



Change your clothes

Change the world

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Recycle  for
Change

We do not just care. We experience a world of wars and misery for The Poor, but we also find many promising signs of humanity on the move for the sake of a better future for all.





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About Us

Recycle for Change was started on the idea that not only does it make sense to transfer economic and human capital from our part of the world to people and countries in need, it's also the right thing to do. Recycle for Change works to mobilize people and resources to support important sustainable development in the poorest parts of the world, and at the same time to preserve our planet's resources through the promotion of textile recycling.

We provide an opportunity for people to drop off their surplus clothing to be re-used, through collection boxes placed at publicly accessible locations throughout California. The clothing is collected, packed and sold; generating money for the training of volunteers who take part in sustainable development work in Africa, Central and South America.

At Recycle for Change we believe that in order to secure a healthy and prosperous future for all people, we must protect and preserve our planet's natural resources and foster cooperation across cultures.

Recycle for Change's mission is to fight worldwide poverty, to empower ordinary people to do the same, to reduce carbon emissions and create a sustainable future for all. Recycle for Change recognizes that the earth's resources are finite and that preserving these resources is crucial to the well being of future generations.



Richmond Vale Academy's volunteer at the Child Aid project in Ecuador

Why Clothes?

Why should we throw perfectly good clothes out to rot in landfills when, on the other side of the world, there are people wearing only rags? Why should we not contribute to others with our knowledge, when that can truly improve the lives of so many?

Most of us realize that we have a great deal of excess and a genuine problem with waste. With 5% of the world population, our society produces 40% of the world's waste.

Today, Climate Change is an accepted fact. People worldwide are feeling the real cost of feeding a growing population and are facing the stark reality that oil and natural gas resources are limited.

Humanity's perspective on recycling has also greatly changed in the past decade. Not long ago, second-hand clothing was only for those who could not afford to buy new clothes. But now an overwhelming growth in consumerism has resulted in people throwing out much more clothing - often before it is worn out. It goes against our sense of logic and morality to see items being discarded when they still have value. Thus we have seen an impressive growth in clothing recycling as more and more people are actively seeking to buy second hand clothing.

With those ideas in mind, Re-cycle for Change works to mobilize people and resources to support important sustainable development in the poorest parts of the world, and at





the same time to preserve our planet's resources through the promotion of textile recycling.

Your unwanted textiles and shoes help support the training of volunteers working in sustainable development projects in the following areas:



Education



Environment protection



Health



Sustainable small scale agriculture

“The Clothing Box is a part of the community and gives neighbors the opportunity to give back... We are glad to be a part of helping the community thrive.”
- Roma Groves, Principal Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School - Oakland, CA



Environmental Impact

Many of us fancy ourselves as people who care about the environment. We're educated on the ever growing effects of climate change. We sort our trash, diligently collecting recyclables and putting them in the appropriate container. We turn off our faucets when we brush our teeth and take shorter showers, trying to conserve precious water. We drive hybrid and electric vehicles or take public transit when we can. We compost our fruit and veggie scraps. We care, and we do things to protect mother earth.

But what about the clothes on our back. When was the last time you gave any thought about where unwanted textiles end up and what their true cost is? The thing is, the common perception is that most clothes are donated and reused. But the alarming truth is that it is quite the opposite! While textiles are 99% recyclable, in the US only 15% of unwanted textiles get reused or recycled and the remaining 85% get taken to the landfill where they go on to create more harmful gases that worsen climate change.

Let's for a moment, take a look at the environmental impact of the clothes on your back. That Patagonia Talus jacket may scream "outdoorsy, tree-hugger", however, its carbon footprint is actually 66 pounds of CO₂, much of that attributed to the polyester, which is manufactured from petroleum products. Now on to your t-shirt. That takes 700 gallons of water to produce, not to mention the additional third of a pound of pesticides and fertilizers that it takes to grow the cotton used to make it. And now let's get to your blue jeans, those bad boys take a whopping 2,000 gallons of water to get from the cotton field to



In 2014, we planted 20,000 trees, taught children in 100 schools, around St Vincent, about the importance of trees in protecting our environment. This would not have been possible without the support from Recycle for Change.

