



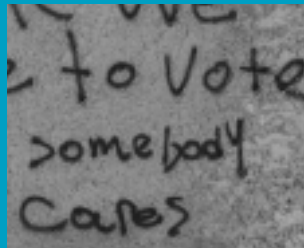
MADRE

Winter 2005-2006

speaks



ARCHITECTURE OF A FAILING STATE



what's inside

- Hurricane Katrina Exposes Crisis in the US
- Women's Community Groups Respond to Disaster
- 2005 Program Highlights and Ideas for Holiday Giving
- ... and MORE!



MADRE

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From the Executive Director

VIVIAN STROMBERG

Dear Friends,

2005, which began with our urgent response to women and families caught in the Asian tsunami, has been punctuated by one natural disaster after another across the world: in Sri Lanka, Cuba, New Orleans, Guatemala, and Pakistan, MADRE stood with our sisters and their families after each crisis, offering emergency aid and support for reconstruction that puts the needs of women, families, and communities first.



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MADRE Executive Director
Vivian Stromberg

early childhood education, and economic development programs. We fought violence against women, the spread of HIV/AIDS, and hunger and malnutrition. And everywhere, we stood up to the policies of the Bush Administration, which have caused needless suffering at home and abroad. Our insistence on US policies that reflect both common sense and common decency remains the guiding principle of MADRE's work. Thank you for enabling us to grow this principle into a set of concrete programs that better the lives and futures of women and families in every region of the world.

Sincerely,

MADRE honors the memory of ROSA PARKS

a life-long Civil Rights leader whose defiance of segregation sparked the 1955 Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott and the modern Civil Rights Movement. Rosa Parks' legacy fuels our own determination to challenge and change unjust laws as we continue to work for a world free of racism and injustice.

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MADRE's newsletter, *MADRE Speaks*, is published quarterly.

MADRE is an international women's human rights organization that works in partnership with women's community-based groups in conflict areas worldwide. Our programs reflect a human-rights-based and people-centered approach to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals, which aim to: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development. MADRE provides resources and training to enable our sister organizations to meet immediate needs in their communities and develop long-term solutions to the crises they face. Since we began in 1983, MADRE has delivered over 21 million dollars worth of support to community-based women's groups in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, the Balkans, Asia, and the United States.

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A BIG THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL INTERNS!

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Architecture of a Failing State

The Bush Administration's disastrous response to Hurricane Katrina has focused public attention on a dangerous dynamic in the United States. Like few other events in recent memory, Katrina exposed the giant vacuum created by the government's abdication of its essential responsibilities and attempts by corporations, the religious right, and the military to fill that void.

BUSH'S "ENTERPRISE ZONE"

Along the Gulf Coast, reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina quickly became a theatre for Bush's dream economy. Bush suspended taxation in hurricane-hit areas and vowed to pay for reconstruction by cutting existing (read: social) programs. Within two months, House Republicans were pushing to slash food stamp funding by \$1 billion; cut Medicaid access and benefits, and force another 10 hours of work from families on welfare. Bush also announced plans for the country's largest school voucher program: nearly half a million dollars for displaced families to send their children to private schools, including religious schools. As right-wing economist Milton Friedman once said, school vouchers "are not an end in themselves; they are a means to make a transition from a government to a market system."

That transition is already quite advanced. By now, many people in the US take it for granted that corporations have replaced government in providing basic services, ranging from health care to utilities to transportation. As services have been transformed from citizens' rights to consumer products, poor people have lost access and more people have become poor as they struggle to pay for health care, child care, and other services once guaranteed by the government. As in the Global South, the trend hits women the hardest. That's because women have fewer financial resources to begin with and because women are mainly responsible for meeting their families' basic needs—especially when the government stops providing services.



© HENRY CHALFANT

The economic policies Bush enacted in the aftermath of Katrina, including privatizing and dismantling basic services, are the same ones the US has been exporting for decades. Many of MADRE's programs—like this food security project in Nicaragua—work to meet the needs of communities denied basic rights and resources as a result of US-driven policies.



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This year, the Bush Administration presented three separate rationales for expanding the role of the military into domestic affairs, including responding to natural disasters, enforcing quarantine during an avian flu outbreak, and gathering "intelligence" for the "war on terror."

