the sub-district, assessing how much each farmer should pay based on the size of their land holdings and crop yield.

Her father, a former ICA human development project staff member, held the same post before his recent retirement. Most of the *thalathis* I had encountered when I worked in villages years ago were middle-aged men like him.

But Pratibha projected a completely different image when I met her in his house in February this year. She has three villages to handle. Her tools of trade are modern. Unlike her father, who had to refer to sheaves of dog-eared land records, she carries a laptop packed with the required data and forms. A few taps on the keyboard and her assessment is registered and later transferred to a server at her office.

Although she evidently enjoys her work, her forthright manner and frank speech gets her into trouble. In one incident, she complained about flaws in the way software training was provided. "We were tested on our mastery of the software even before we had begun our training," she says. Her superior complained to his higher-ups about her insubordination. They decreed that her annual increment would be forfeited this year.

"I did not tell my father about this till he had retired," she told me. "I was afraid he would have spoken to my superiors and tried to seek their forgiveness on my behalf." She considers the punishment meted out to her as unjustified and has filed an appeal against the action to the authorities at the district level. What if the appeal fails? "I will ask the revenue department to conduct an investigation and give its ruling," she says. "I don't see why I should be penalised for doing the right thing."

Pratibha is irked by the slipshod standards around her and says graft is rife in the system. She says when the *thalathi* and the *gram sewak* (a village development officer appointed by the district) conspire, they can siphon off funds meant for the development of a village. "I too have been asked by people to look the other way in return for cash gifts," she says. "But I refuse. The 25,000 rupees (US\$400) I receive each month as salary is enough for me." India must deal with corruption, she says. "But we have to start from the top, not from the bottom."

If Pratibha remains true to her ideals and does not get kicked out, she could rise up the ladder and perhaps help reform the way things are done. For now, she represents the energy and potential of India's youth to change their nation and the world. □

# Return to Maliwada

By William L. Bingham



*This well was one of the few landmarks we could recognize in a village that had changed dramatically over the last four decades.*

I was on the team of consultants which helped the ICA initiate its first Human Development Project in Maharashtra state, India. I returned in January, almost 40 years later. The following are my impressions from the two visits.

I received the invitation to help with the project “out of the blue” in 1975. The phone rang. I picked it up and heard the Texas drawl of George Holcombe from the ICA. My family and I had spent a year interning at ICA’s headquarters in Chicago. There, I heard about a plan to establish a ring of Demonstration Projects around the globe; perhaps one in each time zone.

So I was not surprised when George said an interdisciplinary team was being assembled for a consult in a remote village in India. My skills as a mechanical engineer would help round out the team, he said.

The team was to leave on Christmas Eve. To a typical Christian family with four children ranging in age from nine

to 16, this was not ideal. However, my wife Annette is an extremely capable woman who had taught middle school for a few years and managed the ICA’s printing department for a year. But we did have an issue: our eldest son, who sustained an apparent brain injury early in life, was showing signs of regression.

Still, our family decided that I should go. The three younger children could help their mother run the home and care for their ailing brother.

## Surviving India

Our team landed at Bombay airport. There, we boarded an Indian Airways plane to Aurangabad. Its airport had a short runway then. Because of this, we flew in early so that the plane could take off again by 9 am when the air would still be dense enough to give it the required lift.

My seasoned fellow travellers taught me how to survive in India. When I reached for a glass of water

in a cafe, one of them warned me: “Don’t touch it. Wait and order some tea.” I learnt not to drink water in India that had not been boiled.

## Preparing for the consult

We spent our first day in Maliwada touring the village and meeting its residents. One lady was decorating the space between her small dwelling and the unpaved street. The surface was a dark green and she was drawing designs on it with white lime. It was quite neat; even handsome. I asked an Indian ICA staff member, Kamala Parekh, what the homeowner had used to make the background for her images so green. She gets the material “locally”, said Kamala. Her response seemed a bit dodgy. When I pressed her further, I discovered the secret: “gobar” (cow dung).

One of my tasks was to build a toilet for use during the consult, which would last several days. I helped a local craftsman dig a hole upon which to mount an enclosure. As we measured the boundaries, he taught me to count: ek, do, teen, and so on – my initiation in speaking Hindi.

Our team included founders of the ICA such as Joe Mathews and Gene Marshall. Every day we were bussed from our sleeping quarters in the Government Guest House to the village. We walked up and down the street, talking to villagers about their images of the future for a “better Maliwada”. As foreigners, we were paired up with an Indian as most of the villagers had little proficiency in English.

## Side trips

We took a side trip to view ancient religious sculptures at the nearby





*Elaine (left) and Annette visiting Pundlik for tea at his home in Maliwada. He was one of the villagers who took part in the consult that initiated the project in 1975.*

Ellora Caves. These were not natural caves – they had been carved out of the mountain side. We had to visualize the process to grasp how the artisans made the sculptures emerge in situ from rock.

We also did some “souvenir” shopping in Aurangabad. I got Annette some silk for a sari and trinkets for the children, including a rudimentary bicycle lock that bolted directly to the bicycle frame.

## Revisiting India

Last year, when I celebrated my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, Nelson Stover of Emerging Ecology, an Associate Member of the ICA in Greensboro, North Carolina, asked: “What’s next?” My answer – return to Maliwada to see the changes. Six months later, he proposed a visit to India. Annette and I took up the invitation. After all I would not be younger the next year.

So through the auspices of Emerging Ecology, we went on an excursion to India. It was about two weeks long – enough for several significant experiences, even though the actual distance we travelled in India was only about 250 miles.

Vijay Lokhande, president of the board of ICA India, took us on a tour of small scale industries in Panvel, near Mumbai. We visited a printing firm that used technology sophisticated enough to simultaneously print on both

sides of a page. The firm is owned by two brothers who are leaders in Rotary Club International. They described another innovation – a method for collecting rain water and pumping it into aquifers 20 metres below. In times of drought, it could be pumped up to the surface for agriculture and other use. It is expected to be replicated throughout India and elsewhere.

## Changed village

In Aurangabad, we left our hotel in a caravan of two vans and stopped at what seemed to be a suburb. “This is Maliwada” said the driver. In 1975, I remembered driving through open farmland to the village. Now, here we were, in a bustling urban area.



*A certificate issued in 1976 to a villager who had completed the ICA's eight-week training course. He had kept it safe and showed it to us when we visited him this year.*

It took me a while to recognize the large open well before us. Women were lowering buckets to draw water. Looking down the unpaved street I saw a number of modest houses; most of them had a concrete floor in front, a contrast to my first visit when I saw women plastering the earthen floor with a dark green layer of cow dung. There were some double-storey buildings; one with a shop selling electronics and computer products. I looked up and saw the electric power lines. That must have been one of the most appreciated changes.

We were taken to a house near the well where we met some of the village leaders and elders. Several

of them smiled at me and said: “I remember you”. I believed them although I was sporting a goatee in 1975. We sipped tea and listened to their stories. I was awed when the home owner took out some project documents produced in 1976 from a treasured spot.

## Sign of hope

Children milled around the homes we visited. Some had even rushed home to change into fresh clothes of bright colours when they heard visitors were coming back after many years. Some were riding bicycles of the old one-speed variety. One girl, about 12 years old, rode up and down the street a number of times, pausing each time to peek through the door at this gathering of American tourists.

This image of a curious and serious girl, quietly observing the visitors to her village, stayed with me, a sign of hope in a village that has changed so much in the last 40 years. I am grateful to Emerging Ecology and to Nelson and his wife Elaine for guiding us on this journey. □



*A curious girl peering through the doorway at us as we sipped tea at the home of a Maliwada resident. Some of the children milling around the homes we visited had changed into fresh clothes when they heard we were coming to visit.*

# Journey back to Jawale

By Jeroen Geradts and Rokus Harder

**W**e were technical students on an adventure in India. Back in 1983, India was the most exotic destination we could dream of. So we seized the opportunity to conduct an Appropriate Technology survey over six months in an Indian village.

