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Dear Reader,

December issues of this newsletter are always special for me. They inspire me to reflect more, to take a different look at what I've achieved during the year; they make me look back and also look around me at what I have. This time, my reflections go to giving.

We hope this might lead to you finding ideas, inspiration, and passing them on to others.

Isabel Rimanoczy
Editor

Quote of the Month

*"And the cows there, would you say they drink their own milk?
And that apple-tree there, does it eat its own apples? Look around
you, everywhere there is giving and receiving. "*

(Extracted from Uwe Maya, *On the Significance of a Grain of Sand*)

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TIME TO GIVE

by Isabel Rimanoczy

With the holidays almost on us, the shopping frenzy is in full swing and begins to occupy the mind and the free time of people in many different cities of the world. TV and street advertising urge us to shop, emphasize what we "need to have", and "must have" and even invite us to overcome hesitation by suggesting: for every gift you buy, treat yourself to







another. But looking around the room, at how many possessions we have already, we are prompted to ask "Is that what we really need? Need for what?"

Getting a different perspective

At the start of the new millennium, 189 countries came together at the United Nations building to commit to eight millennium development goals (MDG), which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015. Achieving these goals is not only about improving the life quality of millions. The reality is that not achieving them will only make peace more unstable, increase conflict, and from the environmental perspective, will only augment our exposure to climate consequences and natural resources depletion. The MDG are goals that touch us all.

As we are halfway through, much has been achieved and much remains to be done.

THE 8 MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

	1 Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger		2 Achieve Universal Primary Education
	3 Promote Gender Equality & Empower Women		4 Reduce Child Mortality
	5 Improve Maternal Health		6 Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases
	7 Ensure Environmental Sustainability		8 Develop a Global Partnership for Development

With the 2015 target date fast approaching, it is more important than ever to understand where the goals are on track, and where additional efforts and support are needed, both globally and at the country level. While the goals sound ambitious, everyone can

contribute to them. From the corporate leadership role you happen to play, to your role in your community, neighborhood, or even as an individual. And all of these contributions are needed.

Giving what? How?

Former US President Bill Clinton opens a wide scope of opportunities that cover the capabilities and resources of everyone, in his book *Giving: How each of us can change the world* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2007). Giving is not something strange to the US American culture, where there are over one million registered charity organizations, employing over 10.2 million people. In what follows, we will share some traditional and unconventional opportunities.

Millennium Development Goals: Do you want to keep track of what has been done so far, and what needs support? Progress is tracked rigorously and can be found in the website <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/>. You can find a list of organizations around the world that need an individual's support working on the MDGs at this link: <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/support.cfm>

Giving Money

Robin Hood Foundation: In the late 1980s hedge fund manager Paul Tudor Jones founded this organization, which has since raised more than \$1 billion from wealthy donors to fight poverty in New York City. All the donations go directly to four areas: early childhood and growth; education; jobs and economic security; and survival, since the administrative costs are covered personally by the board members. Currently there are over 200 programs funded, from charter schools to housing for homeless, to job training for former prison inmates. <http://www.robinhood.org/>

Oprah Winfrey's Angel Network: Since 1998 this organization has received more than \$50 million in small donations, averaging \$150. They were able to fund sixty schools in thirteen countries in Latin America, Africa, China and Haiti; provided \$15 million in relief funds after Hurricane Katrina; supplied school materials for thousands of poor South African children; helped orphaned children in three African countries; and supported women in post-war areas. The network also invested over \$6 million in Use Your Life Awards to fifty-four small organizations that help people in need. <http://www.oprahsangelnetwork.org/oan/Home>

KIVA: Do you want to know where your money goes, exactly? This is a non-profit organization that minimizes administrative costs by using the Internet to connect low income entrepreneurs in the developing world who need small loans to earn their way out of poverty. Kiva partners with microfinance institutions around the globe, who are experts in choosing qualified borrowers and upload their borrower profiles directly to the site so you can lend to them. By choosing a business on <http://www.Kiva.org> you can "sponsor

a business" with amounts as small as \$25. Then throughout the course of the loan (usually 6-12 months), you can receive email journal updates from the business you've sponsored. As loans are repaid, you get your loan money back.

