



MADRE

Fall-Winter 2006

speaks



**Women Confront
Climate Change**



MADRE

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From the Executive Director VIVIAN STROMBERG

Dear Friends,

Despite the Bush Administration's denials and distortions, we all know that global warming presents a real threat to people and whole ecosystems around the world. Unfortunately, some of the predictions we hear are so frightening that they leave us feeling hopeless and overwhelmed, instead of motivated to demand change. Yet, now more than ever, it's crucial to confront the reality of climate change.

That's why I'm pleased to let you know that MADRE is now incorporating a human-rights-based response to climate change into our work with women and families around the world.



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**MADRE Executive Director
Vivian Stromberg**

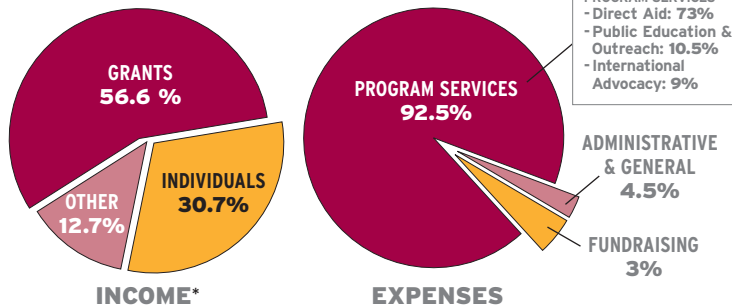
Why is a women's human rights organization addressing the issue of climate change? Because the women of our sister organizations are on the frontlines of this crisis. Poor women and their families are the first—and worst—affected by global warming, which threatens their capacity to grow food, acquire water, and benefit from safe sanitation systems. In fact, climate change is a women's

human rights issue. So, together with our partners, MADRE is now developing concrete solutions with those most affected by climate change and advocating for long-term policy changes to help protect all of our children and grandchildren.

Sincerely,

MADRE income & expenses

for the six-month fiscal year ended 12/31/05.



*802,917 is the value of "in-kind" medical shipments and services donated to MADRE during this fiscal year. This category is not included in the above totals and is not considered income by the Internal Revenue Service, but it is a very important source of support for MADRE.

IN MEMORY

Maya Miller



Maya Miller, a long-time friend of MADRE, died on May 31, 2006. Maya was not only a supporter of MADRE, but also a wise mentor whose clarity and courage will continue to guide our work.

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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 community-based women's organizations worldwide to address issues of health and reproductive rights, economic development, education, and other human rights. MADRE provides resources, training, and support to enable our sister organizations to meet concrete needs in their communities while working to shift the balance of power to promote long-term development and social justice. Since we began in 1983, MADRE has delivered over 22 million dollars worth of support to community-based women's organizations in Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, the Balkans, and the United States.

We occasionally exchange mailing lists with other organizations. If you do not want your information shared, please write to us at the address listed above.

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Women Confront Climate Change



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What Do Women's Human Rights Have to Do with Global Warming?

Women living in poverty are the most threatened by the dangers that stem from global warming. They are also key actors in ensuring their communities' ability to cope with and adapt to climate change. When we approach climate change from the perspective of women, we see the ways that women are made vulnerable to threats associated with climate change, and that women's skills and leadership are crucial for people's survival and recovery. Therefore, defending the full range of women's human rights within the context of addressing climate change is essential both to protecting women themselves and to cultivating their capacity for leadership—on which so many lives depend.

What's Gender Got to Do with It?

Most approaches to tackling the threats of climate change focus on scientific and technological aspects of the problem, ignoring its social impact. Both the Kyoto Protocol and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change neglect to even mention gender. Yet developing a *gender analysis*—an understanding of the ways that men and women are differently affected by climate change and respond differently to its threats—is increasingly crucial to saving lives, saving resources, and quite possibly, saving the life of the planet.

What's Poverty Got to Do with It?

The effects of climate change threaten everyone, but they do not threaten all people equally. Poor people whose governments are unable or unwilling to respond to their needs are most at risk. Since 1990, more than 90 percent of “natural disasters” have occurred in poor countries. Worldwide, the majority of poor people are women.

- People who have been displaced from their lands and forced to live in lowlands are at risk of flooding and mudslides.
- People already denied health care, adequate food, and clean water have the least resistance to food shortages and increased incidence of disease.
- People living in rural areas and regions neglected by government are often denied adequate warning of disasters and adequate resources for rescue and relief efforts.
- People who are denied information, education, technology, skills, and infrastructure have the least capacity to adapt to the effects of climate change.

What Are the Effects of Global Warming on Women?

DISASTERS—triggered by increases in extreme weather: A tidal wave is a natural disaster until it hits the shore. Then it becomes a social issue that affects women and men differently because of the distinct social roles and expectations that they fulfill. During the 2005 Asian tsunami, many more women than men were killed, in part because:

- men ran to safety while women stayed behind to rescue children and the elderly;
- more men than women had been taught to swim; and
- women stayed indoors because of social prohibitions against leaving home unaccompanied.