- Kata Lovassy – Teacher at Richmond Vale Academy

your closet. Turning off the faucet when you brush your teeth now seems like a drop in the bucket when you compare it to clothing consumption doesn't it?

So what can we do about it? Well, there are several things you can do. You can start by making smart choices as a consumer. Start by buying less or if you have to, buy smarter. Choose sustainably grown cotton that uses less water and chemicals or even better, buy reused clothing. Next, if you have to dispose of an article of clothing, think before you dump. Recycle for Change makes it easy for consumers to responsibly recycle all of their textiles. We take textiles in any condition. That's right, socks without pairs, t-shirts with holes, sheets with ghost eyes cut out, you name it as long as it's clean and dry, we can recycle it. And don't forget, we also really need your new or gently used clothing as well because these items help us subsidize the recycling of the materials that aren't reusable but are recyclable.

Last year, eco-conscious fashion consumers in the greater Bay Area helped Recycle for Change keep almost 9 million pounds of clothes and shoes out of the landfill! That saves an estimated 6.3 billion gallons of water, 3 million pounds of pesticides and fertilizers and 63 million pounds of CO2 emissions. Will you make the commitment to be an eco-conscious fashion consumer? Help us keep 10 million pounds of clothes and shoes from the landfill in 2015 by finding the nearest Recycle for Change box and dropping of your unwanted items so we can save resources and protect the environment together!

Supported Programs

The biggest challenges of our time are poverty, inequality and climate change. Addressing those challenges demand participation and action from us all in order to achieve a sustainable future for all people. During 2014 Recycle for Change has supported the training of 138 volunteers who worked in the poorest parts of the world. They have a crucial role in helping the communities in which they work to tackle some of the most pressing development issues of our time. The benefits of the volunteer

program supported by Recycle for Change are not only confined to the communities in which they work; when returning home they also bring with them important skills and perspectives, which are crucial in our vision of creating an equal and sustainable world.

In 2014, of the 138 volunteers, 11 worked at the Total Control of the Epidemic project in Mozambique; the project is built on the understanding that it is only the people themselves who can liberate themselves from the HIV/AIDS epidemic.



One World Center's volunteer at the Teacher Training project in Mozambique.

Its primary focus is thus to mobilize communities toward behavior change that reduces stigma, strengthens prevention, and sustains treatment. 47 volunteers worked at Child Aid projects, which is a broadly based project. It builds the capacity of the families and their communities in an all-inclusive program, recognizing that in order to nurture children successfully, the entire community must be strengthened. Families are brought together to address health and sanitation, income generation, education, district development and environmental awareness.

The presence of the volunteers is extremely important. They continuously contribute to the success of our activities at TCE (Total Control of the Epidemic) Maputo; Engaging in activities such as continued training of our field officers & planning and building a Children's playground.

- Ofelia Langa – Project leader –
TCE Maputo, Mozambique



Where did the Volunteers work during 2014?

Child Aid:

The project, among other activities, includes building preschools, organizing youth clubs, offering adult literacy classes; water and food security or initiatives that help reduce maternal and infant deaths.

Teacher Training:

The project focuses on the training of primary school teachers for the rural areas.

Climate compliance:

The projects focus on energy, water, food and disaster security.

Children's Town:

Primary and secondary school providing education for orphans and other children whose situation has caused them to stop attending school and in many cases live on the street.

TCE:

A community mobilization program focused on preventing HIV transmission.

Farmer's Club:

The project trains small-scale farmers in sustainable agriculture practices such as conservation farming, and equips them with knowledge they can use to adjust to the changing conditions.

Food for Knowledge:

The project provides a fortified corn/soy meal to over 600,000 school children in Mozambique. It takes a holistic approach to the problem by also addressing infrastructural problems such as access to clean water and learning after school support.

Belize:

5 Volunteers from Richmond Vale Academy worked at child aid projects impacting 7,500 people in 2014.

Ecuador:

5 volunteers from Richmond Vale Academy worked at Child Aid and Farmers Club projects impacting 3,750 people in 2014.