BLURRING THE LINE BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE

After Hurricane Katrina, more than half a million people took refuge in facilities that churches ran at the request of state governments. In Mississippi, one of the biggest relief efforts was organized by Operation Save America (formerly Operation Rescue). The virulently anti-abortion group, whose tactics include clinic blockades and other violence, handed out Bibles and tracts along with food aid while its director preached to evacuees in the organization's shelters. And for the first time ever, the federal government will pay churches for their relief efforts.

Though the line between church and state was perhaps at its blurriest in the weeks after Hurricane Katrina, the attack on the separation of church and state began when Bush took office in 2000. Since then, Bush's

White House, with its prayer breakfasts and Biblical rhetoric, has become emblematic of the integration of religion into the US political system. MADRE has always worked with religious people whose commitment to democracy and human rights is informed directly by their faith. In fact, the religious community has been at the forefront of US movements for abolition and civil rights, and for peace in Vietnam, Central America, and Iraq. This tradition is an expression of religious ethics, such as non-violence, justice, compassion, and respect for nature; it stands in sharp contrast to fundamentalism, which works to turn arbitrary and absolutist interpretations of religion into public policy.

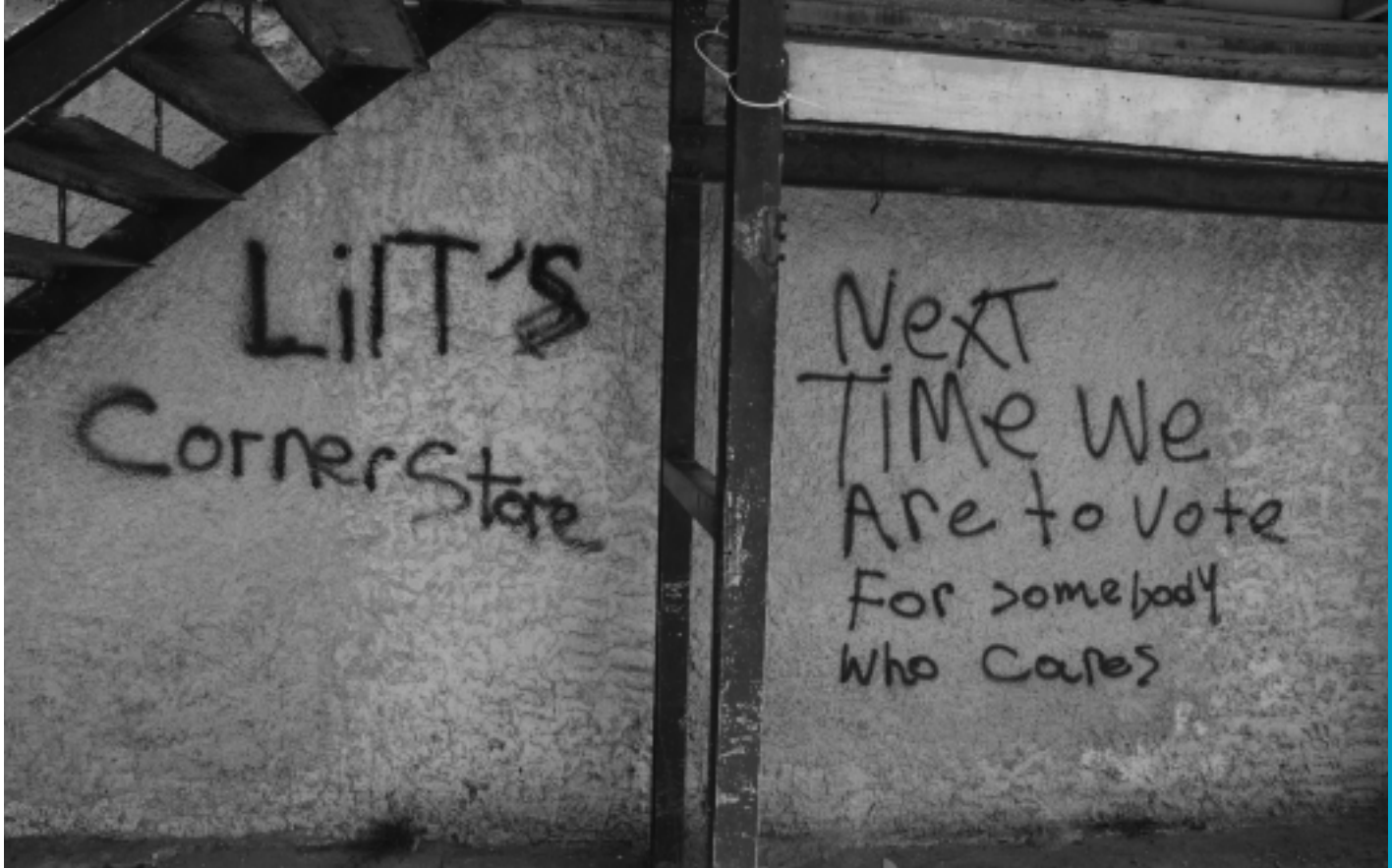
By empowering fundamentalist organizations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the Bush Administration both shirked its obligation to provide disaster relief and trampled the line between church and state. While the right-wing likes to talk about "culture wars," the fault line in the US today is not between religious and non-religious people, but between advocates of human rights and secular democracy, and fundamentalists who manipulate religion to pursue a reactionary social agenda.