We went to Jawale, 60 km south of Pune, and dived with all good intentions into ICA team life. We gave advice on biogas, the hotbox cooking method and several other appropriate technologies.

Staying and working in Jawale was an intense and wonderful experience. It had a huge impact on our lives, dreams, ambitions and careers. After more than 30 years we returned, two men, now in their fifties, curious about what had changed. Did the village pass

untouched by time or did it change a lot? Did all our good intentions make any difference?

On our way from Pune to Jawale in January this year, the differences immediately became apparent. It used to be a half-day trip across the mountains on a narrow winding two-lane road. Now we whizzed through a tunnel over a six-lane toll road in just one and a half hours. And even the dirt road passing by Jawale has been replaced by tarmac.

Namaskar! In the school at the entrance of the village we receive a warm welcome and blessings with incense, sugar and a *tilak* (red dot) on the forehead. The kids have a good laugh looking at our pictures of Jawale and people from 1984. They see how it has changed a lot!



The road to Jawale in 1984 (left) and now. Bare land on the right is now home to a copse of trees.



Washing clothes along the river then and now.



Rokus and Jeroen, wearing a dark T-shirt, in Pune in 1984 (top left panel). Villagers welcoming them (top right panel) at the school in Jawale in January. Students looking at old photos of Jawale (bottom left panel) and greeting the visitors.



## Walkabout

We walk through Jawale with the village elders. The population has quadrupled since 1984, many new homes have been constructed. But we could still recognize some spots.



The house where our staff met (top left panel) when the project was operating is still there, now with its own toilet (bottom right panel). Wendy Saegenschnitter leading a staff session (bottom left panel) at the house.



Much of the open space (left) behind the ICA house has been built over (right).



The old village temple (left) has been renovated and given a face lift. The well has also been improved.



The Panchayat office where we sat with villagers (left) to watch television placed in a window is still there.



Shivaji park – the pride of the village – has unfortunately lost one of its old trees.



These shops that were operating in 1984 (left) are now closed.

## Meeting people

When we used to walk through the village, small children used to come up to us to ask our names, and then run back to their mother or sister with the answer. Now the routine has changed – a sweet girl asks, in

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perfect English, for permission to take a selfie with us on her iPhone.

During our tour of the village, we visit various people and have tea at their homes. The village elders taking us around are all men. But surprisingly, the *sarpanch*, the elected leader of the village, is a young woman. Good to see that these things are changing too. As she prepares tea for us in the kitchen, she tells us that it is an honour to be sarpanch. But it also involves a lot of work and she is looking forward to the end of her four-year term so that she can attend to her family and farm.



*Sarpanch Poonam preparing tea for us after we drop in on her during our tour of the village.*

Jawale's hospitality is great. We are invited by another family for lunch. As they browse through our old photos, they recognise their niece and show us a recent photo of her.



*Our old photos are historical documents. Our host was delighted to see the pictures of this girl, his niece, and showed us a photo of her now as a grown-up woman.*

Later, in the fields, we encounter a guy who remembers us from when he was eight years old. Like many other villagers, he speaks good English, which makes it much easier to communicate.



*This man (left) remembered seeing us when he was an eight-year-old.*

Many things have improved. Jawale is more connected to the world now. We asked some of the elders what was better 30 years ago. The common answer – there was more cohesion among the villagers then.

## Beyond development

In 1984, our assignment was to conduct an appropriate technology survey. We suggested the village introduce biogas to deal with the shortage of firewood. Due to deforestation, people had to walk long distances to collect firewood and resorted to using dried cow dung (gobar cakes) instead. Burning wood or cow dung in a kitchen without a chimney causes serious health problems.

About 25 biogas plants had been constructed by 1989. Due to the growth of the village, there was no space for cows in the village anymore. The animals were moved to small stables in the fields. Collecting cow dung became cumbersome. So biogas was abandoned after being used for just five years.

Nowadays, firewood is still the fuel of choice in many households. But they also have a kerosene stove and bottled gas as alternatives. And they have the money to buy it. In just over 10 years, the context for what is appropriate for Jawale and what is not has changed drastically.

## Connected

Jawale used to be an isolated village. It was a half an hour walk to the closest village. The bus to Shirval town came only three times a day. And it was a 45-minute ride with villagers, cattle and luggage. The sole communication link with the outside world was the post office. A letter from the Netherlands would take two weeks to arrive. And for us, foreigners, it was hard to communicate directly with any of the villagers, as they didn't speak English at the time.

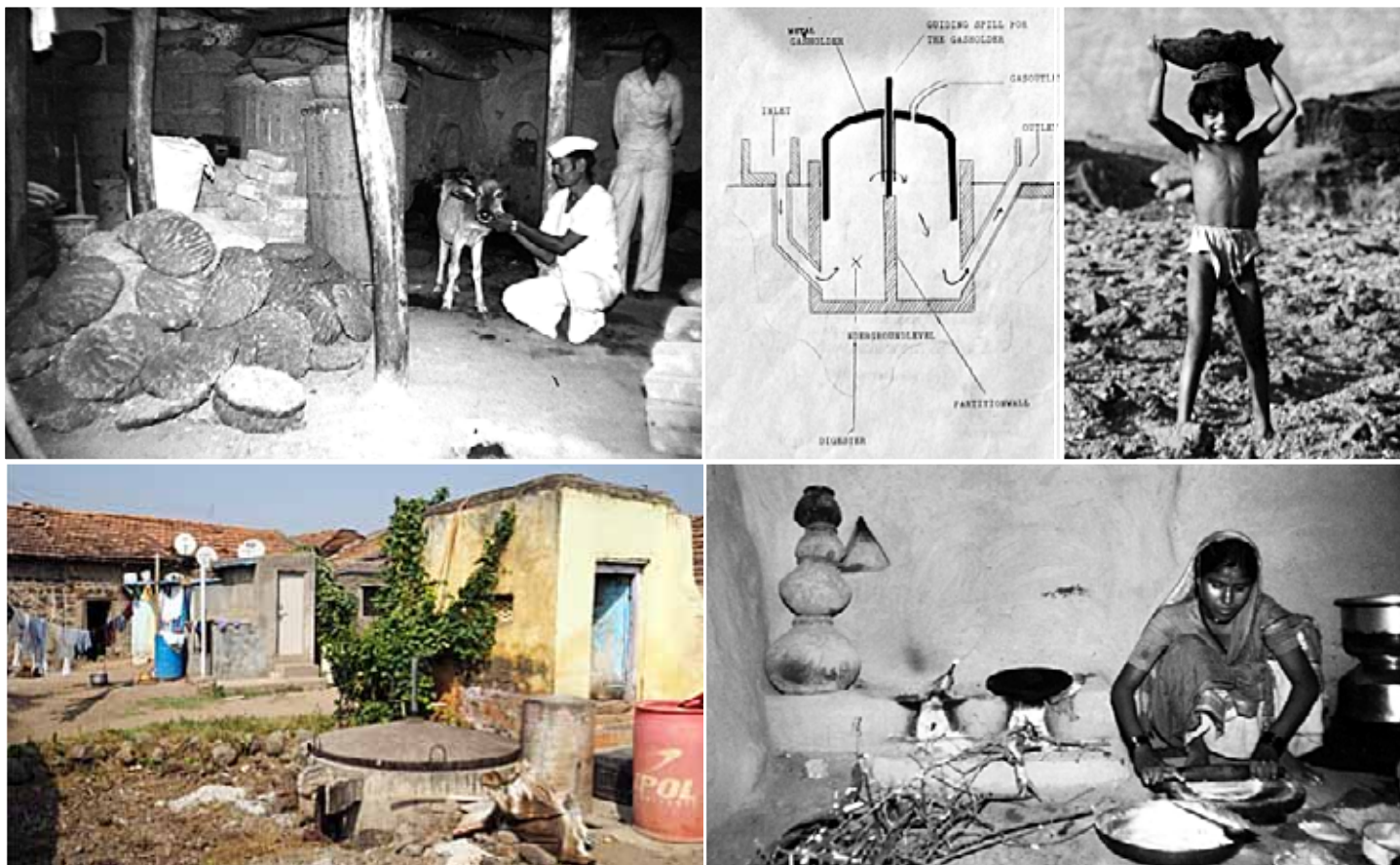
Now, along the road to Jawale many new neighbourhoods and industries have appeared. There is hardly any open space or farm land left along the road. Cars and motor cycles drive by all the time. Clearly many people from this region now work in Pune. No rural traffic jam yet, but it's certainly no longer a dirt road with bullock carts moving slowly towards the next village.

