
Development

FINANCE

Ninety African Institutions Share US\$14 million Grant	1min. 49secs.	3
<i>Several non-governmental organizations remain in business, thanks to the Ford Foundation.</i>		
Development Quotation	30secs.	13
<i>The African lions are coming.</i>		

GOVERNANCE

Poll Shows Nigerians Reject Sharia law	3mins. 18secs.	6
<i>The first real poll of Nigerians' reaction to state-introduced sharia law shows general disapproval.</i>		

HEALTH

A World Without Polio	4mins. 31secs.	9
<i>An Indian woman recalls her experience with the oral polio vaccine.</i>		
International Organization to Deal with Malaria in the Niger Delta	1min. 17secs.	5
<i>Medecins Sans Frontiere takes on a major killer in the Niger Delta.</i>		

RESEARCH

UN Urges Developing Nations to Study Starch Properties	1min. 51secs.	3
<i>The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) encourages African nations to enter into the global starch market.</i>		

WOMEN

The Girl Who Made Her Dream Come True	3mins. 45secs	14
<i>Sarah achieves her ambition despite the loss of one leg in a car accident.</i>		
UNESCO Urges Women to Make the News on March 8th	1min. 37secs.	4
<i>An initiative for a global women's news day.</i>		
Rwandan Women Share Male Partners to Rebuild Families	3mins. 20secs.	7
<i>Genocide drives desperate Rwandan women to share partners.</i>		

Environment

AGRICULTURE

Monkeys are Farmers' Friends	1min. 16secs.	4
<i>For free, the colobus monkey can make a coconut farmer rich.</i>		
Cloud Harvesting Brings Relief to Drought-Stricken Village	2mins. 56secs.	6
<i>A village has found a way of trapping clouds for its domestic water needs.</i>		
Swazi Chickens Face Extinction	1min.19secs.	4
<i>Swaziland's indigenous domestic birds may be extinct due to poor livestock management.</i>		

DESERTIFICATION

Tradition Helps Stem Desertification	4mins. 22secs.	9
<i>Traditional wisdom may hold the key to reversing desertification in Africa.</i>		

DISASTERS

World Bank Equips Poor Countries to Cope with Disasters	58secs.	3
<i>An international partnership seeks to reduce human and economic loss from natural disasters.</i>		

FORESTS

Once We Logged, Now We Conserve the Forest	3mins. 58secs.	10
<i>A community that once depended solely on logging now adjusts to the new realities of forest conservation.</i>		
UNHCR Intensifies Environment Campaign	1min. 16secs.	5
<i>The rehabilitation of the environment of refugee host communities begins in northern Uganda.</i>		
A New Global Policy On Forests in The Making	3mins. 7secs.	8
<i>The United Nations' new forest policy is ready to be unveiled.</i>		

Children's Section

A Central African Story About the First Zebra	4mins. 49secs.	11
<i>How Zebra came about its peculiar stripes.</i>		
Porcupine's Children	5mins. 43secs.	13
<i>Spiky Porcupine can't seem to keep his children out of trouble.</i>		
Do Chameleons Give Birth by Committing Suicide?	2mins. 11secs.	12
<i>Chameleons are hardly ever seen any more because people misunderstand and kill them.</i>		
Why Do Cockroaches Exist since They Don't Help in Any Way?	58secs.	13
<i>Flies and cockroaches are more useful than you'd believed.</i>		

News

Ninety African Institutions Share US\$14 million Grant

1min. 49secs.

Nearly 90 African non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments and semi-autonomous governmental bodies received US\$14 million in grants from the Ford Foundation in the first half of last year. All the grants were made in the foundation's three programme areas namely, Asset Building and Community Development, Peace and Social Justice and Education, Knowledge and Religion.