DISASTER RELIEF AS URBAN WARFARE

Since 9/11, Bush has transferred funds, professional staff, and equipment from civil defense to the military. As we now know, that decision turned the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) into an empty husk. Just as importantly, it made the military the only arm of government capable of responding

Public Pressure Stops Bush's Corporate Hand-Outs

After Hurricane Katrina, Bush awarded hundreds of millions of dollars in no-bid contracts to companies with close ties to his Administration, including Halliburton (formerly run by Vice President Dick Cheney) and Bechtel. Bush also overrode the law requiring these companies to pay the locally prevailing minimum wage to construction workers in the Gulf States. But thanks to public pressure from Labor, Democrats, and progressive groups, the White House was forced to reverse both policies.



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Popular sentiment in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

effectively to disaster. “I think we turned the corner [in New Orleans] last Friday,” Louisiana Senator David Vitter said in early September. “But the reason we did it—and we need to be clear about this—is because we made it a massive military operation.”

There are individual soldiers who took risks to rescue people after Hurricane Katrina and their efforts should be commended. But there’s a fundamental problem with treating disaster relief as a combat mission: combat requires an enemy. In New Orleans, the abandoned survivors of Hurricane Katrina, who were mostly poor people of color, became that enemy. As Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco said of the troops sent to the city directly from Iraq: “They have M-16s and they’re locked and loaded. These troops know how to shoot and kill, and they are more than willing to do so, and I expect they will.”

Civilians—whether in New Orleans or Baghdad—should not be the targets of combat operations. That’s why we were alarmed to see the US 82nd Airborne patrolling flooded neighborhoods in Louisiana. These are not “first responders,” but soldiers who are trained to kill. Members of this division stand accused of torturing prisoners in Iraq and raping a child in Kosovo. Like the separation of church and state, maintaining a distinction between the army and domestic law enforcement is a core principle of democracy—one that should not be sacrificed in the name of fighting terrorism or responding to natural disasters.

CHARTING A NEW COURSE

“Failed state” is a US State Department term usually reserved for impoverished countries that the US targets for military intervention, like Afghanistan, Haiti, and Liberia. But in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, it’s also a term that resonates with our perception of the US itself: a state that fails to protect its citizens or provide even basic services. Naming and exploring this dynamic enables us to take stock of current conditions in the US so that we can work to change course.

In fact, for many people, Hurricane Katrina opened a space for new kinds of conversation about what kind of country this is and what kind of country we want it to be. As we spend time with family and friends during the holidays, let’s continue to engage in these conversations. Let people know that despite all the divisive talk about Red States and Blue States this year, the vast majority of people in the US want to see policies that challenge the destructive trend that became so visible in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. According to studies by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, more than three-quarters of people in the US want increased health care, education, and Social Security. That’s just one example of a starting point for conversation that can unite broad sectors of people around better policies. ♦

—BY YIFAT SUSSKIND, MADRE

For citations accompanying this article, please visit www.MADRE.org



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This year, with your support...

latin america

NICARAGUA & PERU

Women's health and reproductive rights

➤ IN NICARAGUA, MADRE IS HELPING TO EXPAND CADAMUC clinic. CADAMUC, which was the first women's health clinic on Nicaragua's North Atlantic Coast, now serves approximately 6,000 people a year. The new construction will give the clinic a total of five rooms: two for OB/GYN care, one for pediatric service, one for dental services, and a pharmacy.