And you can't miss the enormous communication mast in the middle of the village. Many houses have a satellite dish and television, providing communication and access to news to most people. Jawale is connected to the world...

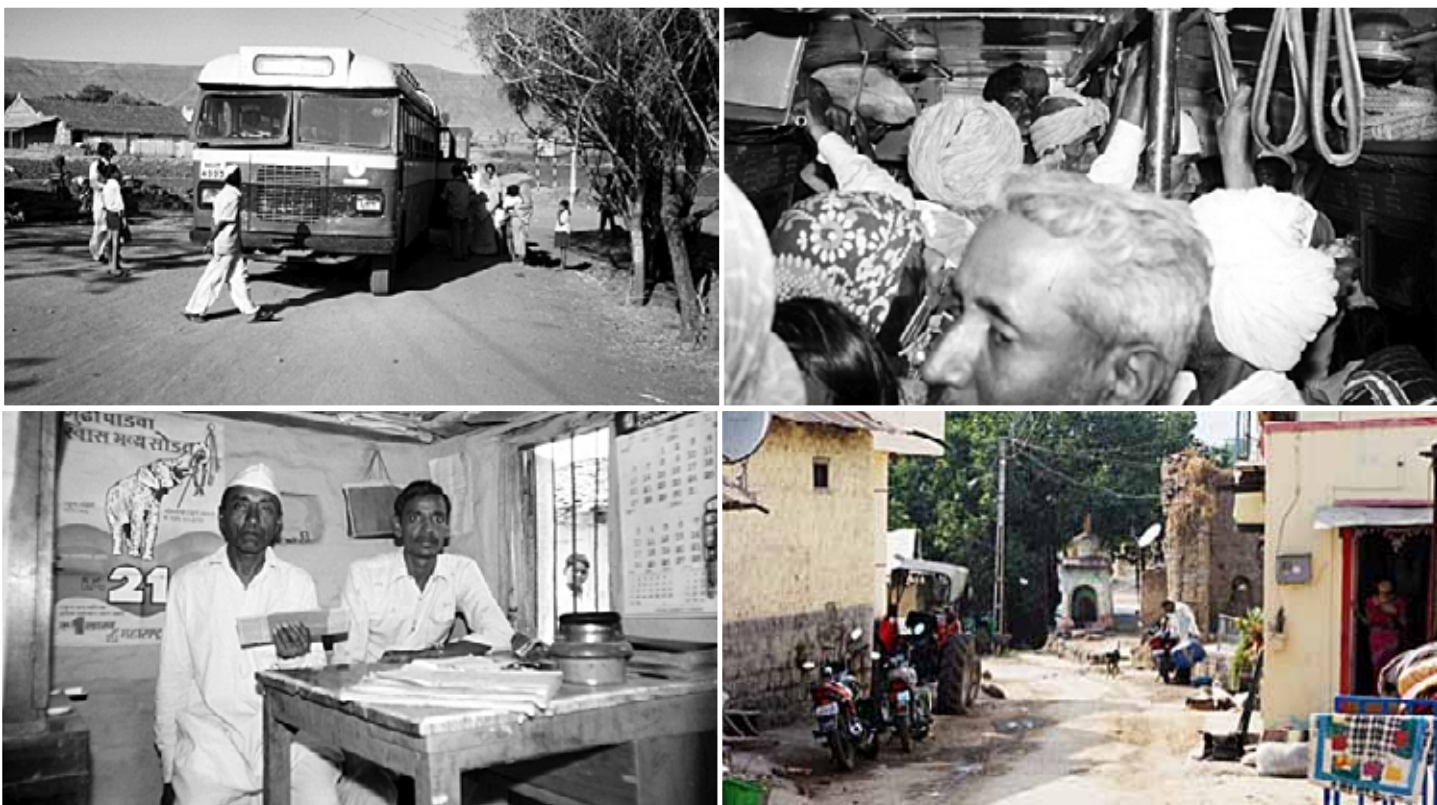
## Infrastructure

There used to be just six water taps in Jawale. We had to queue twice a day when the water was running, which lasted just an hour. Now, three enormous water towers provide a continuous supply to all households.





The biogas plant (top-middle and bottom-left panels) as an alternative for cow dung cakes (top-left panel) and firewood was abandoned after five years. Collecting cow dung (top-right panel) had become cumbersome.



The bus to Shirval came only three times a day. Today, many villagers have their own motorised transport.

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The old water tower, pump and well have been replaced by a modern system.



We queued twice a day when the water ran for an hour. Now there is a continuous supply.

There was no sewage system at the time – just some open gutters along the road used by children as toilets. And adults would do it in the fields. Now all streets have drains and most are covered, keeping the village roads clean. Most households have a toilet now and efforts are being made to connect the remaining 25 per cent as well.

Housing has also changed a lot. Mud and wooden houses are disappearing. Some apartment blocks, several floors high, are under construction. And some creative designs give the village a totally new appearance.

According to the village elders, irrigation contributed most to Jawale's development. The construction of small dams, water reservoirs and lift irrigation enabled them to cultivate more land and harvest more crops a year.

Irrigation, with the building of small dams and reservoirs, has contributed most to Jawale's development.



Some of Jawale's modern houses give the village a totally new appearance.





*Irrigation, with the building of small dams and reservoirs, has contributed most to Jawale's development.*

## Conclusion

Jawale has evolved and the villagers are clearly in charge of their own development now. ICA has moved out and should be proud of all that has been accomplished. For us Westerners, India is not so exotic anymore. Even in a small village like Jawale, life feels more like ours. It's much easier to communicate, relate and understand the people and we quickly feel a part of the things that are happening.

But with all of that, life in Jawale is not as authentic as it used to be. People have even adopted some of our poorer qualities such as individualism and less social cohesion.