The grants made between February 1st and May 31st 1999, range from US\$30,000 to US\$1,000,000, and run from three months to about three years. The beneficiaries are from 14 countries in all the four geographical regions of the continent, namely: Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Among the beneficiaries are research institutes, universities, nature conservation projects, waste disposal and neighborhood improvement programmes, the media and theatre groups, NGOs working on AIDS, reproductive health and gender issues, community forestry programmes and human rights advocacy. Others include centres for democracy, rule of law, peace and security, child abuse and other forms of social violence.

Minority, social, economic and cultural rights, capacity building, affirmative action and Internet literacy programmes are also addressed by the grants.

The target areas are chosen to reinforce the Ford Foundation's image of a resource for innovative people and institutions worldwide, with the goal to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation and advance human achievement.

Ford Foundation Report.

World Bank Equips Poor Countries to Cope with Disasters

58secs.

The World Bank and an international coalition of governments have launched a global initiative to help developing countries cope with the consequences of natural disasters. Membership of the international partnership, called ProVention Consortium, also includes international organizations, private insurance companies, universities, and non-governmental organizations.

According to the World Bank, natural disasters killed more than 50,000 people and destroyed US\$65 billion worth of property and infrastructure in 1998 alone. Nearly all of the deaths occurred in developing countries, where the world's poorest people are most affected. And the disasters often hit the same countries successively.

ProVention Consortium aims at equipping developing countries with the means to better cope with natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and floods and reduce the loss of life and destruction they cause.

Addis Tribune/ africanews.org

UN Urges Developing Nations to Study Starch Properties

1min. 51secs.

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has urged research institutes in developing countries to look into the various properties of starch in an effort to help developing countries compete more effectively in world starch markets.

"Access to more information about starch properties will help people in developing countries sell their products and compete in world starch markets," said Morton Satin, Chief of FAO's Agro-Industries and Post-Harvest Management Services recently.

Starches are found in most crops including wheat, corn, rice, potatoes, cassavas and sago palm. Food uses of starch include baking, cereals and snacks, soups and sauces, frozen foods, natural flavors, beverage emulsifiers, powdered non-dairy creamers, confections and dairy products. Non-food uses for starches include adhesives, explosives, paper industry, construction industry, metals, textiles, cosmetic and pharmaceuticals and mining.

Currently, most of the research on tropical starches is done by corporations in the developed world. "This pattern must change if there is to be any hope of building a significant presence in world starch markets from developing countries," Satin said.

The FAO began studying the functional properties of starch a year ago and is now working with research institutes in Italy and Thailand on the issue. In future, the Organization will support further work on the physical, chemical and taste properties of starches.

Satin pointed out that starch, like many other tropical, subsistence crops, has not benefited from the degree of research required to ensure commercial competitiveness on an international scale.

FAO

Monkeys are Farmers' Friends

1min. 16secs.

A monkey may be a nuisance when it gets into your orchard or banana plantation, but recent research shows that they can grow the income of a coconut farmer by eating immature nuts.

The research which focused on the red colobus monkey species in the east African Island province of Zanzibar, was done by Kirsten Siex and Thomas Struhsaker of Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. They discovered that the monkeys are as choosy of coconuts as are the islanders.

"Since colobus prefer immature nuts, they are actually acting as unpaid pruners, increasing the crop on trees from which they feed," according to Siex and Struhsaker.

They found that the coconut palms from which the monkeys took six immature nuts a month yielded an average monthly harvest of 13 coconuts. Similar trees from which they took ten immature nuts a month yielded 17. This is a win-win situation said Siex and Struhsaker.

"The farmers should be thanking the monkeys, not persecuting them," they said.

The Economist.

Swazi Chickens Face Extinction

1min.19secs.

Swaziland's two indigenous chicken breeds are on the verge of extinction. The breeds - the bare-necked and the short-legged chicken have now become very rare. Government officials believe that they may have been lost for good.

The country's Agriculture and Cooperatives Minister, Roy Fanourakis, has blamed their extinction on lack of initiatives for growing the poultry sector, poor farm animal resources and ad-hoc management services which are uncoordinated and lack focus.

