



Johnny Ipil-Seed News

The quarterly newsletter of *Trees for the Future*

Special Issue

Winter 2005 Vol. XIII, No. 4

Hurricanes - A Whole Chain of Them!

As Hurricane Katrina was making its way across Florida and the Gulf of Mexico on its way to New Orleans, as worried families looked at its progress on their TV screens, an event that earned far less attention could also be seen:

It was a chain of tropical storms right behind Katrina, running all the way back to the West Coast of Africa.

Under the right conditions, each of these additional storms, which then included two later to be called Ophelia and Rita, could have become just as dangerous as Katrina turned out to be. What conditions? Tropical storms form when cold air meets warm water.

No one should be allowed to say that they didn't expect Katrina. It wasn't a matter of "if". Just "when" and "where". Ocean temperatures have been rising for some time, now about two degrees higher than a decade ago and there is plenty of scientific evidence to prove what that will bring about. It was nearly ten years ago when former Peace Corps volunteer Mike Tidwell wrote his book *Farewell Bayou* describing what would happen when a big storm (like Katrina) struck a poorly prepared city (like New Orleans).

Once the human tragedy had taken place, Congress immediately began passing resolutions allocating many billions of dollars to help the survivors and to rebuild the city. **But it seems that neither the Congress nor the American People have considered spending money to address the underlying cause of this devastation.** Unless we begin thinking that way, and soon, we will probably run out of money long before we run out of hurricanes.

The underlying cause, the reason the world's oceans are heating up, is called Global Climate Change. More, and more, violent storms are only one of the results we

can soon expect to visit us.

Most of the world understands this. Over 160 countries (not including Australia nor the USA) are signatories of the Kyoto Treaty to limit carbon emissions. And yet the increase in tropical storms, the drastic changes in seasons throughout the tropical world, the rapidly dwindling global supply of potable water, and that big brown cloud of dust that also recently crossed the Atlantic from Africa to the Caribbean, all tell us we need to do more than reduce emissions. **There's obviously far too much carbon in the atmosphere already and we've got to begin taking it out.**



The only practical way to achieve this is through photosynthesis and, for that to happen, we need to bring vegetation (trees) back to the barren lands of the Developing World. That's what your program does: removing over a million tons of carbon dioxide annually and growing.

We're able to do this in a practical way thanks to some wonderful people, living in many of the countries where your program is at work, giving unselfishly of their energy and talents to help their people - and help save the global environment.

Articles Inside this Special Issue:
Dave Nearly Kicks the Bucket
Up Close With Technicians - The Global System
Got Gas? - Planting Trees for the Holidays

Johnny Ipil-Seed News is a quarterly newsletter of TREES FOR THE FUTURE, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people of the world's poorest communities to begin environmentally beneficial, self-help projects.

This newsletter is printed by wind energy on recycled paper with soy-based ink and is sent to all supporting members to inform them of recent events, plans, financial matters and how their support is helping people.

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The Philippines: Gabriel "Gabby" Mondragon

Gabby came from the southern Philippines to direct a foundation in northern Luzon. There he assisted the return of the Aeta People to their tribal lands after they had been evacuated by eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. For over a year he lived with them in these uplands.

As TREES began to develop livelihood projects for these families, it was Gabby that came up with a good many ideas that would both improve their living standards and restore productive life to mountains still buried under *lahar* from the volcano.

Despite great difficulties, he helped the Aeta people restore tree cover to several hundred acres around the community called "Bagong Buhay" (New Life). Within four years, the trees he helped plant restored springs, providing a supply of water year-around (enough that they even built a swimming pool).

Through his efforts, many types of vegetables and fruit trees have been returned to the land, including the *duhat* tree, which had almost completely dis-



Gabby, middle, holding a pineapple at the entrance of his Forest Garden in Zambales.

appeared. Now the community is adding coconut and starting a small dairy using tree leaves as in the forage.