Coins for Kids: Children have initiated some valuable giving campaigns. Several schools across the US have helped kids set up their own funds raising initiative. In New York, Coins for Kids raised \$31,510.47 to Katrina recovery efforts. We don't need another Katrina to find who could benefit from such an initiative. Can you inspire your kids to launch such an initiative at their school, with their classmates?

Giving Time

Fifty five percent of US adults—that is 84 millions—give some time each year to community service. For those who have one hour or two per week, there are tutoring opportunities in every community, libraries and health centers who welcome volunteers.

Big Brothers Big Sisters: This is the oldest, largest and most effective youth mentoring organization in the United States. It provides volunteering opportunities to mentor children between 6 and 18 years across the country. Activities to do with the kids range from shooting hoops, playing a board game, going on a hike, enjoying a pizza, learning to cook, visiting a museum or just hanging out.
<http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.diJKKYPLJvH/b.1539751/k.BDB6/Home.htm>

Make-a-Wish: Since 1980 this foundation has granted the wishes of more than 144,000 children around the world with life-threatening illnesses, thanks to a network of over 25,000 volunteers.
http://www.wish.org/help?s_kwcid=make%20a%20wish|1020698666&gclid=CMO-j8-0_Y8CFQixsgodDSDJ2Q

Inspiring children: Age 6, McKenzie Steiner organized her friends in California to participate in her second beach cleanup. She had done the first with her school, and thought they didn't finish the job, so she invited her friends to do another one. She brought the gloves and plastic bags for twenty kids to pick up bottle lids, plastic containers and other trash "because animals die from people littering the ocean". If she can organize such a simple campaign...

Finding the opportunity that matches your possibilities, resources and interests: Visit <http://www.volunteermatch.org>, a site that allows to enter your zip code in the US and find a list of opportunities in your area. Or visit <http://www.vso.org.uk> for opportunities in other countries of the world.

Giving Things

How many objects do we have stored in closets and attics, that we don't need and could

make a difference in someone's life? From music instruments, to books, clothing, or those drawer-filling hotel toiletries that a shelter would so much welcome.

In 2004, almost 12% of American households – that is 13.5 million-- were unsure of their ability to feed themselves at some point during the year, and about a third of them said that at least one family member went hungry at least some of the time. However only 12 percent of the hungry are homeless: most of them are citizens, living in rural or suburban areas and more than one-third have at least one working adult in the family.

Room to Read: In 1998, John Wood, a successful Microsoft executive went to Nepal to get some vacations away from his stress. On the first day he heard that children were eager to learn but had no books. After visiting a school, he decided to do something. He came home, quit his job and founded Room to Read, a support education in the developing world. Since the year 2000, the organization created 3600 libraries, built 287 schools, donated 1.5 million English books, set up 117 computer and language labs and funded over 2300 scholarships for girls. <http://www.roomtoread.org/>

World Bicycle Relief: Bicycles are simple, economic and sustainable transportation that can make a big difference for individuals. After the tsunami, this organization raised \$1.5 million to provide over 24,000 bicycles to people in Sri Lanka. Currently, World Bicycle Relief is partnering to address the HIV/AIDS crisis in Zambia. Their goal is to provide 23,000 bicycles to community home-based care volunteers, disease prevention educators and vulnerable households, and training and equipping more than 400 bicycle mechanics in the field. The program will reach more than 500,000 adults, orphans and vulnerable children. <http://www.worldbicyclerelief.org/>

eBay Giving Works: For those who want to give away objects that have value but are not suited for charity, eBay launched this venue, where both givers and buyers can choose the cause they want to support through their donation. <http://givingworks.ebay.com/>