Meanwhile, three international organizations - the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), and the Southern African Development Council (SADC) - have launched a project to harness the farm animals genetic resources as an approach to addressing the poor performance of the livestock sector of Swaziland's economy.

Fanourakis is hopeful for the UN approach. "I have all the confidence and trust in the structures we have established to carry us forward to attainment of effective management of our animal genetic resources for sustainable agricultural production leading to improved food for society," he said.

PANA

UNESCO Urges Women to Make the News on March 8th

1min. 37secs.

An appeal has gone to all media organizations worldwide to give women journalists the pilot's seat in deciding ~~and producing the editorial content of their newspapers and broadcasts on~~ **March 8th**, the International Women's Day.

Koichiro Matsuura, the Director-General of the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), made the appeal early in February calling on all news media executives to make March 8th a day to remember by seeing to it that women make the news.

“If journalists, the media and the organizations that represent them come together to make this initiative a success, then for the first time in history a day’s news output in both print and broadcasting throughout the world, will fall under the editorial responsibility of women,” she said.

“Through this focus on equal opportunities in the media, UNESCO wants to emphasize that the free and abundant flow of independent information is best ensured if all talented journalists have an equal chance of becoming editors and media executives, purely on the basis of their professional ability, without regard to gender, ethnic origin, religion or any other unconnected factor.”

Recognizing that some media organizations already have top female executives, UNESCO leaves it up to each media to decide how best to implement the initiative.

UNESCO

International Organization to Deal with Malaria in the Niger Delta **1min. 17secs.**

After two missions to assess the medical needs of the Niger Delta area, Nigeria’s most conflict prone region, the award winning international humanitarian aid organisation, Medecins Sans Frontiere (MSF), has decided to set up a malaria intervention programme there.

The medical assessment missions ascertained that the disease is the number one cause of mortality and morbidity for the 100,000 people in this oil-rich, watery environment.

The programme is to be based in Yenegoa, capital of Bayelsa State, with an initial staff of five expatriate and 30 Nigerian medical personnel. Mobile units would be introduced to ensure broad coverage of the entire population of the delta.

In addition to a fever and malaria treatment programme, an information and prevention programme would also be set up.

Medecins Sans Frontiere has been in Nigeria since 1996 following its intervention in a large-scale meningitis epidemic in the north. In subsequent interventions the organization has dealt with other major killer epidemics like cholera, yellow fever and measles.

Medecins Sans Frontiere.

UNHCR Intensifies Environment Campaign **1min. 16secs.**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has intensified its campaign against environmental degradation in the refugee camps in northern Uganda.

Speaking at a recent workshop in Kampala, Uganda, Adera Tsegaye, UNHCR deputy representative, said that the UN agency had received US\$42 million from the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation (BMZ) to restore the degraded environment and minimize the impact of refugees at the host districts of northern Uganda. “This will be addressed through a series of measures, including forest activities, supply procedures, soil and water conservation and environmental awareness programmes for both refugees and neighbouring communities,” Tsegaye said.

This new BMZ funding is not the first for the region. A BMZ-funded environment project had run in northern Uganda from 1996 to 1999. Tsegaye said that the new project would be extended to help more environment management programmes in various refugee host areas, in addition to the well known host districts of Arua, Koboko, Adjumani and Moyo, which still have some forests left in them.

New Vision/Africanews-on-line.

Cloud Harvesting Brings Relief to Drought-Stricken Village

2mins. 56secs.

Caleta Chungungo, a mountain village in one of the driest regions of Chile in South America have found a way to save their village from drought by harvesting clouds.

Caleta was drying up and emptying out until a coalition of Chilean environmentalist, Canadian researchers and international funding agencies decided to make use of the town's most valuable asset: *Chamanchaca*, a low-lying cloud that passes over the place almost every night.

