This provides an update on World Vision's efforts to end extreme poverty by 2030 through Economic Empowerment.

Economic Empowerment Executive Briefing

March 2016

Greetings!

World Vision is delighted to send you our Executive Briefing for Economic Empowerment. You are an integral part of our work to end extreme poverty by 2030, so we want to keep you updated on our progress.

In this issue, you will find:

- A note from Christopher Shore, Chief Development Officer
- Latest news and statistics
- Prayer requests
- News articles

"In light of growing risks faced by small holder farmers, it is vital that they understand the potential impact of, for example, changing rain fall patterns, on their livelihoods and how to mitigate those risks. This is why access to early warning and market information forms a critical component of building improved and resilient livelihoods for small holder farmers."

Richard Rumsey
Senior Director Resilience & Livelihoods
World Vision International

A Note from Christopher Shore
Situation Awareness

In previous newsletters we have explored how the farm is both a business, as well as an ecosystem nested within a bigger ecosystem. At the same time, the farmer is managing a significant investment, worrying about risks, and trying to stay ahead of negative events and spot opportunities. That understanding is why we have a 3rd operational pillar in our model – perhaps best summarized as the "Situational Awareness Systems of Small-holder Farming."

A sophisticated investment manager on Wall Street will employ a wide range of tools in order to have the best and most up-to-date information needed to oversee the investments. That person will gather information about everything from industry trends and market developments, from political and regulatory change, to weather and its impact on transportation patterns or delivery schedules.

A farmer – anywhere in the world – needs to also manage information and be aware of the changing world around them. Weather information is critical for the farmer to make good decisions about planting or harvesting. Animal or plant disease information is needed to take appropriate preventive action or preparation ahead of problems arriving on the farm, as is knowing what to do when that disease does arrive. Long-term seasonal forecasts are useful for deciding whether to plant with the expectation that rainfall will be high – or low – as certain plant varieties are optimal for different conditions. Pricing information lets the farmer know whether to store the crop or sell right away. The entrance of new market players gives the savvy farmer understanding of where the markets are likely to move.

In the United States or Canada, if a farmer wanted this information, they could easily tune their radio or television – or use the internet – and hear or read some version of "The Farm Report." This report brings everything together for the farmer – immediate weather forecasts and longer-term weather projections, crop and input prices, significant developments in the marketplace, and information about plant or animal diseases. Although they need the same information, small-holder farmers in far too many parts of the developing world cannot easily get this kind of information. In some places good information is not readily available, such as accurate local weather information.

That is why the 3rd operational pillar of our integrated model is what we call Situational Awareness, or at times the Early Warning for Early Action and Farmer Information System

This pillar takes into consideration many of the lessons World Vision has learned in our Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) work. This includes the understanding that in order to build resilience, people experiencing both shocks as well as simply change in current circumstances, need to understand not only what is expected, but what to do in that situation.

As is true for most World Vision programming, the mechanisms we develop to provide needed information is only one part of the "system" we are creating. Small-holder farmers, their families, and communities, need to understand the information and warnings, know what to do with that information, and then take action. Hence, we also call this our Early Warning for Early Action system.

Fortunately, the advance of technology means that we have the opportunity to gather, analyze, and distribute needed information more rapidly and efficiently than ever before. However, we continue to use some decidedly "old school" technology – such as local radio - for final distribution. Not everyone in the world uses a smart phone yet.

World Vision's goal in our work is to build both improved as well as resilient livelihoods of small-holder farmers. This 3rd pillar of our work helps the small-holder farmer to proactively manage the shocks, emergencies, and change that affects them, allowing for both better opportunities to sell at better prices, but mostly to prevent changing conditions from becoming a spiral back into poverty.

Christopher Shore
Chief Development Officer, Economic Empowerment
World Vision

Statistics

-Annual global investment of US$6 billion in appropriate disaster risk management strategies would generate total benefits in terms of risk reduction of US$360 billion. Read Here

-98.6 million people were affected by disasters in 2015. El Nino was a factor in 92% of those events. Read Here

-CRED Director, Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir, said: "At 22,773 deaths for 2015, overall disaster mortality was considerably down on the ten-year average of 76,424 deaths. It does seem that early warnings are having an impact in the case of storms." Read Here

Newsflash

- Join us on a life-changing journey to see God at work in a community impacted by poverty. Experience the impact of your support in the lives of children and families around the world. Contact your World Vision representative if you are interested in joining a trip.