One of our learnings is that the context changes as a village evolves. Introducing biogas may have been appropriate in 1984, but 10 years later it didn't fit. You can't introduce one change and assume that all other aspects of village life will remain untouched by time. Unconsciously, that's exactly what we had imagined. As technicians we humbly admit – you can't engineer development. Rather, you move along with the waves of change. Go with the flow! □

*Jeroen Geradts and Rokus Harder were former students at the Institute of Technology in Hilversum, the Netherlands.*

## POETRY

### Why I Write – **By Hila Gharzai**

*Hila Gharzai is a 20-year old young woman from Jalalabad, Afghanistan who has been sharing her writing through the Afghan Women's Writing Project (<http://awwproject.org/>) for many years.*

*I write  
When I am unaccompanied  
When I feel weak  
Disappointed  
When I have been offended  
I write*

*When I feel hurt  
Lost  
Tired of life  
I write*

*When I feel scorn  
Can't find a shoulder to cry on  
When I can't find any support  
Or feel lonely  
I write*

*When I can't achieve my goals  
When I can't open the door to success  
When I get scared  
When I can't find the light  
I write*

*When I hear the stories of my sisters*

*I hear they've died  
Married too young  
When I hear the cries of children in the street  
When I know something is wrong  
And I can't help  
I write*

*I write of my pain, my broken heart  
My goals and my feelings  
I write and I write  
Writing is my medicine*

*A friend to share my wounds and joy  
A shoulder for crying  
A way to calm myself  
A new world where despondency turns to serenity*

*If I don't write  
I will become a star that can't shine  
A fish out of water  
A hungry lion  
A cheetah unable to run  
I will lose my strength  
And the stunning world that I create for myself in my writing*

*If I fail to tell my stories of struggle  
I will lose myself*



## Shoot, share and study

By Loren Weybright  
and Steve Harrington

**E**ducation is changing along with classroom behaviour. Teachers are becoming co-learners and guides while students help their partners in project-based learning.

One example is a mentoring process at medical schools. The three-step method is sometimes called: “*See One, Do One, Teach One*”. It is used to teach simple procedures such as performing a surgical suture, a task that requires both knowledge and practice. First, the student observes how the stitching is done. Then, he or she does it. Finally, he or she teaches the newly acquired skill to a novice.

Heifer International, a nonprofit working to eradicate poverty and hunger, uses a parallel process with farmers. A family is given an animal and learns how to care for it. They donate its first off-spring to a neighbour. All families in the project “pay it forward”

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like this. As they mentor each other and collaborate, the project grows in a sustainable way.

### The Youth Media Project

We used mentoring and project-based learning methods in a cross-cultural photography project involving student groups in Nepal and the US. One group is from the Tri-Ratna Cooperative School (TRCS) of Bungamati, near Kathmandu, and the other is from the Institute for Collaborative Education (ICE) in New York City.

The Youth Media Project focuses first on photography and story-making skills, and then on strategies for teaching those skills to other students. A simplified diagram of the five-step lesson plan looks like this:







*Students from both institutions, divided into seven teams, gathered in the TRCS library.*



*For many TRCS students, it was their first experience in learning how to handle a camera and using it to create their own stories.*



*A mother and child viewing an exhibit as its creator explains his work during the exhibition..*



*The whole school, as well as parents and members of the community, came to view and comment on the Youth Media Project exhibition.*

We did three months of onsite mentoring, in-classroom coaching and action planning with TRCS and its school management team.

At ICE, a teacher engaged a select group of students for an entire semester. Both groups had a face-to-face session at TRCS. Fourteen ICE Students and two teachers went to Nepal. They packed 30 digital cameras, laptops and lesson plans in photography and story-making skills for 28 TRCS students.

The challenge for the teams: “Here’s a camera; use it to tell two stories – one about yourself – and one about your family and community.”

The ICE students used the lesson plans they had developed and practised with in New York to impart multi-media skills to their TRCS partners. They also showed them how to exhibit their photo stories.

In April, Bungamati was among the districts affected by Nepal’s recent earthquake. Several teachers lost their homes and at least one has had to live in a tent. ICE and TRCS have plans to continue their cooperation through a teacher to teacher program although immediate implementation may be affected by the quake aftermath. □

For more information on the project, please see the following references. ICE Students’ mentoring Postcard Guide for making photos and stories:

[https://docs.google.com/documentd/1GQwew1FunxWCd\\_zN8XjwJzHjYL2r7m00kblxrFwn4xA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/documentd/1GQwew1FunxWCd_zN8XjwJzHjYL2r7m00kblxrFwn4xA/edit?usp=sharing)

Buck Institute Citizen Photojournalism Guide:

<http://pblu.org/projects/community-photojournalists>

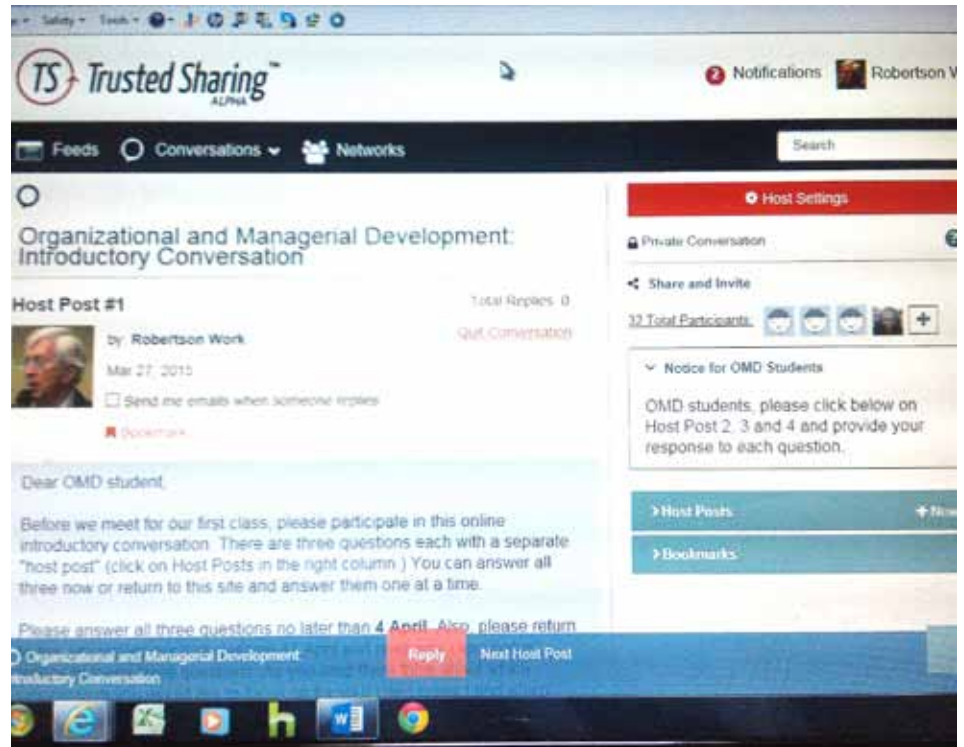
# New app for online conversations

By Robertson Work

The first class of organizational and managerial development was beginning in two weeks. I invited my 35 New York University (NYU) grad students to an introductory online discussion. First, they introduced themselves to each other. Then, they shared their learning hopes for the course. Finally, they mentioned an organization that could be the focus of a class team. They were able to respond whenever they wanted. Before class, they returned to the site and reviewed their classmates' responses to the three questions. When they got to class they had already met each other online and were a community. They knew who was in the room, why they were there and they formed eight project teams in one hour. The software that made all this possible was **Trusted Sharing**, a new app for online, flex-time conversations.

Do you want to have a meaningful conversation with family or friends who live far and wide? Does your NGO or company need to do strategic planning with staff in different locations and time zones? How can citizens and their governments share views concerning policy options? How can you follow up on a face to face meeting? How can your students work in a team outside of class while being in various locations?

These are just a few situations where Trusted Sharing can help. The app, now in an alpha phase, will revolutionise the way the



world talks to itself. It is a social enterprise and is free. Developed by Duncan Work, former LinkedIn Chief Scientist, and Ty Hallock, CTO, Trusted Sharing may be the next big thing online. (Duncan is my brother and I am advising Trusted Sharing on how it can be used by facilitators, academics, NGOs, the UN and national and local governments – and I am having fun doing it!)

Check it out at [www.trustedsharing.com](http://www.trustedsharing.com). You can read an overview of Trusted Sharing there.