Gabby has established a training center which now receives visitors from around the world, including a Japanese delegation studying organic agriculture as the Aetas are developing it. He has twice been a delegate to Japan to speak about Peace Through Development.



TREES' Technician Gabby Mondragon, Mayor Roger Yap of the City of Botolan, 2 barangay leaders, and Dioning Galan, the Agricultural Officer for the Zambales region, organize the coconut train that will help plant 100,000 coconut palms for a major biodiesel project.

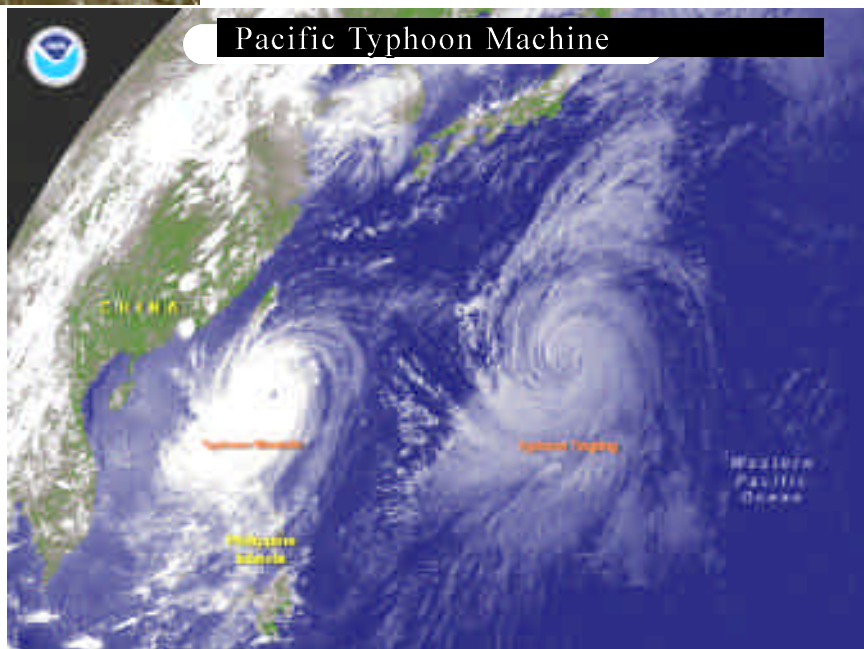
The Global System: Climate Change Is Seen On ALL Continents

Right: While storms are born off Africa's West Coast, a brown cloud of dust from the dry country-side forms over land and moves slowly westward, depositing dust (and all it contains) on islands of the Caribbean.



Left: As Katrina and Rita crossed the Gulf of Mexico on their way toward land, there was a whole chain of other storms stretching all the way back to West Africa.

Right: As a chain of storms race toward the East and Gulf Coasts, a chain of typhoons, formed off the Baja coast, race toward south Asia.





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Honduras: Jorge Betancourt

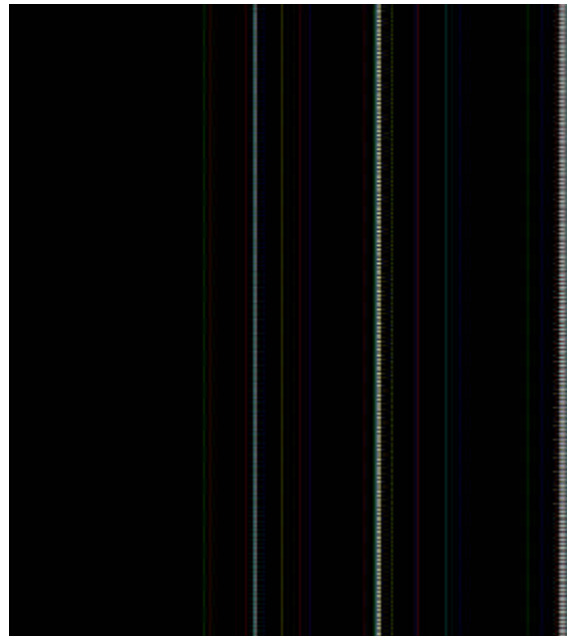
We met Jorge more than 20 years ago when he served as associate director of Peace Corps/ Honduras for natural resources, a program he continued to build until there were more than 150 volunteers at any time. He built alliances with TREES and other organizations to make sure his volunteers had access to seeds, new technology and in-service training.