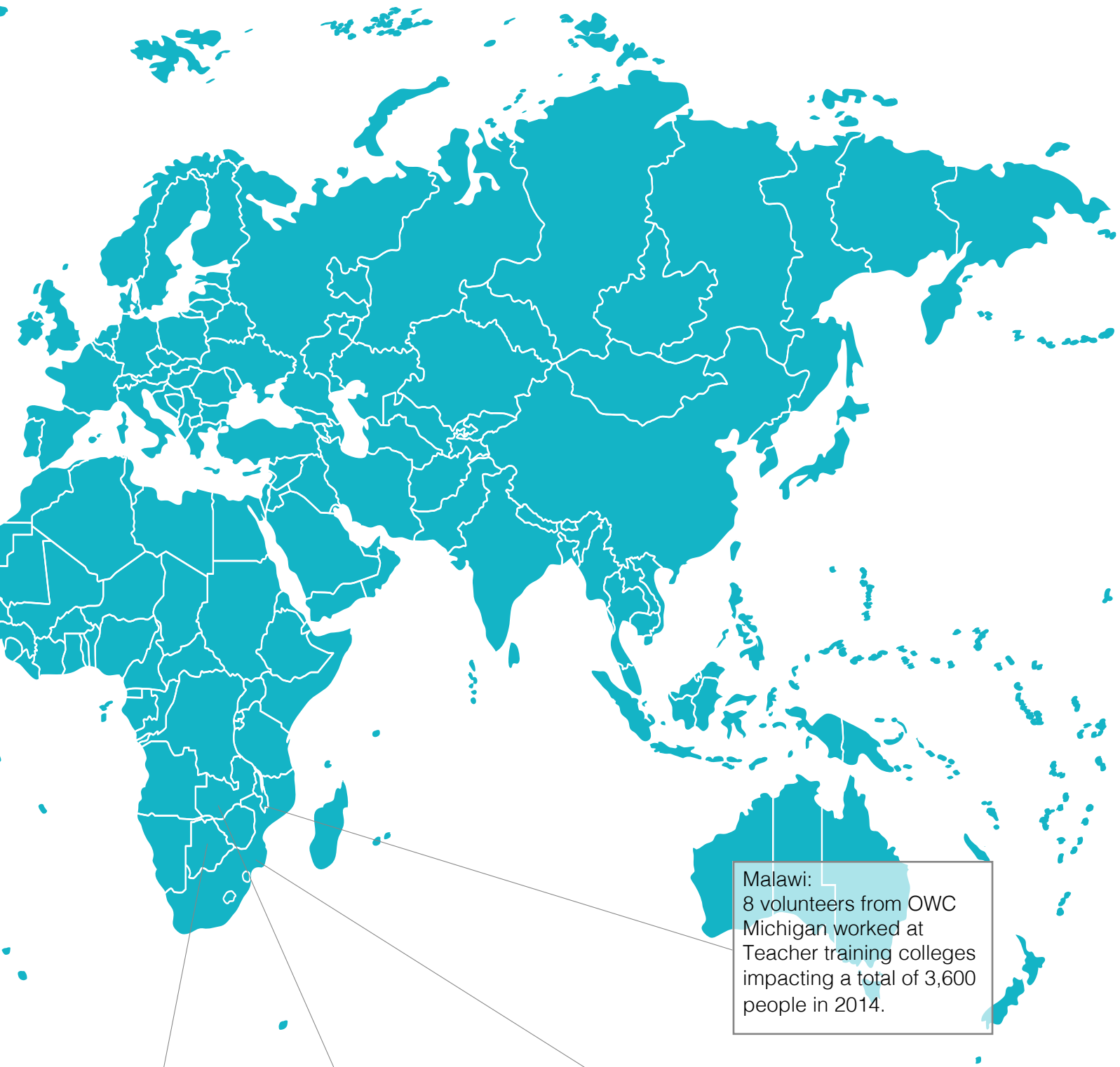
Brazil:

34 Volunteers from OWC Massachusetts worked at child aid projects in Bahia impacting 51,000 people in 2014.

St. Vincent:

37 participants from Richmond Vale Academy worked at climate compliance projects impacting 37,000 people in 2014.