You can join and start a conversation with anyone about anything. Unlike Facebook, a Trusted Sharing conversation stays

intact and does not disappear in the daily roll down. Unlike Twitter, a Trusted Sharing conversation can be much richer and more useful. Many facilitation methods can be used on Trusted Sharing including the ToP Focused Conversation, Workshop and Strategic Planning, World Café, Open Space, Appreciative Inquiry and others.

The value of a flex-time conversation is that people can participate anytime from anywhere. In addition to testing it this spring with my students at NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, I am also introducing it to the UN's e-governance branch for use at the local, national, regional and global levels. And in May we hope to introduce Trusted Sharing at a continental conference of the International Association of Facilitators. □

*Robertson Work, adjunct professor of public administration, is founder/director of Innovative Leadership Services and facilitator/trainer for UNDESA, UN Habitat and the East-West Center, among others. He is a long-time colleague of ICA International.*



# Saving time through virtual meetings

By Khrystyna Yablonska

**W**hen discussions and resolving of workplace issues can't be done face to face, virtual meetings can help. They might sound mysterious but they are gaining popularity. The purpose of virtual facilitation at such events is no different from the traditional one – to engage a group of people in effective group decision-making.

Facilitation of virtual meetings is more complicated compared to conventional meetings. However, the right tools and some practice can simplify the task.

The benefit of online facilitation is that it saves time. There is no need to travel to a venue and gather a group

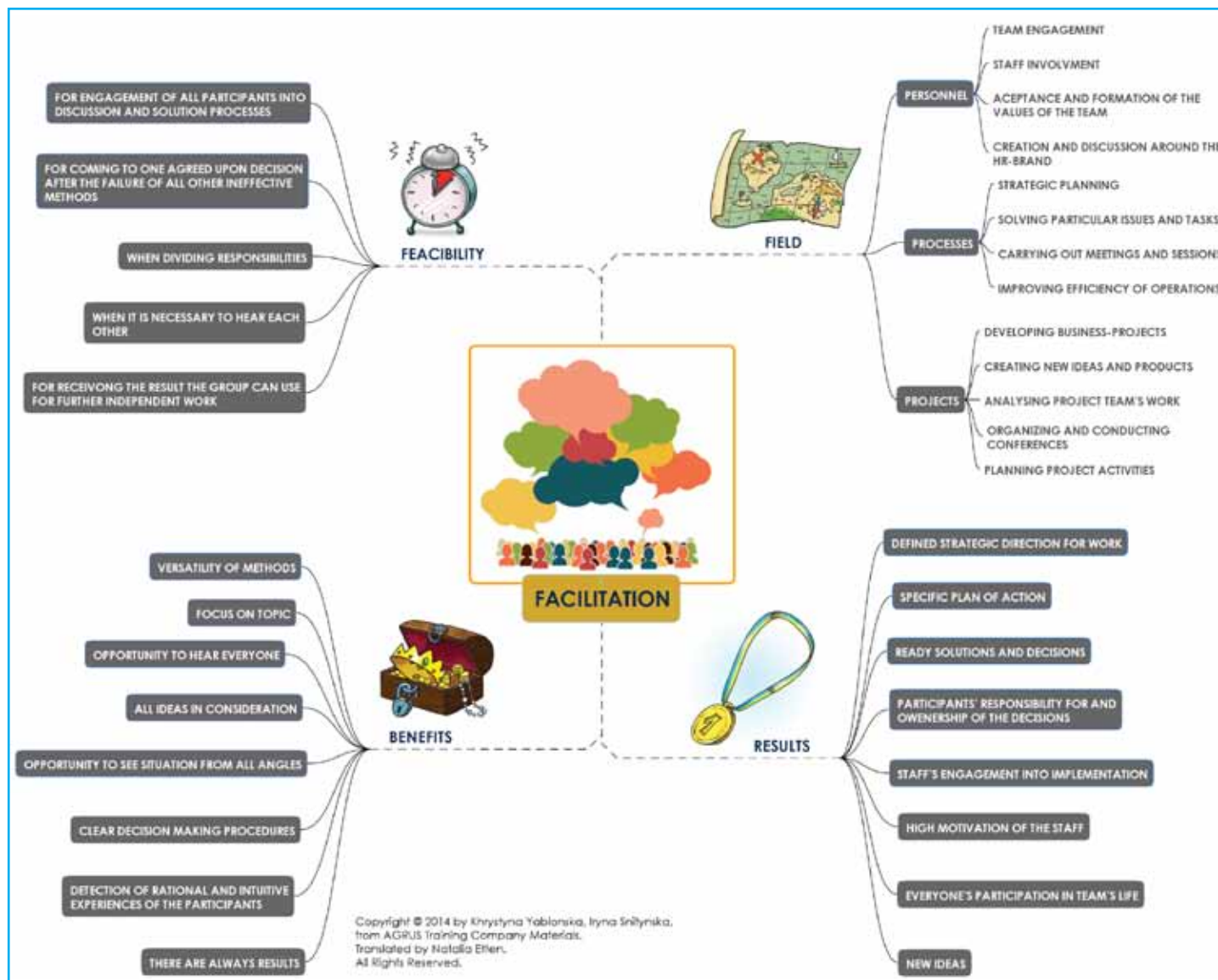
together. It is also more efficient as such meetings can be scheduled quickly and with a short lead time.

The most important thing is training. Virtual facilitation requires honing your best practices and other skills.

## Before the meeting:

1. Choose an efficient facilitation resource. It should allow participants to see each other, use online Post-it notes, write their ideas and post them on a virtual board.
2. Test the online platform and draw up clear guidelines for new participants.

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# Learning from Yolanda

By Mark Pixley

**T**yphoon Yolanda, also known as Typhoon Haiyan, was one of the strongest recorded. It devastated parts of central Philippines on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2013. In response, the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia and several universities organized a conference for faculty and students followed by a service learning program during which college students from across Asia spent a week living in the affected communities to do recovery projects.

The three-day conference on “Disaster Response, Community Resilience and The Role of Asian Universities” was held at the Central

Philippine University, in Iloilo, on Panay Island, south of Manila, on June 28, 2014. I was invited to help with the facilitation and reflection and to introduce the disaster recovery model of the Global Facilitators Serving Communities (GFSC), an NGO that I work with, and the ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, Decisional) process for group discussions.

We had more than 200 participants, about 120 from universities in the Philippines and 80 from South Korea, Taiwan, China, Indonesia, Thailand and India.

I had planned a guided introduction but the schedule was disrupted so

I did an exercise in which they had to line up by height, birthday and distance travelled. The line was so long that it circled around the conference room but all appreciated the interaction with each other.

My presentation was the next day. I began with an exercise in small groups where everyone would speak for three minutes. I then did 10 minutes of reflection. This helped people get to know each other and their experience of crisis. It also set the context for my presentation on the Crisis>Change>Choice disaster recovery model.

According to the GFSC model, after a major crisis individuals and communities go through four stages of recovery. The choices they make can lead to effective personal and community reconstruction or to a

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3. Draw up and distribute the agenda. If you plan to work with presentations or texts, send them beforehand. If there are many of them or if they include videos and photos, you can post them on the Internet using a special service.
4. Send guidelines on how to join the meeting. Ask for a trial connection five to 10 minutes before the meeting.
5. Make sure all programs and equipment are fully operational.
6. On the day of the meeting, send reminders about the event, its objectives and connection guidelines. Find out whether all are able to attend.
4. Present information in small chunks, no longer than 15 to 20 minutes.
5. Fully engage participants in the discussion. Give the opportunity to ask questions, for example, by using the chat feature.
6. Before closing the meeting, summarise the results, ask for feedback, determine further action and people responsible, agree on the timing of any potential next meeting and thank the participants.