    Rwanda/Tanzania/Safari: August 1-14, 2016
    Zambia: November 7-11, 2016

- 2016 SEEP Network Annual Conference: This event will afford exciting new opportunities to engage with key themes and key players in inclusive market development.
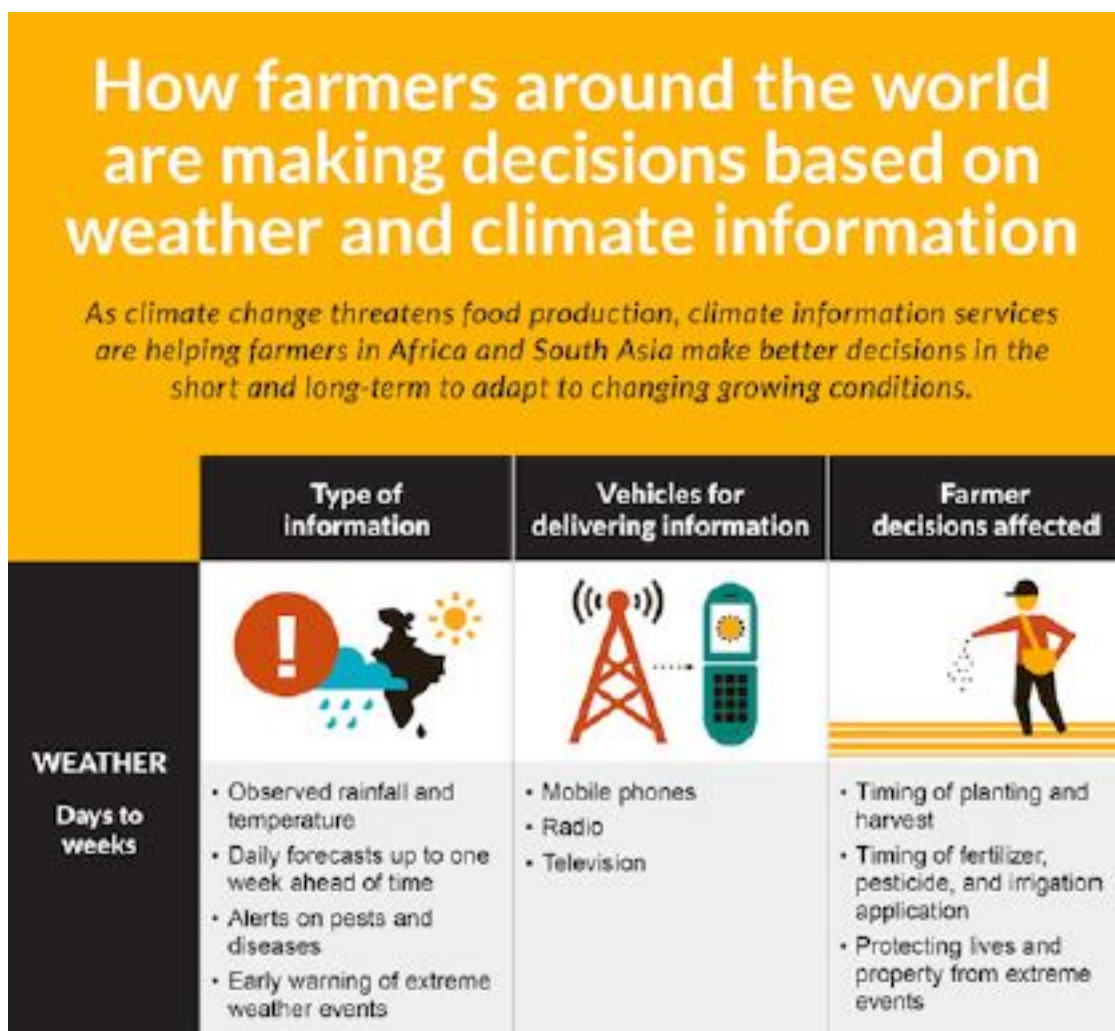
    Washington D.C. September 19-21, 2016

Prayer Requests

- As we celebrate Easter, thank God for the self-sacrificial love that Christ demonstrated through his life and ministry, even unto his death on the cross.
- Pray for the nearly one million children in eastern and southern Africa who have been impacted by El Niño-driven drought and erratic rains during the last two years.
- Pray for the 3.9 million people in South Sudan who are food insecure. Praise God for World Vision's food aid programs, but pray for sustainable food security.
- Pray for the Planning Initiation Workshops in Mali that took place earlier in March. We've been able to start this work due to the generous grant from the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation which we mentioned in our November newsletter.

Learn how farmers make decisions based on weather and Climate

*View full infographic here

In the News- African Agriculture, "A Green evolution"

Read about how small holder farmers are benefiting from learning new, sustainable farming techniques Read Article

Hailey Tucker