Botswana:
4 Volunteers from OWC
Massachusetts worked
at Child Aid projects
impacting 6,000 people
in 2014.

Zambia:
29 volunteers from OWC
Massachusetts worked at
Child Aid and HIV/AIDS
education projects and
Children's town impacting
31,600 people in 2014.

Mozambique:
16 Volunteers from OWC Michigan and
Massachusetts worked at Teacher training
colleges, HIV/AIDS education and
Children learning improvement impacting
80,000 people in 2014.

Malawi:
8 volunteers from OWC
Michigan worked at
Teacher training colleges
impacting a total of 3,600
people in 2014.

Saving Municipalities Money Through Increased Textile Recycling Accessibility

According to EPA estimates, only 15% of textiles get recycled or donated, which means that 85% end up in the landfills. That's a whopping 21 billion pounds of post-consumer textile waste per year. From 1999 to 2009 the volumes in post-consumer textile waste increased by 40% while the recycling rate of these materials only grew 2%.

With the economy continuing to grow and "fast fashion", where discount retailers supply the latest designer trends to a mass market at a relatively low price, on the rise, the problem of how to recycle or reuse textile waste will only continue to grow larger in our "throw-away" society. For this reason, some municipalities are starting to look for creative ways to find outlets for their residents' textile waste, without having to use money from their own coffers to do it.

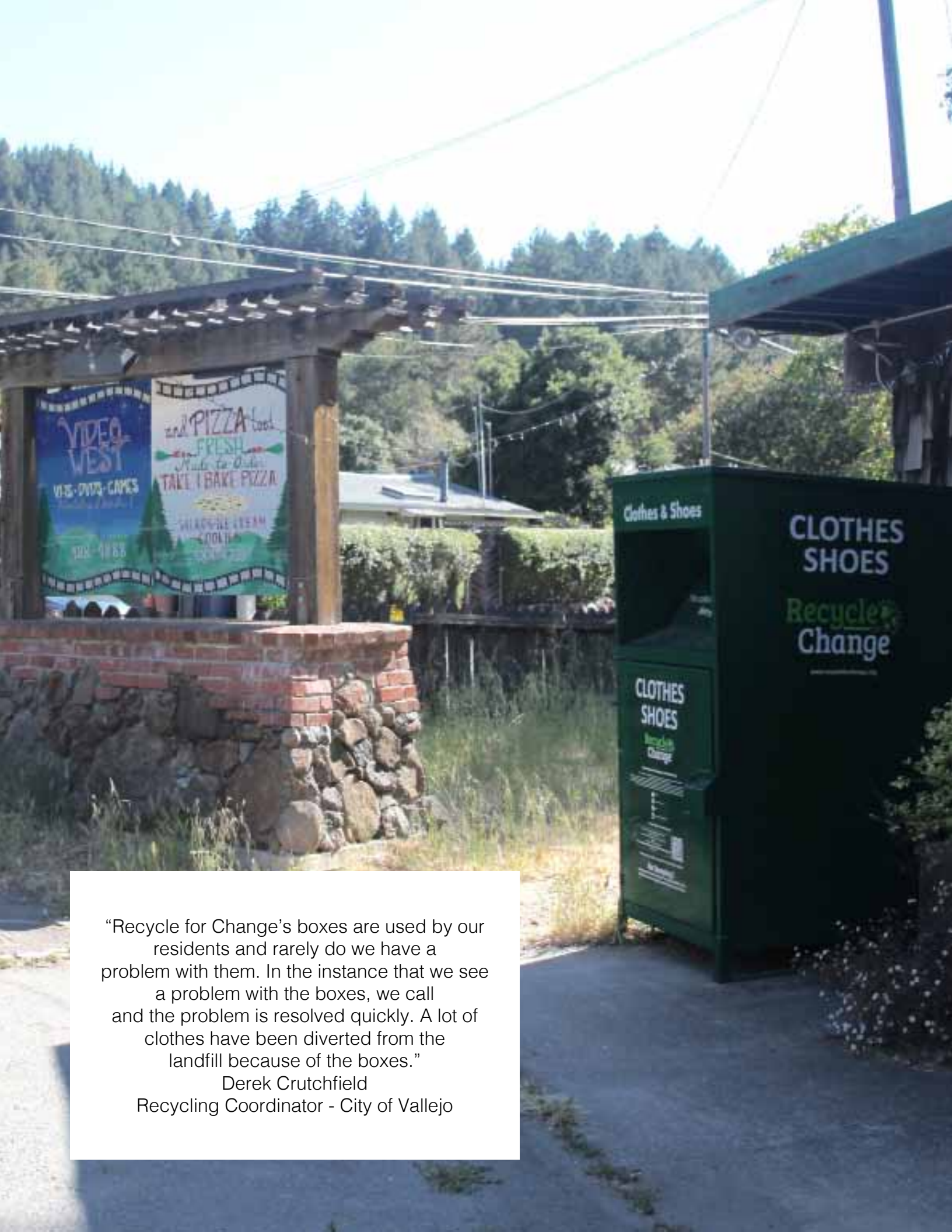
Those in the industry know, that the collection of textiles through municipal waste programs is difficult and costly and unfortunately isn't as simple as including those items in your regular curbside pickup. While the lifecycle of textiles is different from your typical "recyclable" materials like aluminum, glass and plastic, the material is just as recyclable and even has the same carbon footprint as glass. But they can't go in a typical curbside recycling program, because that would contaminate them to a point where they would no longer be usable.