## During the meeting:

1. Check the connection and sound. Deal with technical or any other problems related to participation.
2. Let participants know the agenda and aim of the meeting.
3. Keep to the procedure.

## After the meeting:

1. Send the minutes to participants.
2. Monitor the implementation of decisions made; and keep participants informed about this.

Once you try out virtual facilitation, you will realise that in some cases this is exactly what you need. □

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*Khrystyna Yablonska (div1@shkola-agrus.com) is a facilitator from Ukraine*



secondary crisis. Facilitation and engagement processes can play a critical role in the recovery process.

I introduced the ORID process and shared a format of appropriate questions for an introduction conversation at a meeting with community leaders – something the students might well do in the affected communities. The questions included:

“What have been some major events for the community?”

“What have been high/low points?”

“What have been strengths of the community & its people?” and

“What should the community carry into the future?”

Participants then practised using the ORID process. They paired off to lead a conversation on “Your College Experience” or “Childhood House”. I also handed out question formats for an “End of the Day” conversation, a “Common Experience” reflection and a movie conversation as additional resources.

We had a team-building session, during which we watched the first 15 minutes of “Haiyan: The Eye of the Storm” by the Discovery Channel. Team leaders led the

discussion. The groups were large, so it was challenging for everyone to hear. The foreign students felt the video and discussion helped them grasp the nature of the disaster. The Filipino students had a chance to reflect on some of their experiences. The video was so impactful that we watched the rest of it over the next two days.

The nature of service learning emphasizes using reflective processes including maintaining journals and encouraging the faculty to facilitate group conversations. There was a wonderful mixture of people

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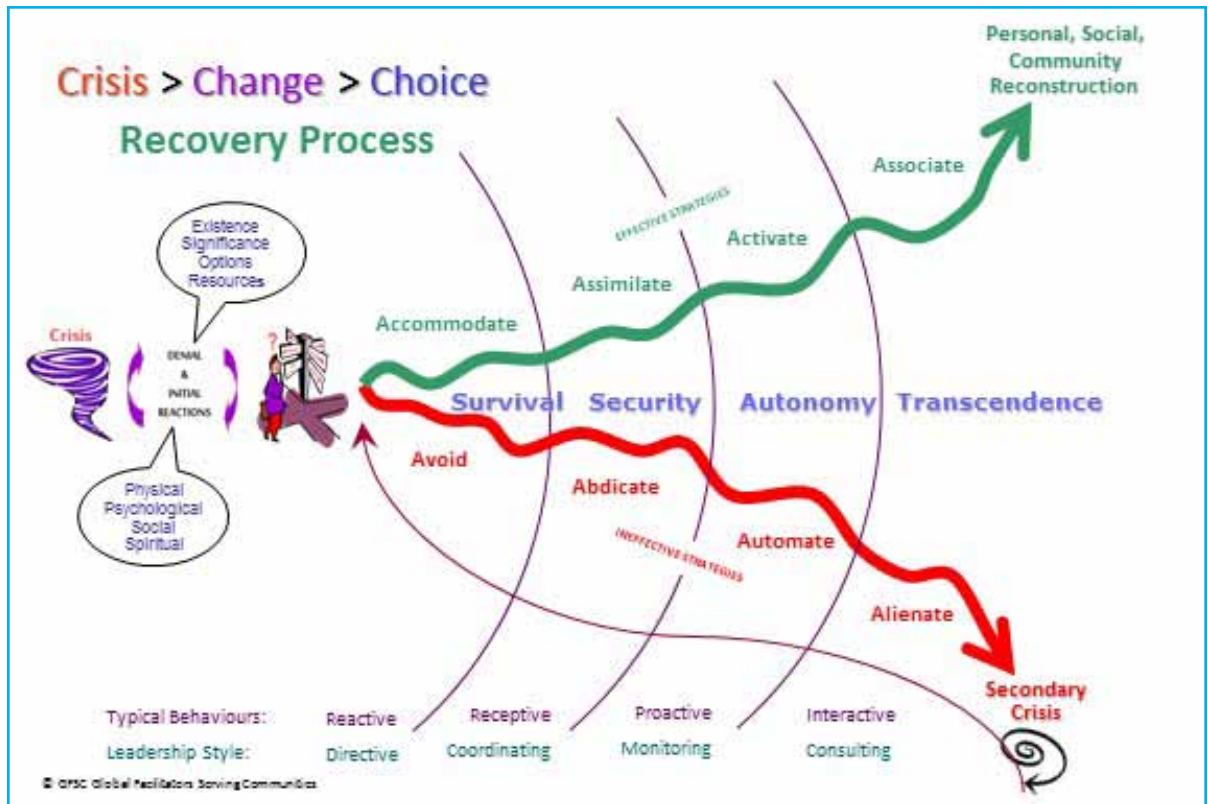
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talking about the disaster, community resilience and how different institution had responded. One professor talked about creating mangrove buffers. There were responses from the government and churches, and some examples from Indonesia and China.

Several university presidents explained how universities

were getting involved in disaster recovery processes. An interesting comment was that the government has lots of resources but is not good at distribution. The universities, with their student manpower, can repack materials and distribute them efficiently.

On the final day, the teams spelt out their aims. I gave them 30 minutes to prepare a poster outlining objectives for their community service and a creative presentation, like a song, slogan or dance. Before their presentation, I asked each participant to write their personal



intention for the coming week on a post-it note. Each team had three minutes for its presentation, which were video-taped. As expected, they were soon trying to outperform each other.

Overall, I was pleased by the results of the conference program. Despite limited time, I was able to provide a solid introduction to the GFSC models and facilitation approaches. That empowered the students and prepared them for their service learning projects. The combination of brief lectures and practical application of methods

was powerful. The closing round of project presentations energized and unified the teams for their week in the field. □

### My prayer

*The spectre of darkness shadowed  
the sacred space of matrimonial bliss  
with the trappings of desire,  
the formulaic 'lifestyle' mirror of self—  
wants and needs threatening to capture  
mind and spirit, a concert  
of phantasy and illusions and  
songs sang on stage promised to dull  
the fruit of transgression,  
to mask recurring ache that stems  
from betrayal of childhood innocence.  
The psychological nightmare that waits  
in the wings must be obliterated  
with the power of prayer  
for the light of hope and the seeds of love  
can vanquish all threats  
to the sanctity of life at its rawest.  
Society is challenged not to give in  
to predators and purveyors  
imaging life like vacuous footprints  
of self-indulgence to escape flashbacks  
of victimhood and echoes of pain.*

Deborah Ruiz Wall

*More information is available online on the following:*

#### **Typhoon Haiyan, Eye of the Storm**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BnahLG\\_DmQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BnahLG_DmQ)

#### **Global Facilitators Serving Communities (GFSC)**

[www.globalfacilitators.org](http://www.globalfacilitators.org)

#### **United Board Report on Learning From Yolanda**

[http://www.unitedboard.org/Portals/0/Content/Publications/UBC-AUG%202014-Newsletter\\_online.compressed.pdf](http://www.unitedboard.org/Portals/0/Content/Publications/UBC-AUG%202014-Newsletter_online.compressed.pdf)



# Promoting peace across the borders

By Svitlana Salamatova  
and Ana Nikolov

The Global ICA Channel, ICA Ukraine's Internet media project, broke new ground by hosting a meeting of experts on cross-border cooperation (CBC) this year.

The meeting entitled "The Role of Experts of CBC Ukraine – Russia – EU in Peace Building" was held on Jan 12 and facilitated by Larry Philbrook, the head of ICA Taiwan.



It had been initiated by Yevgeny Zhuk, the head of Ukraine's Borowski District State Administration and Kharkiv Oblast from the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).