Catching a cloud might seem as tricky as trying to bottle a rainbow. But the residents of Caleta have found a way of doing it. They are able to wring water from an otherwise stingy sky by trapping it in nets. They have 86 "nets" which are actually nylon-mesh-covered panels roughly the size of advertising billboards - on a mountainside in order to tap *Chamanchaca* as it passes.

Droplets of water from the cloud condensed on the mesh - which provides a large surface area for them to do so. When they are big enough, they fall through the holes and are channeled into reservoirs, where the accumulated fluid is filtered and chlorinated before consumption. On a good day, a single panel can capture 700 litres of water.

Unlike its neighbours in the surrounding valleys, Caleta gets little relief from nearby rivers. Even worse, the village lies in the path where the local rainfall is below 700mm a year. As a result Caleta's 350 villagers have had to rely on truckloads of water from elsewhere to keep them going. This water comes at too high a price for most of the farmers who are trying to eke out a living from the place.

However, the cloud capture system now provides around 300,000 litres a month, equivalent to roughly 30 lorries' worth. At one dollar for 300 litres, the cloud water is one-fifth of the cost of buying water in lorries.

This easy and affordable source of water has helped to stem the flow of farmers from Caleta, according to Benjamin Quijandria, a Latin America specialist at the International Fund for Agricultural Development in Rome, which helped to finance the project. Commercial farmers in nearby villages have started to take interest in the project. They are considering expanding the project in order to reduce the high cost of irrigating their farms.

The Economist.

Features

Poll Shows Nigerians Reject Sharia

3mins. 18secs.

Recent poll results by RMS Media, a Gallup International affiliate, show that Nigerians are opposed to state imposed sharia law such as was introduced in Zamfara State, northwestern Nigeria in November 1999. The opposition is strongest along ethnic and geographical lines, and more in the Christian south of the country. A sizeable opposition was also found in the north, among both Christians and Muslims. But not enough to deter its introduction in at least eight more northern states by simple majority approval in those states.

Sampling more than 5,000 respondents from all the states of the federation, except Zamfara, RMS Media found that about half of Nigerians disapproved of the introduction of Sharia in Zamfara State while one third approved. More southerners disapproved, with nearly total disapproval in Lagos, followed closely by the East and West. The survey couldn't be done in Zamfara State because it was considered to be unsafe for field work.

One in three northerners disapproved. Another one-tenth of them remained neutral. This is much more than had been anticipated, given the claim of near total support for it, by the Zamfara and Niger State administrations which have introduced the Moslem theocratic law.

Although national disapproval of state-imposed sharia is high, the survey showed that there is enough support for it in at least seven northern states - mostly to the northeast and northwest. However Niger State shows 31 percent rejection, Kaduna shows 58 rejection. The diapproval rating for Bauchi, Adamawa, Gombe, Nassarawa, Taraba, Plateau and Kogi States range from 34 percent to 75 percent.

The survey also shows that two of every three persons in Nigeria, half of the respondents from the north, and one in three northern Muslims would have preferred that the federal government took a stronger position against Zamfara's enactment of Sharia. President Olusegun Obasanjo's tended to vacillate between denouncement and indulgence.

"This lack in decisive action was for all practical purposes taken as encouragement for other states to debate on the introduction of sharia," the survey states.

"The claim of the executive governor of Niger State to have acted according to the demands of the overwhelming majority of his people can be clearly refuted," the survey states. It adds that: "it is equally self-evident that Sharia law would be against the will of people in Kaduna State where the idea has been seriously proposed."

The survey shows that there is equally a strong rejection of state introduction of the Christian equivalent, or the establishment of a Christian State. But more Muslims are prepared to accept a Christian theocratic state than vice versa.

RMS

Rwandan Women Share Male Partners to Rebuild Families

3mins. 20secs.

Unable to find husbands Rwanda women who lost their children and husbands during the genocide that swept through the country in 1994 are sharing men in a bid to rebuild their families. This has created a scare among health workers who report that an increasing number of people are becoming infected with AIDS as a result of this practice.