That is where the Recycle for Change collection program steps in. We provide a self-subsidized collection program that pulls these resources from the waste stream,

ensuring they get a second life, whether it's as a second-hand article of clothing, a wiping cloth for the automotive industry or insulation for the building industry. This program keeps textiles out of the landfills saving resources and reducing CO2 emissions, while providing residents an easy way to recycle textiles. It saves the already resource strapped cities and counties from having to create the infrastructure to develop their own collection program. The icing on the cake is that the program is so successful that the surplus income actually funds grants to three other non-profit organizations with programs aimed at mobilizing and supporting communities to take up the fight against poverty.

Ultimately the success of our program could not be realized without the partnership of site hosts and the municipalities within which we operate.

Through such partnerships, we are able to provide a greater good for both the environment and the community. By providing a location for our boxes, the site hosts allow residents access to easy and convenient drop off locations and in return we continue our work protecting the environment, fighting climate change and poverty.



“Recycle for Change’s boxes are used by our residents and rarely do we have a problem with them. In the instance that we see a problem with the boxes, we call and the problem is resolved quickly. A lot of clothes have been diverted from the landfill because of the boxes.”

Derek Crutchfield
Recycling Coordinator - City of Vallejo

Local Community Involvement

At Recycle for Change we believe that on this planet we are all interdependent. Just because we may have oceans between us, doesn't mean that our actions aren't felt globally. That is why we believe that our mission of funding sustainable development work abroad is so important, because the effect ripples through the lives of many, not just those who are directly affected. That being said, while our primary focus is fundraising for those most deeply affected by climate change, typically those living in the developing world, we are rooted in our Bay Area community and we had many fun projects that saw great results in 2014. Here are a few we'd like to share...



“These canned goods are particularly important to our program. While many families receive the food bags we hand out, most of those items require a kitchen in which to prepare those meal items, however, there are many that are both hungry and without shelter. For these individuals, pre-prepared meals in cans are their only sustenance. These canned items can be opened, heated and eaten directly out of the can. For many, this is the only way to get a hot and nutritious meal. Without Recycle for Change, we would not be able to provide these items and these homeless individuals would be greatly underserved and would be forced to go without food.”

- Sister Alice Muhammad

Fighting to Stamp out Hunger in Oakland

Over ten years ago, Sister Alice Muhammad, an Oakland resident who was recovering from a work injury at the time, was looking for something to occupy her time. She began by accompanying her husband Lonnie Scoggins Jr. on his trips to a local ministry to help with food deliveries. As time went on she gained a deeper interest in serving her community and she began to forge relationships and collect surplus baked goods on her own, loading them into the trunk of her car and delivering them to a local park to hand out to the local homeless population. She remembers thinking, “it just hurt me that we don’t care enough. You know, it’s a thin line between have and have not and we have to remember that.”