Yet, in the aftermath of the tsunami, women managed to extend their social networks and intensify their roles of caring for families and communities to meet the extraordinary needs of survivors. The most effective relief and recovery operations relied on and supported local women, recognizing the tremendous burden women carried; the specific threats women faced; and the skills that women possess.

FOOD INSECURITY—resulting from droughts and floods caused by disrupted rainfall patterns: Because of gender discrimination, women and girls eat last and least when food is made scarce (including pregnant and nursing women, who have the greatest need for nutritious food). Yet, women plant, produce, procure, and prepare most of the world's food: women are responsible for approximately 75 percent of household food production in sub-Saharan Africa;



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Hurricanes, Hunger & Human Rights

In Nicaragua, Indigenous women and their families face worsening hurricanes and flooding as a result of rising sea temperatures. These conditions have destroyed food supplies in communities that are already threatened by extreme poverty.

MADRE's Harvesting Hope program promotes food security, combats hunger, and equips women to fight for their rights within their communities.

Adapting to Drought

In Kenya, the women of our sister organizations are enduring a seven-year drought that is killing the livestock on which pastoralist Peoples depend. Worsening poverty has led to a sharp rise in forced child marriages. As men struggle to replace income from lost livestock, increasing numbers of them resort to trading their daughters—some as young as eight or nine—for bridal dowries. MADRE is supporting our sisters in the **Umoja Uaso Women's Group**, who are demanding human rights for themselves and their daughters. Rather than sending their girls into forced marriages, the Umoja women are sending their daughters to school. MADRE is supporting the Umoja primary school and helping the community transition from herding cattle to raising camels, which require less water.



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65 percent in Asia; and 45 percent in Latin America. In most communities, women hold the most reliable knowledge about promoting food security, preserving threatened food supplies, and ensuring their families' survival in the face of shortages.

SEVERE FLOODING—as a result of rising sea levels: Women's traditional knowledge about building wind-resistant housing, planting trees to mitigate erosion, preserving seeds, composting to improve soil quality, and conserving safe drinking water have protected generations of communities from the worst affects of flooding.

WATER SHORTAGES—particularly in the Middle East and on the Indian subcontinent: The time-consuming task of gathering and transporting water generally falls to women. As water becomes scarce, women's workload increases dramatically. Girls' school enrollment drops as they trek longer distances to find water. During water shortages, women's knowledge of managing and

maintaining water sources becomes critical to communities' survival.

WORSENING HEALTH—caused by long-term heat stress, malnutrition, and pollution:

Worldwide, the compounded effect of poverty and gender discrimination is the single gravest threat to women's health: women have the least access to health services, nutritious food, clean water, and opportunities for rest. As overall human health declines, women face the greatest risk of illness, as well as unsustainable work burdens of caring for the sick. Although they are the most threatened, women provide critical resources for maintaining health. Women's capacity to activate social networks for caregiving, their stewardship of medicinal plants, their expertise in traditional medicine, and—of course—the health of women themselves must be protected in order to defend women's human rights and enable communities to adapt to increased health threats associated with climate change. ♦

— BY YIFAT SUSSKIND, *Communications Director*

latin america & the caribbean

BOLIVIA ■ CEM Aymara: MADRE is working with the *Centro de Estudios Multidisciplinarios Aymara* (CEM Aymara), a research center of the Qulla Peoples, to strengthen Indigenous women's participation in Bolivia's Constitutional Assembly.

GUATEMALA ■ Barcenas Maquila Workers' Committee: With MADRE support, the Barcenas Committee recently organized a series of educational activities on sexual and reproductive rights and health for 1,000 young people. The Committee is also constructing a small consultation room and two classrooms where people can come for health services and trainings on sexual and reproductive rights.

HAITI ■ KOFIVIV: NEW SISTER ORGANIZATION! MADRE has begun a partnership with KOFIVIV, the Commission of Women Victims for Victims, the largest community-based rape crisis group in Haiti. KOFIVIV was formed in 2004 by women from poor neighborhoods of Port-au-Prince who were raped during the 1991-1994 US-backed military coup d'état. These women have reached out to the many women who were raped during the political violence of 2004. MADRE is supporting KOFIVIV's counseling program, including 12 solidarity groups, each with more than 25 members, which offer informal social and psychological peer support to survivors of rape.

africa

KENYA ■ Umoja Uaso Women's Group and the Indigenous Information Network: This summer, a 15-person MADRE delegation visited communities of our sister organizations in Kenya. MADRE conducted human rights trainings for women and youth on women's political participation, women's human rights, HIV/AIDS, and female genital mutilation (FGM). The director of *My Little Village*, a pre-school in New York, joined MADRE to do trainings on early-childhood education for teachers from Umoja and Logologo's schools. MADRE equipped the Umoja School with books, school supplies, educational materials, and toys, collected through the *Helping*



Rebecca Lolosoli, founder of Umoja, with MADRE Executive Director Vivian Stromberg

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Hands campaign. MADRE's *Harvesting Hope Kenya* program provided goats, cows, and camels to the women-led village of Umoja and purchased a small generator for the village.