➤ IN PERU, MADRE SENT SUPPORT TO OUR SISTER organization, LUNDU, to hold trainings for young Afro-descendant women about sexual and reproductive rights. The trainings, which used video and art to engage participants, enabled young women to develop their capacity as leaders and strengthen their ties to their heritage and communities.

COLOMBIA

Armed conflict and forced displacement

➤ IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TALLER DE VIDA, OUR sister organization, MADRE supported *Reinventing Life through Art*, a program for women and young people displaced by the war. As part of this program, Taller de Vida runs a youth center in Bogotá offering classes in theatre, dance, and film; and supports small-scale, women-run economic development projects. The young people of Taller de Vida recently used MADRE's support to produce a film called "La Escuela Desplazada" ("The Displaced School"), featuring their personal stories of displacement and conflict.

mideast

IRAQ

Violence against Women

➤ AS VIOLENCE continues in Iraq, MADRE is working with our partners

at the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI) to provide shelter and human rights training to women fleeing rape, domestic violence, and "honor killings," which have all soared since the US invasion. This year, with MADRE's support, OWFI opened a fourth women's shelter in the Iraqi city of Nasariyeh.



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► IN THE US, MADRE CONTINUES TO demand an end to the war against Iraq and raise awareness about threats to women's rights in US-occupied Iraq.

► MADRE'S "HOUSE PARTY" CAMPAIGN OFFERS an online toolkit for people to host parties in their communities to raise awareness in the US about the crisis facing Iraqi women, and gather support to send to our sisters in Iraq. *To find out how you can get involved, visit www.madre.org.*

asia

SRI LANKA Economic Justice and Community Development

► MADRE IS FACILITATING THE efforts of INFORM, our sister organization, to ensure that women are able to participate fully in decisions regarding resettlement and reconstruction after the tsunami, and that land for resettlement is allocated in a non-discriminatory fashion. Recently, MADRE helped establish community centers that will offer services for people who survived the tsunami and support initiatives to ensure that the rebuilding process reflects the needs of all community members.

africa

KENYA Indigenous Women's Rights

► MADRE CONTRIBUTED A NEW TRUCK TO THE Indigenous Information Network (IIN), our sister organization in Kenya. The truck enables IIN members to reach isolated, rural communities, bringing human rights training and health education to Indigenous women in Kenya. Through our *Helping Hands* campaign, MADRE also donated school supplies to a pre-school in Umoja, which serves 50 Indigenous children and promotes education as a basic human right among nomadic, pastoral communities in Kenya.

► MADRE ALSO WORKED WITH IIN TO SPONSOR AN EXCHANGE between Indigenous women activists from Nicaragua, Kenya, and the United States. As part of the exchange, the director of MADRE's Nicaraguan sister organization, Wangki Tangni, conducted trainings on women's health, reproductive rights, and Indigenous rights in three rural Indigenous communities in Kenya.



© INFORM

responding to disaster



© Zenab

MADRE's emergency aid shipment to Darfur, Sudan.

responding to disaster

►THE YEAR BEGAN IN THE WAKE OF THE Asian tsunami, one of the worst natural disasters of all time. MADRE members' quick and generous response enabled our Sri Lankan sister organization, INFORM, to set up emergency health centers where survivors received emergency medical attention, clean drinking water, and trauma counseling.

►THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, THE SUPPORT OF MADRE members also enabled us to respond to natural disasters in Cuba, Guatemala, Pakistan, and the United States. As in Sri Lanka, MADRE's support made it possible for organizations working at the community level to respond quickly and efficiently to distribute