In 2001 Jorge became director of a private organization, AMUPROLAGO, which is five municipalities working together to save Lake Yojoa, the largest fresh-water lake in Honduras. This is a daunting challenge: the watershed of the lake is 106,000 acres, mostly deforested with a great number of serious environmental issues. Thousands of families are no longer able to support themselves from their land, and local businesses are being forced to close.

Working with Jorge and several Peace Corps volunteers assigned in the area, we are making the AMUPROLAGO site on the edge of the Lake into a technical resources center from which we can supply seeds, ideas and training to several groups, covering an area of 12 municipalities in these mountains.

With Jorge's help, TREES will also be assisting new

groups forming in the southern area called Choluteca where conditions are very hot and dry and where trees are even more desperately needed. From there, we plan to extend the program into Nicaragua and El Salvador.



Melissa Kolbe, a past field rep, stands with Jorge Betancourt, TREES' Current Honduras program Coordinator

Dave Nearly Kicks the Bucket

For 32 years I've talked about fragile upland soils--the result of destroying the trees that protected the land. After "talking the talk" all this time, I finally had the chance to "walk the walk."

We were invited to Antique Province in the central Philippines where the water supply is rapidly falling because of deforestation, over-grazing and other faults. I was following Cedric Encarnation, TREES' field technician and the water chief, to see more of the problem while we circumvented a landslide.

Trying to follow carefully in his footsteps, my foot suddenly slipped and plunged to knee-depth in the muck. Trying to pull that leg out caused my other leg to be sucked in. By this time I was really struggling and fell over backwards. I was stuck and sinking fast into the slimy sloo.

Because the surrounding area was so soft, attempts to pull me out with branches and ropes were hopeless. Were it not for the backhoe that was working nearby, there's no telling what would have happened.

The driver saw my plight and eventually managed to swing the bucket over my head. I grabbed the tines and held on as he lifted. There was a loud sucking sound and I was pulled out. Getting my feet under me, I fell back into the bucket and was swung out of the mess.

Our efforts to help Antique Province reforest their crumbling watershed is now receiving a lot of support from the entire province, including the Governor and several Mayors. The project could feasibly plant 2.5 million trees over the next two years.



The Deppner scorecard: In 32 years - bit by a cobra in Indonesia, gored by a bull in Banda Ache, slid of a mountainside in Honduras, kicked by horse in Ecuador, bleeding ulcer in Nicaragua, heart attack putting up the ceiling in our Silver Spring headquarters, 11 broken bones, 5 broken teeth, put in jail six times in countries not famous for their human rights records, now mired in the muck of Antique . .

. . . and 43 million trees planted!

Q. Would you do it again?

Yes, but this time leave out the snakes-YIKES!

Integrating Video and Adult Learning Theory in Agroforestry Extension

TREES' International Program Manager, John Leary, just returned from a site visit in Senegal where he visited TREES Field Rep Omar Ndao and assisted in evaluating the planting of 250,000 trees in the Department of Kaffrine. The following explanation about training is one aspect of this program; the trip report will be available soon at www.plant-trees.org.

In recent years, there have been two major styles of training for agriculture and forestry-related topics. The first style has consisted of local technicians, primarily



Omar, standing in the background, facilitates a discussion about implementing agroforestry technologies.

those as the local Ministry of Forestry, assembling farmers and teaching in a rather pedagogical style. The second main style of teaching has consisted of extension agents conducting site visits and giving training to very small groups of one to three individuals.

Professors of andragogy, adult learning, support that adults learn best when given the opportunity to exchange experiences with others. In an effort to improve the quality and effectiveness of training, TREES' Technicians have begun to integrate video and experiential learning components into agroforestry training, emphasizing the facilitation of sharing experience. The program is having amazing success.

