

# Rising TIDE

A Quarterly Newsletter from International Development Enterprises Canada

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## Revolutionizing Design

*"The majority of the world's designers focus all their efforts on developing products and services exclusively for the richest 10% of the world's customers. Nothing less than a revolution in design is needed to reach the other 90%."*


So says Paul Polak, founder of IDE and the driving force behind *Design for the Other 90%* - an exhibit of innovative products for low-income communities on now at the Cooper-Hewitt museum in New York.

Since 1981, IDE has harnessed creative design to improve productivity and health. The "design revolution," as Polak terms it, refers not just to the design of innovative and affordable products that address the priorities of poor people, but

also the design of market systems that provide opportunity for small-scale producers - one-acre farmers and micro-businesses.

Now it seems that the idea is catching on. Leading studios and institutes like Stanford's Design School are joining forces with organizations like IDE to find creative solutions for simple but profound problems, like how to lift and store water for irrigation or how to develop markets that really serve customers and producers at the "bottom of the pyramid."

The design revolution is also offering hope for people living with HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa, as described in this issue.

Read on and join the revolution! 

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### Feature

Photo - S. Taylor



Joyce Chishimba: seeds of possibility

## Gardens for Better Health

Growing hope for people living with HIV in Zambia

by Stuart Taylor

The southern half of Africa is the epicentre of the HIV pandemic. In many parts of the region, over one in five adults tests positive for the virus that causes AIDS. Zambia is one of the countries hardest hit. However, in the midst of suffering, we find hope, resilience and a stubborn refusal to surrender to an illness that many simply refer to as "The Disease."

We are standing outside the small mud-brick home of Joyce Chishimba - a forty-something woman whose kind face has a certain toughness to it. A cool breeze sweeps through the dry compound, kicking up a fine dust that settles into our clothes as she leads us into her small garden.

Behind a fence of wooden pickets and dense bushes, she has created a vibrant nursery that contains a startling array of herbs and orna-

mental plants. Largely self-taught, she directs us to some of her favourite plants and extols their virtues, while noting special tips for their care and cultivation.

Here on the edge of Ndola, Zambia's second-largest city, she has built up a clientele that ranges from neighbours who purchase a single hardy ornamental to well-off families from town who purchase a range of perennials to beautify their high-walled compounds in the city's ritzier quarters. It is not big business by any stretch of the imagination, but through creativity and persistence, Chishimba is surviving and growing a small enterprise.

We are here to visit families that are participating in a relatively new IDE venture called "Gardens for Better Health."

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## Gardens for Better Health - Growing hope in Zambia (from page 1)

In Ndola, IDE is bringing a new dimension to a very effective existing HIV care programme run by the Catholic Diocese. While the Diocese has worked for years to provide home-based care for HIV-positive people, it has recently begun exploring economic opportunities for its clients. Harnessing IDE's experience in market development and its innovative labour-saving technology, the Diocese is providing its clientele with the tools they need to become active agents in their own care.

"For years we focused on care for the dying," says Chanda Fikansa – Program Manager of the Diocese's Integrated AIDS Programme. "Now, with ART [anti-AIDS drugs] becoming more widely available, we are shifting focus. Once people living with AIDS have accessed ART, they become strong and productive once more. Unfortunately, there is no employment for them and as a result, they begin to ask the programme to assist them with economic empowerment initiatives."

One of the programme's first steps has been to work with people on the outskirts of a few of Zambia's larger towns, where HIV is more rampant than in rural villages. People living at the edge of town are generally poor and suffer high rates of infection. However, they also have small plots of land that they can use to grow

a few crops. IDE is seeking to capitalize on this advantage – giving people access to labour-saving drip irrigation, training and assistance with vegetable and herb production.

Joseph Mulenga is an herbalist in Kabwe – an hour's drive north of the capital Lusaka. He has been introducing people to traditional

and exotic herbs that can alleviate some of the symptoms of AIDS. His own garden is a living pharmacy, stocked with plants like aloe (for soothing skin rashes), lemon grass (colds and fever) and mint (to reduce nausea). Inside his small two-room house, he shows us plastic pails of dried leaves and roots harvested from his garden. He has a small team of employees that prepares and packages these materials for sale from his dispensary in town.

"Many of these remedies are very popular," he says. "People say they are surprised at how effective these herbs can be for soothing common symptoms of HIV/AIDS." Staff from the Diocese of Ndola have traveled down to Kabwe to learn more about herbal treatment from Mulenga. For some of the common symptoms – skin rashes, mouth sores, vomiting – herbs offer a real option for families that would otherwise struggle to pay for medical treatment.