Fast forward to today, Sister Alice and her team of volunteers distributes food bags and other necessities to over 300 hungry East Oakland residents every Saturday, rain or shine. This is her passion and running the organization is a full-time job and she hopes to be doing it for as long as she is physically able. “I want to be with the people. Feel what they feel and intermingle with them. I want them to know that we are here.”

Recycle for Change has been fortunate to be able to support Sister Alice with both donations and volunteer time over the past 6 years. Over this time our partnership has grown stronger; to this day we deliver all of the non-perishable food items that have been placed into our collection boxes to Sister Alice so they can be distributed to those in need. We are proud to be a part of Sister Alice’s efforts to stamp out hunger.



Making Great Progress Against Textile Waste with SF Environment

In 2014, Mayor Ed Lee made the recycling of textiles a high priority in order to achieve the city's Zero Waste goal by 2020. The Zero Waste Textile Initiative was launched specifically to tackle the mounting problem that textile waste presents. In an effort to provide convenient textile recycling locations for all residents San Francisco has teamed up with local businesses, big and small, and local non-profits like Recycle for Change.

Residents have proven, if you provide it, they will use it! At our most utilized box in San Francisco, we collected 76,549 pounds of clothing in 2014 alone. Residents utilized this box so frequently that halfway through the year we had to add an additional box just to keep up with the demand. This is just one of the many success stories of our drop off locations throughout San Francisco.

The success of our program relies on the partnership with our site hosts. These business owners and individuals provide a greater good for both the environment and their community. By providing a location for our boxes, they allow residents access to easy and convenient drop off locations. In addition to local businesses, through our partnership with SF Environment, we have been working to increase textile recycling access to residents of multi-family housing. In 2014 we provided textile recycling to 9 different complexes and have further expanded that number in 2015.

We are very excited about the attention that the SF Zero Waste Textile Initiative is bringing to the problem of textile waste. Through our collection program in San Francisco alone, we were able to save over 500,000 pounds of textiles from the landfill in 2014. We hope that with increased outreach and education, coupled with the addition of new sites, we can double that number by 2020.



Zero waste is one of the most important policies a city and community can adopt and implement. Waste is caused by us directly and is therefore our responsibility.

Textiles are so easy to recycle instead of sending them to the landfill. It all comes down to our consciousness.

- San Francisco Mayor – Ed Lee



Environmental Education at Work

We believe that igniting a passion for the environment in students at a young age is the key to protecting our planet for generations to come. That is why we actively participate in community efforts to inspire the next generation to take up the cause of fighting climate change.

In 2014 we were proud to serve as a Community Partner for the Marin School of Environmental Leadership. The School of Environmental Leadership combines traditional coursework with inquiry-based projects in environmental stewardship. It was a privilege to work with a group of six sophomores guiding them in a semester long project that focused on textile recycling. Other student groups tackled a variety of topics, which included watershed protection, a campaign to end plastic water bottle use on campus, the installation of a native plant garden and a project that promoted awareness of public transportation and encouraged students to get excited about using the bus system through a contest called the "Amazing Race". Our team in the textile group worked on raising awareness for textile recycling. They created a Facebook page and held a textile recycling drive. They also took a field trip to our facility in Richmond to learn more about how materials are handled and to see just how much people can recycle if they're given the opportunity. At the end of the semester the students came together to present what they had learned to their peers. It was inspiring to see the work that the students had done in such a short time and we hope to be a partner again in the future.