Recent trainings included the participation of 3 groups of 45 men, women and youth from 13 different towns and villages. Half of each training group consisted of current participants in the projects with whom TREES is actively

working to establish multipurpose windbreaks. The other half of the participants consisted of new people who have expressed interest in joining the program. By mixing people with varying levels of experience in agroforestry we are able to facilitate an exchange of information and testimonials that could never be found in any text book or training manual.

The trainings had two major components, a training video component (see picture on left) and field visit component (see picture below), both of which were designed to maximize the participation and exchange of experience among participants. We stopped the video after each of the 13 sections so participants could discuss experiences with the specific species or agroforestry techniques mentioned in that segment. During the site visits, the training participants were able to interview the farmers in 6 different fields and ask questions about why a specific agroforestry design was chosen, why those species were chosen, what problems were faced in establishing that agroforestry intervention, and plans they have to further develop the farm.

The training evaluation by participants showed that 100% of new attendees finished the training with the ability to design and chose appropriate tree species for a multipurpose windbreak, AND they ALL demonstrated the ability to explain these topics to others.

The program is growing in Senegal through grassroots training, village-to-village extension, the sweat of field rep's like Omar, and your support. The program in Senegal will plant ~300,000 trees in 2006.

Farmers discuss the use of living fence and intercropping in this field during a field visit training.



Thank You Anne and Terri!

2005 has been a great year for Trees for the Future. We have grown as an organization. Our membership has grown, we have planted an additional 3.1 million trees, we have assisted over 200 additional communities, and we continue to gain more supporting members, foundations, and businesses.

Much of this could not have been possible were it not for the help of our volunteers. Two volunteers in particular, have contributed selflessly toward the development of *your* program: **Anne Toomey and Terri Kempton.**



Anne (left) is working toward a double Masters degree in Natural Resources and Sustainable Development with American University and the University for Peace in Costa Rica. She has helped the organization this Fall by providing plenty of support at headquarters for communications and publications, as well as by organizing intern/volunteer recruitment efforts.

Terri Kempton (above) is currently working for *Sustainable Conservation*, a program in San Francisco that is a *Partnership for the Prevention of Invasive Plant Introductions through Horticulture*. Terri has contributed to the program by serving as an advisor on topics such as climate change, carbon, and Central America, as well as by making appearances at events like the Green Festival in San Francisco. *Thank you volunteers!*

Heeer's Mah-lu (a project in Antique)

Marilou (Mahlu) Herman is the newest member of our Board of Directors. The reason we asked her to join is that she really cares about people and the environment. In fact, she is now forming her own foundation that will be called "Marilou Cares".

Currently working as a nurse at the World Bank, Mahlu is originally from the island of Panay in the west-central Philippines. The conditions in the uplands of Antique, her province, have continuously worsened as more people move on to the land and more tree cover is lost. The Provincial Water Authority there can no longer meet the demand, so they contacted Mahlu and TREES to see if we can help reverse a rapid decline in groundwater levels by bringing back trees and forests.

This is a project she and Grace have teamed up to develop. They have met with all the participating organizations and have gained the help of two Peace Corps volunteers. Tree seedlings will be planted starting in January. This project has the potential to plant more than a million trees over the next two years. With Grace and Mah-lu working on it, there will be plenty of local families joining the project.



Above: Mahlou with TREES' Director Dave Deppner and the Mayor of San Jose.

Right: Grace with Dave and Mayor of Hamtic



Belize: John & Ruth Coleman

The Colemans are a big family in the Toledo District of Belize so when Johnny or Ruth have something important to say it gets around the community quickly. John had the opportunity to use his training in sustainable agriculture when a USAID project was implemented there in the 1980's. Over about four years, his work in that program helped upland farmers plant more than four million trees! Most of these trees were integrated into upland agricultural systems of the Maya People (who, about 12 centuries ago, had developed this concept). Even today the Maya continue to call one of these species, *Leucaena*, "the Fertilizer Tree".