While the herbs provide a low-cost and home-grown alternative for symptom alleviation, staff are quick to emphasize the importance of medical treatment with their clients.

"One of our top priorities is for clients to get tested [for HIV]," explains Julia Phiri, Director of Dackana – another of IDE Zambia's partners in this project. "Once they have been tested, they can access ARVs [anti-AIDS drugs] if they require them. However, the herbs and vegetables are very important to make sure that our clients keep healthier for longer."




Photo—C. Derksen

Drying vegetables for market and home consumption in Ndola Phiri helped to form Dackana in 2003 as a group of volunteers caring for neighbours living with HIV. The organization is just one example of the groundswell of dedicated caregivers – mainly volunteers and predominantly women – who have stepped in to fill the gap of care and support for people living with HIV in their communities. Many of the caregivers are HIV-positive themselves and thus can offer first-hand experience and sympathetic counseling to their clients. Through Gardens for Better Health, these caregivers are receiving more in-depth training on good nutrition and herbal treatment of symptoms.

The clients themselves are receiving credit to purchase drip irrigation systems, which IDE is currently importing from India. The drip systems allow them to improve their production of vegetables during the dry season with a minimum of effort. Rather than hauling 20 litre jerry cans to pour water on the crops, clients can simply fill a central tank or water bag, which feeds a system of plastic pipes and tubing laid out in the garden.

At the same time, IDE is working with organizations like Dackana to identify local market opportunities for small-plot gardens. Dackana has begun making links with local lodges and restaurants that are interested in purchasing dried greens from clients. There are also opportunities to sell local herbs. These small steps are a big deal for people living with HIV.

Standing in her small but lush nursery, Chishimba offers me a large fern to take home. I start to explain some of the difficulties of carrying a living plant with me on my travels. "Ah well," she laughs, "maybe next time."

Until recently, "Next time" has not been part of the vocabulary for most HIV-positive people. I am encouraged by this reference to the future. Like Chishimba, many of the people involved with the program are planting seeds of hope and possibility. 

Photo—C. Derksen



Joseph Mulenga: home-grown solutions

# Letters from Zambia

Two students working with IDE share their impressions

Selena Matthews

Planning for my two-and-a-half months with IDE Zambia could never have prepared me for the great people that I was going to meet, the lessons I was going to learn about development work or how the IDE project that I was involved in was making such a positive impact. It also could not have prepared me for my two encounters with malaria.



Photo—C. Derksen

A farmer shows off his vegetable garden.

My placement time was divided between the capital, Lusaka, and the city of Kitwe, in the Copperbelt region of Zambia, where I worked with two local organizations on the Gardens for Better Health project. This allowed me to acquire insight into the many successes and challenges that can arise in international development work. An innovative concept, the Gardens for Better Health programme is creating great enthusiasm within the communities we visited. It also creates a great sense of independence for people that might not otherwise have known it. Given that the project

offers the opportunity for increased household incomes and improved nutrition, households are eager to get involved as they gain control of their health and livelihoods.

Working with local organizations also brought to my attention certain challenges that can arise while working in developing



Photo—C. Derksen

A vegetable grower's kids clown for the camera

countries. I was surprised that our activities were so affected by the absence of things that I took for granted in Canada—such as the ready availability of transport and internet access.

My practicum experience has truly

been remarkable. I have not only come away with a greater understanding of development work in developing countries but I have also made great friends here. My experience with IDE in Zambia has definitely given me a greater desire to continue public health work abroad.

*Selena Matthews is a Masters of Public Health student from Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. She recently completed a practicum placement with IDE Zambia*

Cameron Derksen

Standing near the local market in Livingstone, Zambia, I heard someone call, “Hey white man,” from behind me. At the time, I was conspicuous not only for the paleness of my skin, but also because I was taking photos, or “snaps,” of the market with a very bulky camera. I turned to acknowledge the voice, coming from a group of young men sitting on a bench nearby. After determining where I was from, the man asked, “When you go back to Canada, what will you tell people about your snaps?”

I thought about how I had seen similar markets throughout my 2,000km journey across Zambia. Businessmen and women were selling an assortment of products, from fresh local produce and handicrafts to used car parts and imported goods. In the slums, business people promoted services ranging from hair braiding to bicycle repair. Along the roads, honey, charcoal, sugarcane, watermelon, tomatoes, and other goods were available for purchase.



Photo—C. Derksen

One diversified business advertises its services

We met farmers, who on less than an acre of land were growing food to feed their family and for market. We heard about a farmer who, after acquiring a treadle pump, increased his production enough to hire five employees. We talked with a farmer who reached the maximum acreage he could irrigate with a bucket, and was planning to purchase a treadle pump.