AEBR representatives at the event included Johannes Moisio of Finland, chairman of the Task Force for External Borders, his deputy Alex Kirukhin of Ukraine and Ana Nikolov, coordinator for Balkans, Serbia.

Zhuk and Kirukhin also represented the Ukrainian side, along with Sergei Tatusyak. Kirukhin heads a transnational cross-border "euroregion" named Slobozhanschina while Tatusyak heads a similar body named Dniester.

The Russian side was represented by Ivan Kosoretsky from the Institute for the Development of the Kaliningrad cross-border cooperation.

The focus question was: "What can we, as a community of experts, do to promote peace?"

The meeting showed that the human factor plays a leading role in the development of cross-border

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cooperation. This happens through interaction between people, organisations and professionals, as well as through the creation and implementation of joint projects.



## Joint agreements

The meeting led to the signing of a contract between the euroregions of Slobozhanschina and Dniester as well as an agreement to develop media cooperation between Poland and Vinnitsa regions.

Overcoming barriers created by conflicts is a key objective of cross-border cooperation. One way to promote peace is to carry out projects that raise awareness among young people about the importance of post-conflict reconciliation and tolerance in cross-border areas. This requires getting their thoughts on reconciliation, tolerance and human security, and their vision for the development of those areas. That will help us create favourable conditions for bringing them together. We must also equip them with skills for creating and implementing their vision.

After the meeting, there were a series of discussions in chatrooms on follow-up. The AEBR task-force chairman Moisio proposed that ICA Ukraine hold a second meeting.

The Experts conversation continued online on Jan 30, facilitated by Svitlana Salamatova, head of ICA Ukraine. AEBR Secretary-General Martín Guillermo Ramírez also took part, although only briefly due to a tight schedule, highlighting the importance that AEBR gives to the dialogue.

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The ORID and consensus building processes were used at this meeting together with the Linoit virtual board. Four Strategic Directions were identified for joint work (see chart “Experts Platform for CBC”). This includes both existing and future projects.

- Light online activities
- Project opening event
- Creation of web platform
- Creation of Youth Working Groups (YWG)
- Mentoring of YWG
- Implementation of YWG cross-border projects

### The Global ICA Channel

Our team believes The Global ICA Channel can play roles like this in other parts of the world as well. If the global ICA team were to take the lead, the channel could be used to host gatherings of young people from around the planet. ToP processes and facilitators could help make these events constructive and productive.

This will help young people and children learn about methods of project management, believe in themselves and perhaps even begin a career as ToP facilitator. In turn, this joint project with a small financial support will help the global ICA organisation “rejuvenate” itself. And The Global ICA Channel will enjoy an interesting life. □

Please view our multi-lingual presentation on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrUcAGO4pfA>

Following these meetings, the authors of this report, Svitlana Salamatova of Ukraine and Ana Nikolov of Serbia, discussed the possibility of establishing a joint youth project. We propose a “Border as Area of Peace – European Cross-border Youth Initiative” as follows:

**Partners:**

Joint project of AEBR <http://www.aebr.eu/en/index.php>, ICA Ukraine [www.ica-ukraine.org.ua](http://www.ica-ukraine.org.ua), ICAI <https://plus.google.com/u/0/103816185854921268615/posts>

**Activities:**

- Experts kick off meeting
- Grant seeking strategy





# Internship that changed my life

By **Jessie Ho**

**R**oss Dickson says his five-month teaching internship in Araraquara, a small Brazilian town, taught him to relax and enjoy what he had.

He arrived there in July 2013. Things were hard at first and he struggled with loneliness. “I had never been so disconnected from everything familiar so I really had to try hard to engage with the people around me,” he says. But this turned out to be a blessing in disguise – where some might have withdrawn and done only the bare minimum for their job, he learnt to be more resilient and proactive. “I [had to] reach out to people to make the most of my time in Brazil,” he adds.

The differences between the local culture and that of his native Canada helped deepen his understanding of life in general.

“Brazilians are warm and friendly. I attended lots of parties, bars and social gatherings. They have such a zest for life... My biggest learning from Brazilian culture was to relax and to enjoy what you have. Canadian society can be a lot more anxious. I always worry about different parts of my life – my grades, my job, my problems – but I should take the time to relax and enjoy life.”

Dickson is one of thousands of young people who have served with AIESEC, the world’s largest youth-run non-profit organization. Its global internship program offers over 24,000 volunteer and work internships annually.

*Jessie Ho is Blog Editor for AIESEC Canada (<http://aiesec.org/>)*



*Ross Dickson (left) with a fellow teacher in Araraquara, Brazil.*

“I decided to go in 2012 after meeting other people who had gone on exchange through AIESEC,” says Dickson. “They all talked about how their perspective on life had changed while abroad and I wanted the same thing. I also talked to a lot of people from other countries who were living in Toronto and they gave me a taste of what the world has to offer. I knew I had to experience it for myself. By going abroad, I knew I would become a stronger, more independent person.”

While in Araraquara, Ross taught English at Trinity English School, a company that offers English education to children and adults. As there weren’t so many foreigners there, he became more of a cultural ambassador during his exchange experience.

The internship also gave him the opportunity to learn from his fellow teachers, all accomplished professionals with more than 10 years of experience. “They cared deeply about their students’ education and how it would lead to their future success,” says

Ross. “They taught me to teach effectively.”

As he gained experience, he took on his own classes and helped out as a substitute for other teachers when needed. Teaching abroad provided an opportunity for him to learn and grow. “I learned how to communicate effectively, connect with students of various ages, address the diverse learning needs of people and deal with conflict,” he said.

Ross is currently national vice-president of marketing and communications at AIESEC Canada. He says his exchange experience has catalyzed his ambition to further cultural relations in Canada. “I never really thought that I cared much about Canada before going abroad, but now I appreciate my home and my culture’s values so much more,” he says. “It makes me want to build my country and build stronger ties with other countries. International communities can seem so isolated from each other, but after having seen how similar we are as people, I want us to grow together.” □

# The Great March for Climate Action

By David Zahrt

I joined the Great March for Climate Action initiated by former Iowa state legislator Ed Fallon last year. The 3,000-mile (4,800-kilometre) journey, the longest march in US history, began in Los Angeles on March 1 and ended in Washington, DC, on November 1. We wanted to address the nation's reluctance to deal with the mining and use of fossil fuels that add to the global warming behind climate change, and our Consume-and-Throw-Away lifestyle that the rest of the world is copying.

It cost \$5,000 per marcher. There were various fundraisers. Some got their head shaved. I chose an adoption program at \$500 per donor.

We began with a rally in Wilmington, and marched through Los Angeles. My wife Linda and our daughter Heidi joined us for half a day. It rained for two or three days but people were delighted as California had been experiencing a drought!

What was the march like? We covered 15 to 25 miles daily. One person was assigned every day to select the route. We camped out at night. We had various vehicles carrying our gear and even a kitchen truck! Every morning, at breakfast, we had to pack our lunch. Dinner was the biggest meal.

We had a core of 20 to 30 marchers. Others walked with us for a day, a week or a month. Some of us were in our 70s. At 77, I was the oldest. Although it was a march, I usually rode my bicycle. We called ourselves the Elders Bike Brigade.

*David Zahrt (4deezee@gmail.com) lives with his wife Linda in Carson City, Nevada.*



*Although it was a march, I used a bicycle. Some of us were in our 70s and I was the oldest. We called ourselves the Elders Bike Brigade.*

We held rallies. Sometimes we halted for a "rest day". People greeted us and offered overnight home-stays or organised a potluck dinner. Local action groups made presentations at our evening meals. It was amazing that there was so much support at the grassroots level.