Josephine Nyinawankusi lost her husband and four of her five children during the genocide. She is so desperate to replace her lost family, she says that she's prepared to risk her life to do so.

"Life in Rwanda without a husband or children is not a life," she says. "Husbands are very scarce these days, but at least I can still have children," she says.

To do this, she'll have to share sexual partners with other women like her. So many men were killed during the genocide, or later imprisoned for their part in it. And there is very little hope of a woman in her position finding a husband. But by deciding to share sex partners with other women, Nyinawankusi puts herself at great risk of contracting the AIDS virus.

"I know about AIDS, but a family is more important," she says.

The practice of sharing men, known as 'kwinjira' has become widespread in rural areas of Rwanda since the genocide. It is worse in central Rwanda that witnessed some of the worst excesses of the 1994 genocide when as many as 800,000 people died. In some parts of the district, males make up a mere 20 percent of the population.

Rwanda already faces a real danger with the AIDS virus. About 11 percent of the population are estimated to be HIV - positive. Health officials already refer to AIDS as Rwanda's "new genocide." Dr. Ildephonse Kamali, who works in the Kabgayi hospital outside Gitarama town, says that as many as 50 percent of the AIDS tests he administers are turning up positive.

The director of the National AIDS Control Programme, Innocent Ntaganira, said that AIDS patients take up 60 percent of hospital beds and more than 200,000 Rwandans - 50,000 of them children - have died of the disease.

Urging restraint on the people who have survived the worst ethnic extermination since World War II is difficult, says Ntanganira. "Survivors of the genocide have become hedonistic. Why should they fear the disease that might kill them in 10 years' time? In the case of women, if AIDS is the risk they have to take in order to rebuild their families, then that is a risk they are prepared to take."

Deseretnews.com

A New Global Policy On Forests in The Making

3mins. 7secs.

Concern for forests and their links to global economic well-being have taken centre stage in recent policy documents of both the United States of America (USA) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

~~The United Nations' Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) met in New York from January 31st to February 11th to discuss international arrangements to manage and protect all types of the world's forests. And in the USA, forest issues made their way into President Bill Clinton's 2001 budget submission. Known as his "Greening the Globe" initiative, Clinton's new proposal will re-introduce the 'debt-for-nature-swap' - a practice whereby debtor nations are forgiven certain financial debts if they agree to plow back an equivalent amount of money into nature conservation.~~

The Intergovernmental Forest Forum was the fourth and the last of its sort. Its final recommendations will be submitted to the April session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development for action.

The forum discussed institutional and legal steps towards protection for all forest types. It also examined the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation; forest conservation and protected areas; the needs and requirements of countries with low forest cover; forest assessment, forest bio-diversity and watershed forests; forest fires; soil and water conservation; and trade, transfer of technologies and financial resources.

"Deforestation continues in developing countries, mainly driven by the demand for wood products and the need for land for agriculture and other purposes," stated UNEP's state of the environment report, 'Global Environment Outlook 2000'. "Some 65 million hectares of forests were lost between 1990 and 1995, out of a total of 3,500 million hectares. The quality of the remaining forest is threatened by a range of pressures, including acidification, fuel-wood and water abstraction, and fire."

Mr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP, presented a policy paper at the forum urging participants to consider forests as ecosystems that provide a range of economic, industrial, cultural and social benefits, as well as environmental benefits and services.

"The conservation of forests and the protection of our environment are closely linked with efforts at achieving social equity and economic growth... We must cut the vicious cycle of poverty, drought, energy deficiency and deforestation."

Mr. Toepfer added that the new UNEP forest policy framework would put into practice a practical approach to policy implementation, make its contribution to international efforts to manage ecosystems and improve coordination among international organizations and agreements.

UNEP

A World Without Polio

4mins. 31secs.