Heifer International: Wondering what gift you should buy for the coming holidays, birthday, anniversary? This organization has a list of options to choose from, making a difference in the honor of your relative or friend. Founded over 60 years ago, Heifer is committed to helping people in impoverished areas of the globe obtain a sustainable source of food and income. They partner with local communities to identify the needs and provide live stock to families, who are then educated to take care of and raise the animals they receive. In turn, they commit to share the offspring of gift animals with others in need, making them equal partners with Heifer in the fight to end world hunger. Project recipients are taught to achieve sustainable agricultural production, emphasizing community involvement. For as little as \$10, you can contribute to change a family's life. <http://www.heifer.org>

Giving for Peace

Seeds of Peace: Founded in 1993, Seeds of Peace is dedicated to empowering young leaders from regions of conflict with the leadership skills required to advance reconciliation and coexistence. It started with 46 Israeli, Palestinian and Egyptian teenagers in 1993, and has today a network of more than 3,500 young people from several conflict regions. The program allows participants to develop empathy, respect, and confidence as well as leadership, communication and negotiation skills—all critical components that will facilitate peaceful coexistence for the next generation.
<http://www.seedsofpeace.org/>

Interfaith Youth Core: The idea came from a group of young people attending a conference in 1998 at Stanford University. The Interfaith Youth Core aims to introduce a new relationship, one that is about mutual respect and religious pluralism. Instead of focusing a dialogue on political or theological differences, IFYC builds relationships on shared values, such as hospitality and caring for the Earth, and how people can live out those values together to contribute to the betterment of their community.
<http://www.ifyc.org/>

Ready4Work: The US has over two million people incarcerated, at a cost ranging between \$ 25,000 and \$40,000 per year per person. Ready4Work is a partnership between public and private ventures to train newly released individuals, help them find and keep jobs. Since its inception in 2003, the program has shown amazing results: only 1.9 percent of participants were incarcerated for a new offense within six months of their release. And the cost of the program is merely \$4,500 per person a year.
<http://www.dol.gov/cfbci/Ready4Work.htm>

Millennium Villages: This program supports sub-Saharan villages to increase food production; improve health of women and children; and provide education and clean water. It was launched in 2004 in Sauri, Kenya and tripled the crop production, as their inhabitants went from hunger to selling their products. Each Millennium Village requires a donation of \$250,000 for a village of five thousand people. This means that by giving \$50 one villager will be sponsored for a full year. Currently there are 79 villages becoming self sufficient through this program.
<http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/mv/index.htm>

Corporate opportunities

Corporate leaders are in a wonderful place to sponsor and champion initiatives that educate, inspire, touch core values and thereby motivate employees, all by making a significant impact. It's called fostering volunteering initiatives.


Wal-Mart is impacting its 1.8 million employees, through a recently launched program that invites personal sustainability projects, associate-driven efforts where staff develop individual goals to bring new sustainable behaviors into their lives. The projects include

recycling, developing healthier diets, using eco-friendly products and cleaning up parks. Some of the company's best green ideas come from their employees: for example removing light bulbs from the vending machines in stores will save energy and \$1.2 million each year.

Schlumberger, a global oil services company, launched in 1998 a program for employees, spouses and retirees in 79 countries to share their time, experience and passion for learning and science through volunteer activities with younger generations of learners. The program, called SEED, provides access to technological resources for under-served students and teachers in communities where Schlumberger people live and work. These include a range of project-based activities provided through a website in seven languages, hands-on science education workshops, and collaborative international projects. SEED is building a learning community that creates connections among youth around the world and expands their understanding of science. In addition, the SEED Action Fund provides financing to young people for local initiatives addressing sustainability issues in their communities, for example in relation to water and energy. <http://www.seed.slb.com/en/about/index.htm>

Swiss Re, an international reinsurance company, involved its over ten thousand employees in combating climate change: over the next five years the company is committed to contribute 50% of the cost of any employee's personal investment (up to \$4,000), such as buying a hybrid car, installing solar panels, improving lighting and insulation.

Final remarks

This extensive but not exhaustive list of possibilities is meant to do three things: inform and provide ways to channel your initiative; inspire you to consider another new way of giving; and motivate you to pass this information on to others. Wouldn't it be great if all three were achieved? 

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If you want more triggers for reflection, visit
<http://isabelrimanoczy.blogspot.com>.





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