## Connecting up with colleagues

The march also helped me renew old acquaintances along the way! Many of them were colleagues from the Order Ecumenical/Institute of Cultural Affairs. I had spent 20 years in the organisation working in various places: rural America, the inner city of Chicago, aboriginal communities in Australia and villages in Kenya.



*A mobile commode, hauled by a support vehicle, trailed us. Camping equipment came in a gear truck while a kitchen truck fitted with a refrigerator, stoves and water tanks carried groceries for meals.*

In California, Milan and Linda Hamilton helped arrange camping sites and home-stays along the route. Jim and Judy Wiegel, from Phoenix, visited us at the ASU (Arizona State University) West Campus. After crossing into New Mexico, I had lunch with Tim and Martha Karpoff in Albuquerque and met George and Elise Packard in Santa Fe. In Denver, Diane Greenwald and Jim and Oliveann Slotta joined us for a rally at the Colorado State Capitol Building. In Nebraska, I enjoyed a home-stay with Joan Wallace.



*We produced our own electricity using this trailer, which was hauled by our gear truck.*

In Iowa, I stayed with Denise O'Brien and her husband Larry Harris in Atlantic. They helped me find a welder to fix the back seat on my bike. In Winterset, I stayed with Nancy Trask, who works as director of Winterset Public Library. She had the library host a potluck and collegial gathering. In Davenport, I stayed with Doug and Pat Druckenmiller. Doug came for the rally at the City Park.

I celebrated my 77th birthday on Sept 4 as we approached Chicago. Sally Stovall, Dick Alton, Paul Noah and Linda joined us in Oak Park, a suburb of Chicago. We marched





*Don and Jane McClain joined me for a rally in Iowa. Many people I had worked with in the Order Ecumenical/Institute of Cultural Affairs connected up with me as I marched through their town.*

through 5th City, a black ghetto on the West Side, where OE/ICA did its first project in urban renewal. Linda and I had lived there from 1966 to 1968.

Terry Bergdall, who has just ended his term as CEO of the US chapter of the ICA, joined us on his bike. We rode to the rally downtown. After that, we cycled up Lakeshore to ICA's headquarters at 4750 North Sheridan, where the marchers halted for a rest-day.

## Memorable moments

Various events made the march memorable. One was marching across the Colorado River separating California and Arizona. Police escorted us across the bridge.

After three weeks, my wife Linda and our family friend Kristen Lein picked me up at Morristown for a home-stay at Kristen's home. I did some laundry, got a haircut and took a bath. I re-joined the March the next day.

We marched through Iowa City, where I was born, went to university, met Linda and got married in 1959. In Angola, Indiana, I stayed with Bill and Donalou Imler, Drew University acquaintances. The local paper featured me in an article about the march.

We suspended our march in Montpelier, Ohio, and took a bus to New York City to join about 400,000 people in a two-mile walk on Sept 21. It was tagged the Largest Climate March, compared to ours, the longest. Thousands of people in 160 other countries held climate events on that day as well. We took a bus back three days later to continue our march.

In Pennsylvania, we stayed at Maggie's Family Farm, devastated by the fracking operations of Shell that triggered anti-drilling protests. We also stayed overnight in Pittsburg, where we learnt it



*Marchers on the steps of the Capitol building in Des Moines, the state capital of Iowa.*

was the first city in the US to ban fracking.

Keeping the march "running" was figured out along the way. Tasks were identified, created, and assigned. Assignments usually rotated twice each week. There was no administration until we elected a mayor, three administrators and a judicial council. The 20 to 30 of us would have occasional meetings before or after dinner. There were no chalkboards or printouts so there was nothing objective to refer back to. Sometimes there was no agreement on an issue.

We worked on a statement of purpose during several meetings. Our final text reads: *The mission of the Great March for Climate Action is to change the hearts and minds of the American people, our elected leaders, and people around the globe, to inspire action on the climate crisis.*

During the march, we heard people say individual action would not make a difference to the foot dragging on dealing with climate change, that what we need is a movement. It also seems to me that things won't change until we can sit at the table and have a personal conversation with those who we hope to impact – the people behind the fossil fuel industry. □



*We reached Washington DC on Nov 1 and celebrated at a park near the White House. We had gathered 40 to 50 more people on the last leg of our journey.*

## ICA: NEPAL

**Earthquake Relief Fund:** A day after the 7.9 magnitude earthquake that hit Nepal on April 25th, our team visited affected areas in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur. At least 3,300 people have died and hundreds of buildings and heritages destroyed. Tremors are still going on and there might be more casualties and loss of properties. The biggest impact was in and around Kathmandu, the most densely populated area of Nepal.



We have launched a relief fund following Prime Minister Sushil Koirala's appeal for international support. The money raised will be spent on disaster recovery and relief activities including providing food, clean water, fuel, shelter and hygiene products.

ICA Nepal will also do long-term work to help victims recover. We will update all donors on the use of their support.

**Please send donations to ICA Nepal,  
Account Number 01006378902  
SWIFT Code: SCBLNPKA  
Standard Chartered Bank  
New Baneshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal.**

**Or donate on-line:**  
<http://www.ica-usa.org/donations/fund.asp?id=12958>

## ICA: JAPAN

**Cote d'Ivoire Project:** We are collaborating in a training project involving six villages in Agboville, 70km north-west of Abidjan. The project, funded by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA Japan), will train unemployed youths in vegetable farming, chicken farming and agroforestry. Coordinator Hideki Kambi will work with Eugene Kouame, executive director and project manager of ICA Cote d'Ivoire.

**Bihar Project:** MOFA has approved the third phase of this project which involves building three more village

community centres this year. Two multi-purpose centres were handed over to the village development committee in the Madepura project area in February. We will train 10 preschool teachers and equip Women's Self Help Groups with income generating skills. Our partner is Wholistic Child Development International which has a long history of working with churches in India.

**DiDRR Network workshop:** Wayne Ellsworth facilitated a three-day workshop for 15 members of the Disability inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) Network in Sendai, Japan, at the conclusion of the UN Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

**Staff changes:** Mayumi, who is getting married, and Maki, who is moving to near Okinawa, are leaving. Shinji has already left. Three new staff have been recruited and are being trained.

## ICA: CHILE

**Methods courses:** We have organized courses on participatory group work methods for physically challenged people this year.

**Youth counselling:** We are supporting an entrepreneurs' group formed by previous patients of the Children's Rehabilitation Centre – Valparaiso Telethon with help from the government's National Disability Service. We are training the Entrepreneurs in Action Organization in ToP methods and helping them plan their next three years. We have also planned various small projects to support members with more serious disabilities.

## ICA CONFERENCES

**Asia Pacific Regional Meeting:** This event, open to colleagues across the world, will look at future strategies within the region and the globe; and share practical and spirit methods, including Technology of Participation (ToP). It will be held at the ICAA Environmental Education Centre in Talegaon, near Pune, India during Nov 29 to Dec 6. For more information, please contact: [shizuyo@icajapan.org](mailto:shizuyo@icajapan.org).

**Tanzania Regional meeting:** This event, during May 17 to 23, will use "Sharing Approaches that Work" model to discuss the future of ICA in Africa. It will include workshops on ICA methods and programs such as youth leadership curriculum, permaculture and farmer based self-help groups. ICAs are encouraged to send not just their leaders but staff members as well. Expected participants include ICAs in Zimbabwe, Kenya and the US; Safe Neighborhoods/ ICA Uganda; OPAD; ICOD Action Network; and colleagues helping with programming in East Africa. For more information please contact: [richard.alton@gmail.com](mailto:richard.alton@gmail.com) or [sgandhi@ica-usa.org](mailto:sgandhi@ica-usa.org). □