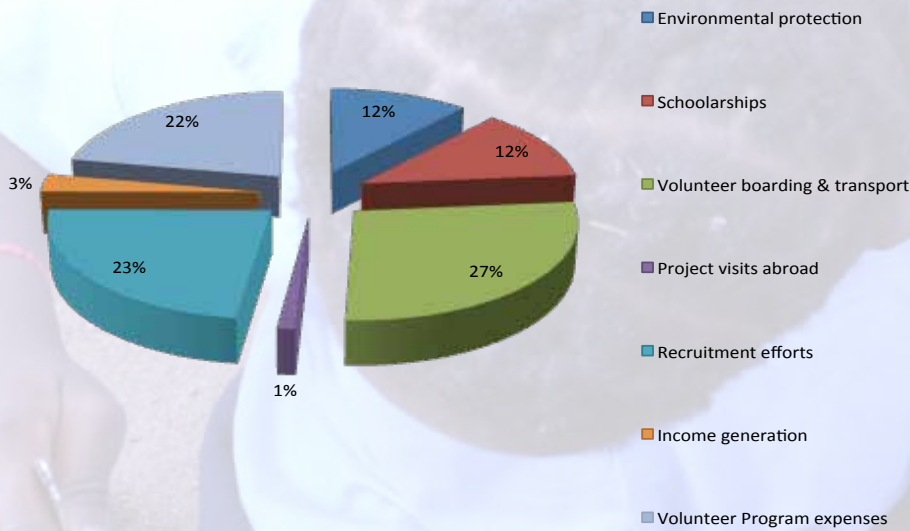
If you would like to learn more about this program you can visit www.thesel.org.



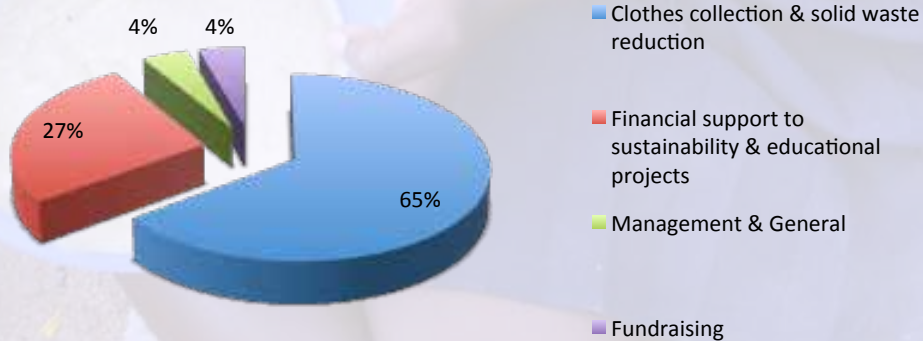
Distribution of support by category:

Environmental protection	\$94,720
Scholarships	\$100,000
Volunteer boarding & transport	\$225,540
Project visits abroad	\$9,800
Recruitment efforts	\$191,000
Income generation	\$24,000
Volunteer Program expenses	\$182,000
Total	\$827,060

Distribution of support by category



Allocation of Funds





Children at the Food for Knowledge project in Mozambique.



Children at the Teacher Training project in Malawi.

Statement of Activities	
December 31, 2014	
OPERATING REVENUE	
Sales of donated clothing & other goods	3,609,532
Other revenue	2,241
Total operating revenue	3,611,773
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Program services	2,832,741
Management & general	133,165
Fundraising	133,726
Total operating expenses	3,099,632
Change in unrestricted assets	512,141

Statement of Financial Position	
December 31, 2014	
ASSETS	
Cash & Current assets	1,141,423
Property, equipment & other assets	466,200
Total assets	1,607,623
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	66,393
Long term debt	149,521
Total liabilities	215,914
Unrestricted net assets	1,391,709
Total Liabilities and net assets	1,607,623

Statement of Functional Expenses	
December 31, 2014	
Program Services	
Clothes collection & solid waste reduction	2,005,681
Financial support to sustainability & educational projects	827,060
Total program services	2,832,741
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	133,165
FUNDRAISING	133,726
Total expenses	3,099,632