{As the world focuses on Africa and Asia in the final push against poliomyelitis, an Indian Journalist paralyzed after receiving oral polio vaccine tells her story but says that the vaccine and mass immunization are most effective against polio }

It was the sixth day of a meek October morning in 1967. I wore my frill frock and white laced shoes and walked with my grandfather to receive the triple polio vaccine. Little did I know, as I sang and gamboled on the way, that it was the last time I would be walking on my two feet.

I returned complaining of pain in my legs and then high fever gripped my tiny body. That night is forever vividly imprinted on my mind. My grandmother had to carry me to the toilet. My left leg collapsed and I couldn't stand as I screamed with acute pain.

In the days that followed, many more children like me began pouring into the hospital in Jaipur, capital of the western Indian State of Rajasthan. It was two weeks before the outbreak was diagnosed as poliomyelitis. My third birthday was only a month away and I had been crippled for life! It was 1967. The mass epidemics of polio that had gripped mostly the industrialized countries for about two decades from the 1940s to the 1960s - crippling thousands of children each year - were being brought under control with the introduction of effective vaccines.

Dr. Jonas Salk of the USA discovered the Inactivated Polio Vaccine, IPV, in 1955. It is a 'killer' polio virus that had to be injected. Salk's rival, Dr. Albert Sabin, introduced the Oral Polio Vaccine, OPV, in 1961. The OPV is composed of live polio virus that has been made inactive.

In India, the OPV was imported from Russia. But the cold storage facilities needed to maintain the potency of the OPV were poor in India. And unlike today, there were no Vaccine Vial Monitors (VVM) to help monitor whether vaccine deliveries had been exposed to heat.

Some claimed that the vaccine that was administered to me, and my fellow sufferers in Rajasthan had already expired. Others said it had been left exposed to the sun at the airport. This argument was later dismissed on the grounds that the vaccine loses its potency when exposed to heat, so it does neither harm nor good.

Awareness about polio in the 1960s in India was so low that no action was taken and the incident - so life shattering for children like me - faded into oblivion. The Indian health authorities classified it as a polio epidemic that had affected the children involved *before* the vaccine was administered.

One in three million doses of OPV can result in vaccine associated paralysis. But, however tragic for the individuals, the risks of contracting polio from vaccination is far outweighed by the benefits of preventing thousands of new polio cases every year. The World Health Organization has opted for OPV for its ambitious Global Polio Eradication Initiative as it interrupts transmission much more effectively than IPV. More than one billion doses of OPV are administered each year worldwide.

As I write this now, 31 years later, there is no cure for polio. But there is prevention against poliomyelitis and a worldwide campaign to eradicate the disease by the end of this year.

Today, polio, also known as infantile paralysis has been eradicated from large parts of the world. The only remaining reservoirs of virus transmission are in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Neena Bhandari/ Moving Pictures Catalogue.

Tradition Helps Stem Desertification

4mins. 22secs.

A survey has been done to document traditional methods of natural resource management used by farmers and pastoralists living in the desert margins of sub-Saharan Africa. The survey was meant to enhance food security and reduce poverty by promoting innovative dry-land management research.

Conducted by the Desert Margins Program of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) the survey documented extant traditional wisdom that enhance conservation, but also found that the wisdom of desert communities is fast disappearing.

“The rules and systems that once helped the resilient people of the desert margins to live in harmony with nature in a fragile ecosystem are increasingly being violated, not deliberately, but because of lack of alternatives,” the survey concluded. The Desert Margins Program was launched to preserve this wisdom.

Desert communities in Kenya and Burkina Faso were among those surveyed and documented.

The Turkana community in northwestern Kenya severely punishes anyone who cuts a tree from Moru Anayeche, the sacred forest that is believed to be their place of origin. The community also protects forests associated with the spirits of the dead and has age-old rules that help to preserve plants and trees found near river banks and houses. Elders own the forests, but forest preservation is the responsibility of the entire community.