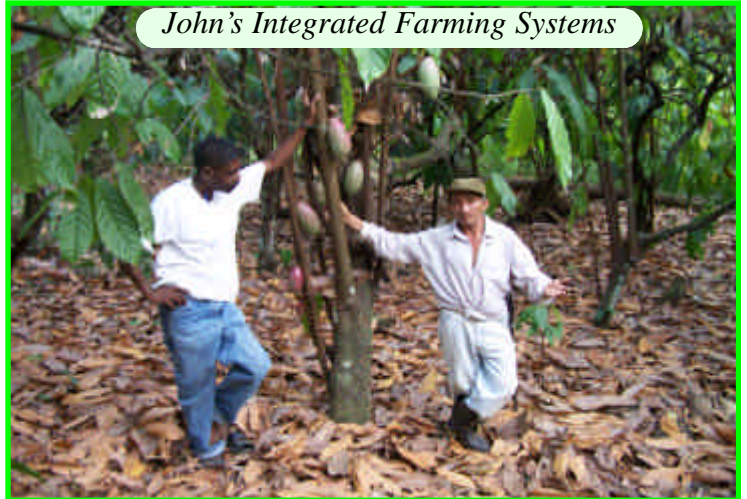
John and Ruth live on the family farm in a village called "Forest Home", near Punta Goorda Town. As the TREES program continues to grow throughout Central America, there is a growing need for more seeds, of more species, of the highest possible quality. John has convinced his family to provide TREES with about 5 acres of land there, which is being developed as a seed production farm.

The farm is a lot more than that. It demonstrates how species are grown, how they can be combined to develop symbiotic relationships that improve both

yields and the quality of the produce.

John and Ruth work together to build and manage the farm and they both meet with people in surrounding villages, encouraging them to also protect their lands and water supply through environmentally sustainable practices incorporating trees. Their efforts brings real benefit to the Toledo community and the seeds they are producing make the program available all over Central America.

John's Integrated Farming Systems



New Addition to Central America: Adam Norikane

Trees for the Future has a new addition to the team since last fall. Adding to our list of past and present staff members who have served in the Peace Corps, Adam Norikane comes to us as a returned Peace Corps volunteer from Senegal ('01-'03). Born and raised in Seattle, Adam has worked on forestry projects as far back as 1996, when he worked with the Forest Service in the Olympic National Forest.

While in Senegal, Adam implemented projects with trees such as *Moringa oleifera*, to combat malnutrition, as well as *Leucaena* for its many beneficial qualities. Adam is currently enrolled in a dual Masters degree program in Natural Resources and Sustainable Development with American University, and with the University for Peace in Costa Rica.

Adam's research and focus on modern agroforestry techniques will be a benefit to our organization. One year of his program will take place in Costa Rica, and

Adam will be working with TREES to coordinate, visit sites, offer technical assistance and develop reforestation programs throughout Central America. Additionally, his Masters research will be on the integration of *Forest Garden* agroforestry techniques with impoverished communities.



Adam, left, trains a Peace Corps Volunteer in fruit tree grafting.

Senegal: Omar "Appleseed" Ndao

While many of neighboring countries around Senegal are suffering from drought, strangely enough, the areas where Omar is working just experienced the greatest rainy season they have had in a long time.

This good news comes at a time when massive dust storms, originating in much of West Africa, are blowing across the Atlantic hurricane factory and reaching the skies of south Florida and the Caribbean, to the point that Antigua and other islands warned people with respiratory problems to stay inside.

Omar is working with communities to replicate a windbreak technology. Every field is getting protected. From the local perspective, this is saving the lands and soils that families depend on to survive. From the global perspective, this is keeping Saharan sand out of our lungs.

Omar assisted in the planting of a quarter of million trees in 2005, and the TREES program is planning to assist 35 communities in 2006 to plant 300,000 trees.