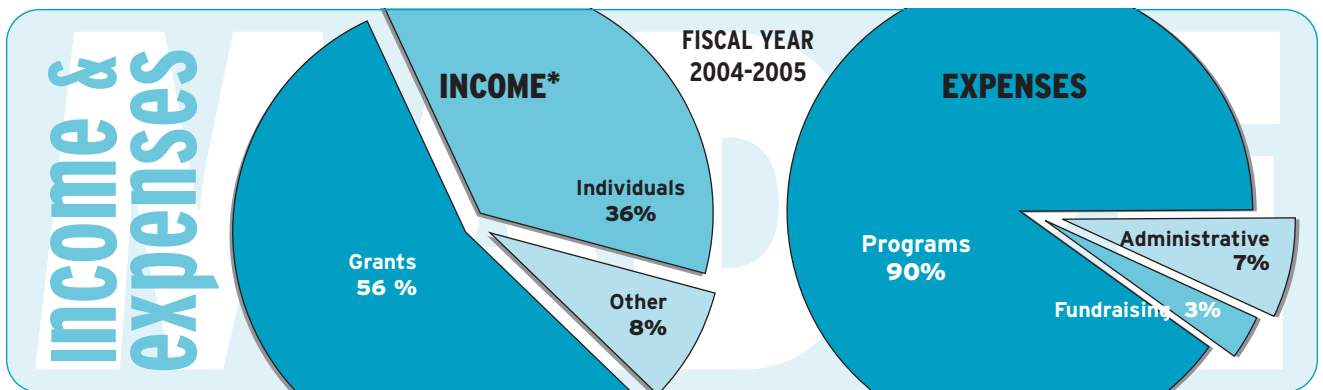
aid with an awareness of the specific needs of women and families.

►MADRE RESPONDED TO HURRICANE Dennis in Cuba with a shipment of \$744,000 worth of anti-parasite medicine for women and families; Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana with support for the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence's efforts to provide emergency aid and safe housing to battered women displaced by the storm; Hurricane Stan in Guatemala with donations of food, water, medicine, and blankets for women and families in marginalized communities engulfed by the storm and the mudslides that followed; and the October earthquake in Pakistan with support to provide food, blankets, and temporary shelters in devastated rural communities.

MADRE in the News

►THIS YEAR, MADRE EXPANDED OUR media program to more widely communicate the daily realities of women affected by US policy around the world. MADRE's commentary and analysis was featured on: Democracy Now!, NPR, Air America Radio, Pacifica Radio, Foreign Policy in Focus, Common Dreams, TomPaine.com, Between the Lines, and many newspapers including: *New York Newsday*, *Toronto Star*, *Detroit Free Press*, *Los Angeles Daily News*, *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, *Monterey County Herald*, *Columbia Daily Tribune*, and *The Virginian Pilot*, among others.

For a more in-depth look at MADRE's programs, we invite you to visit us at www.madre.org.



* NOTE: \$610,316 is the value of "in-kind" medical shipments and services donated to MADRE during the year. This category is not considered revenue by the IRS, but it is a very important source of support for MADRE.

From Disaster to Development:

COMMUNITY WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CRISIS

In the wake of disasters like the Asian tsunami or Hurricane Katrina, we may find it comforting to see big international agencies taking charge of relief and reconstruction efforts. But large-scale relief operations are not always best suited to meet the needs of those most threatened by disaster. Certainly, international agencies—with their resources, know-how, technology, and access to government—have a critical role to play, but their expertise is best utilized in the service of local organizations. Often, however, we see international aid agencies coming into a crisis with little practical experience for addressing its particularities and with little regard for those who have been working in the affected community since long before the disaster.

A member of MADRE's Sri Lankan sister organization described this scenario after last year's tsunami: "The international agencies moved in and immediately began spending huge sums of money, setting up offices in five-star hotels, buying SUVs... Within a week they had artificially inflated the economy." Local groups simply could not afford to function.

Sri Lankan community-based organizations experienced another common—and detrimental—side effect of large-scale relief efforts: a brain drain. "The international agencies lured the best-trained people from the community-based groups," said the director of one local organization. In fact, local organizations sometimes collapse after losing their core staff to higher-paying agencies during a critical time. As for the high salaries, they disappear as soon as the international organizations leave for the next high-profile crisis.

Rather than replicate the work of existing organizations, MADRE works in partnership with local women's groups grappling with disaster. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch devastated Nicaragua's North Atlantic Coast. Decades of government neglect pushed some Indigenous communities off the map of relief operations. Responders didn't know where these villages were, much less how to reach them in flood conditions. But MADRE delivered aid directly to women who had grown up in the region. They knew where every family lived, which households had new babies or disabled elders, and how to reach remote communities by canoe.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, MADRE mobilized community support services for battered women. Our work with women around the world has shown



MADRE delivers emergency aid by canoe after Hurricane Mitch.

that domestic violence escalates in every natural disaster, and that in big relief operations, already-marginalized people are usually the ones who "fall through the cracks." After Katrina, for example, many battered women didn't use missing person registries for fear that they would enable their abusers to find them.