SUDAN ■ Zenab for Women in Development: With MADRE support, our Sudanese sister organization is responding to the urgent needs of women and families in the refugee camps of Darfur. MADRE recently helped Zenab feed hungry families; hire social workers to conduct trauma counseling and play therapy for children; and build bathrooms in the camps to allow women a measure of privacy and safety, as many women are raped when they venture away from the camp in search of privacy.



© ZENAB

Delivery of MADRE humanitarian aid to Darfur.

Indigenous Women Confront Violence: New Report Available

Mairin Iwanka Raya: Indigenous Women Stand Against Violence, by the International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI/IIWF), is a ground-breaking analysis of the ways that Indigenous women are affected by violence and their strategies for ending violence against women. For more information, email fimi@madre.org.

middle east



SUPPORTING WOMEN IN WAR

IRAQ: Iraqi women are facing unprecedented levels of abuse within their homes and on the streets. Together with our partner, the Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI), MADRE is supporting life-saving women's shelters and the *Underground Railroad for Iraqi Women*, a support network that enables women to escape "honor killing" and rebuild their lives.

GAZA: MADRE supported the Gaza Union of Health Work Committees in their efforts to provide emergency health services and trauma counseling to Palestinian children who

Dear Friends at MADRE,

Thank you for supporting our women's shelters in Iraq. Your support has helped ensure our survival during the last three years.

Thanks to you, more women are protected in our shelters. It gives us tremendous hope to know that so many MADRE members in the US are thinking of us—the women of Iraq—in this terrible time.

Our thanks go to all who made this support possible.

All the appreciation,

Yanar Mohammed

Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq

are physically and emotionally scarred by the violence that surrounds them.

LEBANON: MADRE responded to the needs of women and families caught in the Israeli bombardment, providing food, shelter, medical care, and trauma counseling to those displaced by the bombing. Through the CRTD-A (Center for Research and Training on Development-Action), MADRE worked to ensure that humanitarian relief would reach those most in need and that a progressive women's organization would be strengthened in the process.

Four easy ways to support MADRE:



DO YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING THROUGH www.madre.org/GIVELINE. A percentage of your purchase will benefit MADRE, at no extra cost to you. If every MADRE member buys just one gift through Giveline this holiday season, MADRE could earn up to \$80,000.

ARRANGE A MATCHING GIFT AT WORK. Ask your employer: Many will match your gift to MADRE at no cost to you, doubling your contribution!



DONATE APPRECIATED STOCK, ART, OR REAL ESTATE. Claim a tax deduction for the full market value of appreciated stock, bonds, and other securities or property that you have held for over a year.

DONATE A USED CAR AND SAVE YOURSELF A HEADACHE. Claim a tax deduction for donating your car, without any of the hassle of selling it yourself. Visit www.madre.org/cardonations for more information.



Contact MADRE at (212) 627-0444 or by email at: fundraising@madre.org.

ENSURE THAT YOUR VALUES LIVE ON

Including MADRE in your will is simple and powerful, and guarantees your continued support for women's human rights for generations to come. Dozens of other MADRE members have chosen to make an impact this way. Please consider MADRE when planning your estate. For more information, call us at (212) 627-0444.

PLAN AN EVENT TO BENEFIT MADRE

This year's MADRE events included a 5th grade bake sale, an evening of music and literature, and several successful house parties.



**GIVE A GIFT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON
THAT HELPS REALIZE YOUR DREAM:
a world without violence against women and girls**

Your gift will support women who are fighting rape in Haiti and Darfur, "honor killing" in Iraq, forced military recruitment of young people in Colombia, and all forms of violence against women around the world. MADRE will send a beautiful gift card to an address that you provide, with a description of the life-saving programs your gift makes possible. For more information, please visit www.madre.org/holiday or call (212) 627-0444.



MADRE's *Helping Hands* Holiday Drive!

Brighten the holiday season for hundreds of children in Nicaragua, Peru, and Kenya. Send toys, health and hygiene items, and new children's clothing to MADRE, Attn: *Helping Hands*, 121 W. 27th Street, #301, New York, NY 10001.

Join MADRE in Kenya! Learn from Indigenous Samburu and Maasai women and youth about their work to promote health, human rights, and environmental justice. Visit Umoja village, which has declared itself a violence-against-women-free zone.

Contact us at travel@madre.org or (212) 627-0444.

January 13-20, 2007

(stay for the World
Social Forum in Nairobi,
January 20-25!)

& June 16-23, 2007

MADRE

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