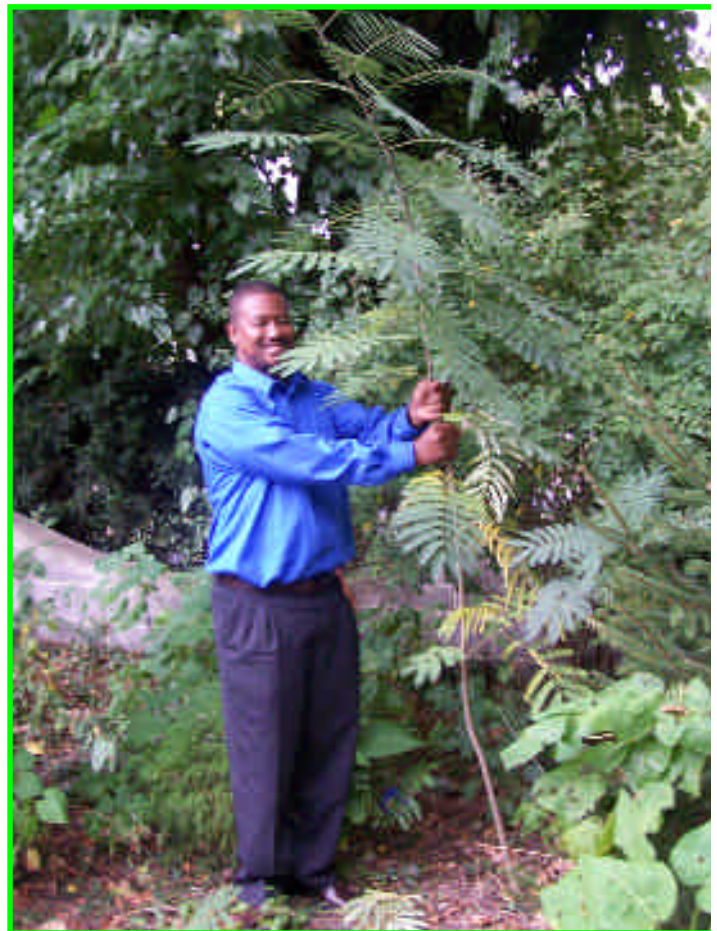
Omar, left, gives a training to farmers on the establishment and sustainable harvesting methods of multipurpose windbreaks.

Haiti: Gaby Papouloute

Gaby is a very spiritual man dedicated to returning lost tree cover to his homeland, Haiti. He has spent much of his time over the past two years helping TREES, Peace Corps Volunteers and communities throughout the Central Plateau, and since the mudslide in Gonaives, he has been working to implement reforestation and other self-help projects with the communities effected by the horrible mudslide that killed about 2000 people in 2004.

Gaby sees 2006 as a new generation, a new dream, a new opportunity to bring back Haiti's past world domination in coffee, cacao, and sugar cane production. He is also working to help communities through the country to implement reforestation projects that are estimated to plant about 150,000 trees in 2006, though with enough funding, these projects could plant nearly 2 million trees.

The newest project Gaby is working on is located about 27 kilometers north of the capital city, Port-au-Prince, in a small town called Bethel. They are currently undergoing a needs analysis and designing a farm plan for an area desperately seeking to protect themselves from the mudslides and disasters that ravaged neighboring towns.



India: Periyasamy Subramanian

With a smile from ear to ear, Subramanian, as he is known, wakes up every day eager to help his people. He began The Rural Development Afforestation Society in 1995, and for two years leading up to the tsunami disaster, Trees for the Future worked with Subramanian to distribute seeds and technology to communities searching for solutions to their falling water tables.

Because lands have been highly deforested, the Tamil people watch most of their potential drinking water flow into the ocean with much of their topsoil during monsoon seasons. To address this Subramanian and 30 other project leaders in the Tamil Nadu region have been working to reforest degraded lands to help capture runoff into groundwater aquifers.