Women are often hardest hit when disaster strikes because they are over-represented among the poor and often have no safety net. Women are also primarily responsible for those made most vulnerable by disaster—children, the elderly, and people who are ill or disabled. Yet, it's not enough to ensure that women receive aid. Women in communities must also be integral to designing and carrying out relief efforts. When relief is distributed by women, it has the best chance of reaching those most in need.

Community-based organizations—especially women's organizations—are a crucial resource in disaster response. Natural disasters are always local events and women in the community have expertise about problems women and their families face. They have pre-existing networks for sharing information and scarce resources, and for extending social and emotional support to survivors. For all of these reasons, the leadership of local women's organizations is crucial in disaster relief. ♦

—BY YIFAT SUSSKIND, MADRE

Support MADRE

HOST A HOUSE PARTY TO SUPPORT IRAQI WOMEN

MADRE is mobilizing people around the US to host parties to raise awareness of the crisis facing Iraqi women and support Iraq's only network of women's shelters. Get your free tool kit today!

MORE INFO: www.madre.org • publiced_advocacy@madre.org • 212-627-0444

SIGN UP FOR MADRE SPEAKS ONLINE

and receive emails with action alerts, updates on MADRE's programs, and articles from women fighting for human rights worldwide.

MORE INFO: www.madre.org • madrespeaks@madre.org • 212-627-0444



HOST A MADRE SPEAKER

It's a terrific opportunity to spread awareness about US foreign policy and women's human rights struggles around the world, and raise support for MADRE's programs. Our spring tour will address African Indigenous women's struggle for human rights.

MORE INFO: www.madre.org/speakers • speakers@madre.org • 212-627-0444

DONATE MEDICINES AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO MADRE'S MEDICAL PROJECT,

which works to combat health threats in the communities of our sister organizations.

MORE INFO: www.madre.org/medicalproject • meds@madre.org • 212-627-0444

DONATE SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO MADRE'S HELPING HANDS CAMPAIGN

and provide children in Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, and Kenya with books, new notebooks, crayons, educational posters, games, and art supplies.

MORE INFO: www.madre.org/helpinghands • helpinghands@madre.org • 212-627-0444

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Fighting for Our Future: A Tribute to Young Women Inspiring Change in the spirit of Nora Astorga

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DONATE YOUR MILES. Your frequent flyer miles can facilitate human rights trainings for women in conflict zones.

ARRANGE A MATCHING GIFT. Many employers will match your gift to MADRE, doubling your contribution at no cost to you. Ask at work; many employers have a simple form that you can fill out.

INVEST IN YOUR VALUES. Consider naming MADRE as a beneficiary of an IRA, 401(K), or insurance policy; establishing a charitable trust or gift annuity; creating a pooled income fund; or taking advantage of the sale of a company.

We can work with you or your financial planner to explore these and other giving options. Please contact us at (212) 627-0444 or fundraising@madre.org to learn more.

➤ TAKE ADVANTAGE OF VIRTUALLY DOUBLE TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR CASH GIFTS TO MADRE BEFORE DECEMBER 31. *Consult your financial advisor for more information.*

Give a gift that helps realize your dream of a better world

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Honor a friend or family member with a contribution to MADRE's programs with children in Iraq or Colombia, or for our work to promote women's health around the world. When you donate online at www.madre.org/holiday or over the phone at 212-627-0444, MADRE will send a beautiful card with a photo and description of the program directly to the person you are honoring (or, if you prefer, we'll send the card to you so that you can give the gift in person).

Form a **GIVING CIRCLE**

A giving circle is a group of friends who come together to pool funds and donate to the organizations they support. Giving circles can be just a few people, or hundreds. It's a fun and increasingly popular way to maximize the impact of your support. Call MADRE at 212-627-0444 for more information.

Do your holiday shopping at **HEARTof.com**

Register and choose MADRE as the organization you want to benefit, then shop online at more than 600 of your favorite stores, which will donate a percentage of your purchase to MADRE.

Give a **MADRE Gift...**

MADRE's tote bags, mugs, t-shirts, and baby onesies make great presents, and the proceeds support MADRE's programs with women and families around the world.

• Joining hands & hearts with women & families for peace, justice & human rights •



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