Similarly, in Burkina Faso, some desert communities plant trees such as *Acacia albida* on their farms because they observed that the presence of such trees helped to increase crop yields. They also encourage the plowing of crop residues. The communities do not allow certain plant species - such as *Panicum lactum* (wild fonio) and *Cenchrus bilflorus* (known locally as cram-cram) to be used for firewood, because their grains are eaten during the dry, “hungry season” when there are no more household stocks of millet and sorghum.

Until recently, the Sahelian pastoralist and livestock followed the rains north during the rainy season and retreated to greener pastures in the south during the dry season. Crops were planted, but fields were allowed to lie fallow to regenerate the soil. But now with the growing populations there are no longer any vast range-lands, nor is there enough farmland to leave in fallow.

The desert communities have therefore been forced to abandon their nomadic lifestyle for a sedentary one, and have had to resort to over-cultivation, overgrazing, and deforestation in order to survive in these stark regions.

“The delicate balance of life in the desert margins is snapping everywhere, bringing in its wake desertification and the specter of famine, the loss and degradation of human life and the environment,” the survey stated.

These problems were exacerbated when a long drought gripped the African continent from 1968 to 1973. Cultivated lands turned into deserts and thousands of people and cattle died of starvation. Leading scientists and policy-makers firmly believed - and continue to believe - that if natural resources are sustainably managed, land degradation can be halted and the devastating effect of drought can be mitigated.

The search for a way to do this led to the creation of the Desert Margins Programme with the endorsement of a consortium of organizations. These include the World Bank, the Eco-Regional Fund, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

The program is now active in nine African countries namely: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

CGIAR News.

Once We Logged, Now We Conserve the Forest

3mins. 58secs.

The route from the Redding airport to Hayfork a small town of 2,000 people, nestled in the Trinity National Forest in California’s northwest corner, winds around a greeny mountain pass. This is the road that Lynn Jungwirth travels often, and in a sense it symbolizes her unique role. She has forged a highway that brings her remote community’s story to the outside world and the outside world to her community.

Federally owned forests cover over 75 percent of land in Trinity County {the equivalent of a local government area}, and its villages are considered the most timber-dependent in California. In the debate over the future of America's national forests, Jungwirth has emerged as a powerful voice for rural communities that have long relied on this resource and are now seeking a role in how the forests are managed.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, conflicts over use of U.S. national forests intensified as environmentalists pressed for more curbs on logging, and those who thought that their jobs were on the line fought back. More than 10 million people live in towns where forest-related jobs are major sources of income.

While the issue is often defined as jobs versus the environment, Jungwirth, 51, who comes from a family of loggers and sawmillers believes there is a way to take better care of forests that also brings economic benefits to local towns. A growing number of activists around the U.S.A. have been testing ways to train displaced loggers and sawmill workers for new jobs that restore and conserve the trees, streams and river banks that sustain a healthy forest ecosystem.

This work is part of a broader movement, called community-based forestry, that is involving local communities in better forest management. For timber villages like Hayfork that is struggling to survive, it represents a beacon of hope.

In 1993, Jungwirth started the Watershed Research and Training Centre to try to make this new approach to forest management work for her town. In 1996, as a result of her work in Hayfork, she was invited to join the planning board of the Seventh American Forest Congress, partly supported by the Ford Foundation.

"They were talking about a committee on research, one on policy, another on education," Jungwirth recalls. "I said, 'What about a communities committee?' Because it doesn't matter what your policy is or your research is or you education programme is if you don't have the social support to carry it out."

Today, the Communities Committee, which she chairs, is a national network of nearly 300 organizations and the main engine of the community forestry movement in the U.S.A.

Forest officials from as far away as India, Mozambique and China have come to Hayfork to learn about the centre's work and share ideas. Some of the centre's innovative programmes are being tried in other villages and towns.

Jungwirth recognizes that community-based resource management must be combined with other activities so towns like Hayfork can create a more diversified economic base crucial for their survival. On most days she is cautiously optimistic. But she sees a long road ahead.