Then the tsunami hit. The focus quickly changed from watershed conservation to the imminent crisis of 'how can farmers grow crops on lands that have been inundated with saltwater?'

For the first half of 2005, Subramanian worked with over 40 farmers, whose only lands were covered with saltwater. The solution: blanket the ground with as much green and brown materials - tree leaves, compost, animal dung, and all other types of harvested veg-



Subramanian, middle, helps plant a neem seedling in Tiruvannamalai

etation. These organic materials were then plowed into the soils. The result: crop and vegetable production was able to continue, and the heavy monsoons dissolved and removed much of the salt out of the topsoil.

Subramanian reports that this has been a great monsoon season since its start in late July. Rains have been plentiful in southeast India. He and his partners are helping to plant as many as 2,000 trees on single days. The goal is to plant 55,000 trees by the end of the year in 10 villages around his hometown of Tiruvannamalai, bringing life back to their degraded lands.



Left: TREES' Advisor on Asia Projects, Chris Wells, middle, stands with Periyasamy, right, during Chris' site visit to reforested areas in Tamil nadu. Right: Chris and Periyasamy delivered a training on soil conservation.





We passed a milestone recently: in Atlanta the price of gasoline went over \$5.00, at least for one weekend. We'll see it again.

And we're rapidly approaching another: when I started driving (shortly after the automobile was invented) there were 75 million cars in the world.

Now we're coming up on one billion. Every day, we are increasingly involved in worldwide competition for oil. Every day, the suppliers of this oil give us reasons why the supply is dropping and the price is rising.

While we cry about it, we should remember that when you build a dynamic economy almost entirely based on a single energy source--fossil fuels--we shouldn't be surprised when, at the first bad news, prices also suddenly become volatile.

But the effect here is not nearly as great as with people in the world's developing nations. With little, if any, local sources of petroleum, with very limited amounts of hard currencies, with an increasingly mobile local population, many of these countries have come upon very hard times. And yet...

And yet in many of these same poor communities, people see this latest of many disasters as possibly one of the greatest opportunities that has ever come their way. An opportunity for these marginalized people, living in remote areas of the Developing World, to actually do something that will begin to level the playing field in their continuing struggle to survive globalization.

The cover picture on the August 4 issue of Newsweek's Asia Edition showed an ear of corn with

Opinion: Got Gas?

a gasoline nozzle growing out of it. The article was entitled "Green Gold". It described scenarios where the world's poor, accustomed to working hard to eke out a meager living, could sustainably produce massive quantities of the world's most traded commodity--oil!

In my most recent travels I've had the opportunity to see this already happening: the governments of these threatened countries have finally come to understand that their economic future greatly depends on the efforts of their own citizens.

In West Africa, where John Leary's projects are planting windbreaks to prevent desert encroachment, one of the tree species included is *Jatropha*. The oil from its seeds makes an excellent "bio-diesel" fuel requiring fairly simple refining. In Ethiopia, vast areas of land are being marked off for planting *Jatropha* trees.

On this last trip to the Philippines I met Roger Yap, mayor of Botolan where our biggest project is located, who recently purchased 100,000 seed coconuts. With



Is this your next filling station?

most coconut growers cutting down their trees because of poor prices, I asked why. "Because" Roger said "the national government is willing to buy back all the oil at a good price, to convert it into diesel fuel. What's more, we are converting the husks into charcoal for export to make 'producer gas' to run

vehicles and stationary engines."

In other places, governments and private investors are studying ways to make alcohol-type fuels, which require woody plants as feedstock. Not so many years ago, Brazil converted almost all its vehicles to such fuels. None of this is untried theory.

So, good for the Developing World? Yes--and good for us also because this global alternative reduces the worldwide demand for oil. Another important reason you should help plant trees.

Inside This Issue

We dedicate this issue to some of the very good people, sometimes called the "barefoot technicians," who are proving that if we all work together, we can implement environmentally beneficial development projects that improve livelihoods and restore degraded lands while stopping Global Climate Change.

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