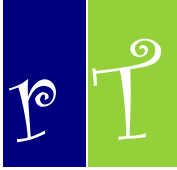
I grew up on a farm in southern Manitoba, and I found the similarities between farmers in Zambia and Manitoba intriguing. We talked about yields, soil management, fertilizer, water and equipment, just as we would in Manitoba (with the exception of crop damage by elephants). When I stood beside a Zambian farmer to examine his treadle pump, I remembered visiting farm implement dealerships with my father as a boy. While the scale of their operations is different, both farmers share an interest in investing in technologies that improve yields, and ultimately increase income for improved livelihoods.

No one is more interested in increasing the incomes of the poor than the poor themselves, and IDE's focus on promoting affordable technologies and developing markets is helping local farmers, manufacturers and retailers improve their own livelihoods.

What am I going to tell people about my snaps?

“I'm going to tell people in Canada that everyone in Zambia is in business,” I answered.

*Cameron Derksen is an International Development student at the University of Winnipeg. He is developing an IDE exchange program linking HIV organizations in Manitoba and Zambia*



# Design for the Other 90%

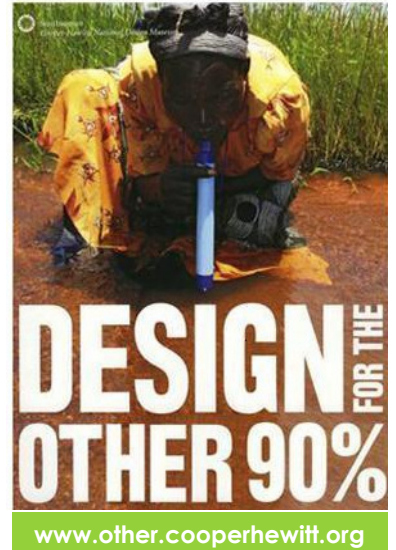
IDE's affordable income-enhancing technologies are featured in a new exhibit at the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, located in New York City. On from May 4 through September 23, 2007, "Design for the Other 90%" features more than 30 works that demonstrate how design can be a dynamic force in transforming—and even saving—lives.

Exploring the variety of affordable and socially responsible products designed for the more than five billion people across the globe who often lack the means to purchase even the most basic goods, the exhibit highlights products in the areas of food, water, shelter, health and sanitation, education, energy and transportation. Those products provide solutions for the extremely poor and marginalized throughout the world. "By showcasing the work of designers who use their skills and ingenuity to produce architectural and design solutions that really affect quality of life issues, Cooper-Hewitt will raise awareness of the critical need for humanitarian design," said Director Paul Warwick Thompson.

IDE has been at the forefront of developing and marketing affordable technologies in developing countries since 1981, and continues to be a catalyst for affordable design innovation through collaboration with design schools at Stanford University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "Ninety-five per cent of the world's designers focus all their efforts on develop-

ing products and services exclusively for the richest 10 percent of the world's customers," said IDE founder Dr. Paul Polak, "Nothing less than a revolution in design is needed to reach the other 90 per cent."

IDE technologies featured at the exhibit will include a treadle pump, an inexpensive foot-powered pump that allows small-plot farmers to produce high-value crops during the dry season, helping them to move beyond subsistence farming. Also included is a garden with a working IDE low-cost drip irrigation system, which reduces water use by up to 70 percent and increases yields by more than 50 percent. Other design innovations featured will include inexpensive shelters, a personal water purification device, a bicycle that can easily carry hundreds of pounds of cargo, and an inexpensive universal laptop computer to be used as an educational tool for children.



# return



# on investment

**Results.** That is what poor farmers in Africa and Asia can achieve. IDE invests in innovative low-cost technology and better markets to achieve one bottom line: an end to poverty, one family at a time.

A \$250 investment in IDE generates at least \$300 additional annual income for one family.

For a person living on a dollar a day, it's the result that counts.

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**IDE Canada Staff:** Stuart Taylor (Executive Director), Harry Olfert (Donor Relations), Cameron Derksen (Project Officer), Sane Dube (Project Officer), Tim Phelan (Public Engagement)

## About IDE Canada

IDE Canada is a Canadian non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the income of families living on less than a dollar a day.

Since its beginning in 1981, IDE has helped to increase production and income in Africa and Asia by designing and marketing extremely low-cost products such as pedal pumps, irrigation kits, and water purifiers. IDE also develops markets that provide better opportunities for poor people.

IDE Canada is a member of IDE's international network, which currently has offices in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, India, UK, and USA.



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