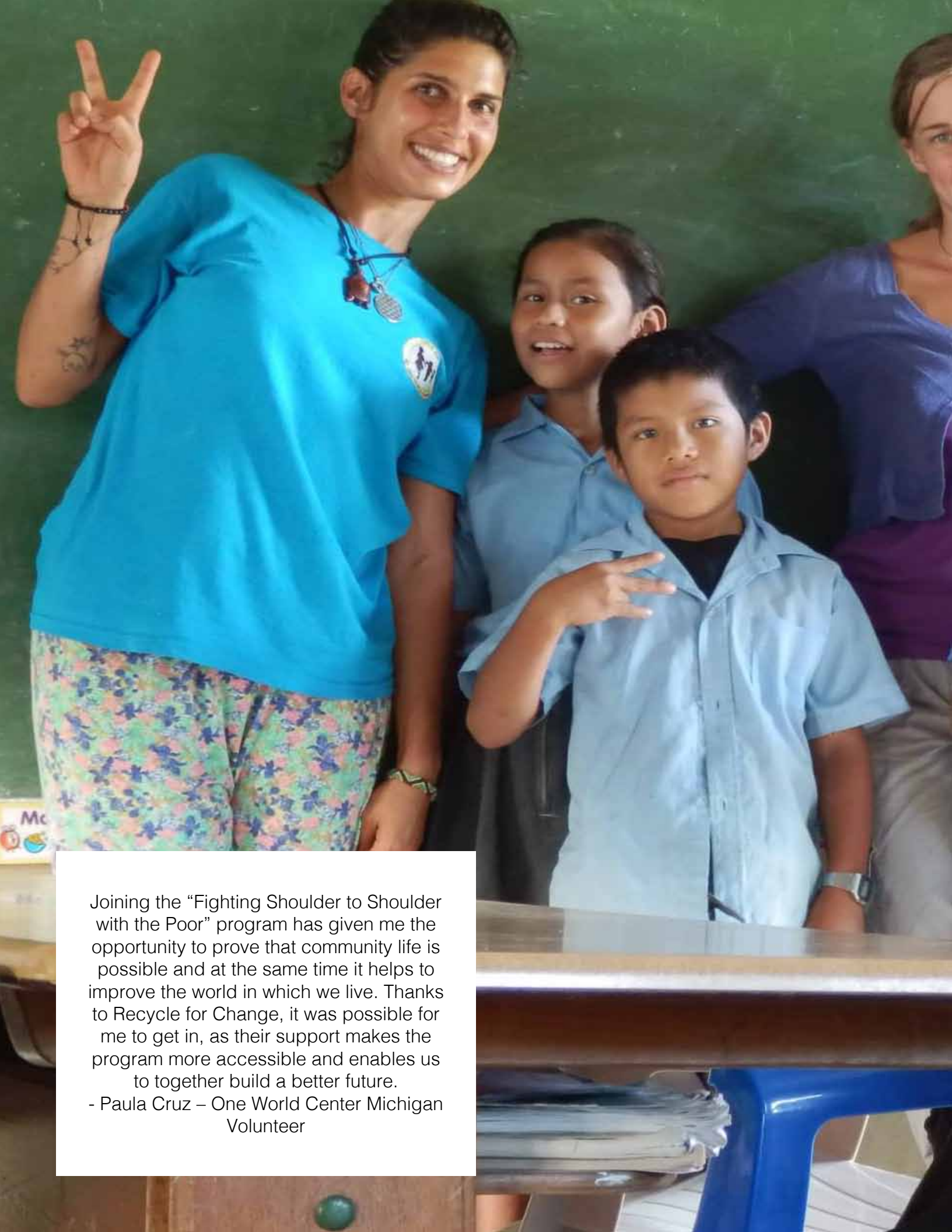
The donations from Recycle for Change enable One World Center to work with sustainability programs in the areas of education, sustainable small scale agriculture, environmental protection and health. Both the lives of our volunteers and the people affected by their work are forever positively changed.

- Trine Wendelboe, Director, One World Center Michigan



The Volunteers are agents of change; they play an important role in making it possible for our community to continue developing and for people to change their living conditions and prospects by organizing together and continuously building new capacities.

- Patrik Jafali – National Headquarters – Humana Malawi



Joining the “Fighting Shoulder to Shoulder with the Poor” program has given me the opportunity to prove that community life is possible and at the same time it helps to improve the world in which we live. Thanks to Recycle for Change, it was possible for me to get in, as their support makes the program more accessible and enables us to together build a better future.

- Paula Cruz – One World Center Michigan Volunteer



Richmond Vale Academy's volunteers at the Child Aid project in Belize.



Recycle for Change

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To find a box near you go to www.recycleforchange.org and click on 'find a box'