Ford Foundation Report.

Children's Section

A Central African Story About the First Zebra

4mins. 49secs.

In the beginning when all was new on the Earth the animals were all similar, none having special horns or colourful coats. But in a great cave close to the shores of the great lake were a multitude of horns of various sizes and shapes and coats of many types and colours.

All the animals living in the grassy plains were soon called together and asked to go to the cave the next morning and select the horns and coats they thought would best suit them. This caused a great flurry of excitement and anticipation, and all the animals were so eager to see what choices of coats and horns were available to them.

All, that is, except for Zebra, whose only concern in life was food, in fact it was well known among the other animals that Zebra was a glutton. When all other animals moved off toward the lake at first light, Zebra did not join them. If he was going to take such a long walk he was going to have a good breakfast of luscious grass and he could not see why all the other animals were so carried away with the idea of horns and coats. Although the other animals urged him to hurry along to the cave, Zebra muttered that he would follow on in due course, when he had finished his breakfast. This was done through a mouthful of grass, so the other animals left the ill-mannered Zebra in disgust.

Several hours later Zebra decided he had had his fill, and slowly sauntered off towards the lake, following a broad trail left by the other animals. As Zebra neared the lake, some of the animals were returning to the plains and Zebra was amazed by their change in appearance. Elephant had chosen a rather drab gray coat, but set this off with a magnificent pair of ivory tusks. Lion had chosen a sleek dusty coat with a regal mane of long black hair. Sable had a glossy black coat and vicious sweeping curved horns.

One by one Zebra passed all the animals in their brand-new finery. Finally, just as he was about to enter the cave, Zebra passed Rhinoceros. Unfortunately Rhino is very near sighted; he had chosen a coat several sizes too large and it looked rather baggy on him. Also he had chosen two horns that were not the same size and stuck them on his nose. All in all, Rhino looked rather odd but he seemed very pleased with himself.

When Zebra went into the cave the only coat left was a boldly striped black-and-white one and he could find no horns at all. After such a long walk Zebra was feeling quite hungry again so he quickly tried on the remaining coat. This strange black-and-white coat did fit very well and as his belly was rumbling he did not care that it looked different; nor did he mind that no horns were left over for him. Meanwhile back on the plains, all the other animals were admiring each other in their brand new finery. When Zebra got back to the plains he ignored all the others and just put his head down chomping away at his lunch. The other animals noticed the startling black-and-white coat and so they greeted Zebra with jeers and laughter.

“Look at the greedy Zebra in his funny new coat and without any horns!” cried Duiker scornfully. Soon all the other animals had taken up the chorus.

Zebra did not care. What did horns matter when all that really counted was plenty of tender green grass to eat whenever he wanted? To this day Zebra has not needed any horns, but he is always fat and glossy in his peculiar black-and-white coat.

When Hippo Was Hairy

Do Chameleons Give Birth by Committing Suicide?

2mins. 11secs.

There is a myth in East Africa that to give birth, a chameleon climbs a tree, then falls out and bursts open to give birth. Although this is not true, the myth is very common. Why was the myth started in the first place? Could it be the result of an accident? Maybe somebody once saw a female chameleon fall out of a tree, burst open and release her babies.

How do chameleons give birth? Some species of chameleon give birth to live young in trees. Other species lay eggs in the ground where the heat and damp of the rainy season helps them to hatch.

Many people are afraid of chameleons and kill them. This could be because chameleons do strange things. They can change colour whenever they want to; they can move both eyes in different directions at the same time and they walk with an odd, slow, rocking movement. All these things frighten people. But they help to protect chameleons from predators; and help them to catch their insect food, too.

Chameleons can produce a kaleidoscope of colours. They can change from brown to green, grey, pink, orange or black. They can make these colours lighter or darker and may add stripes and spots for extra camouflage when their background changes. And because they do all these things, some people think that they are poisonous.

But they are not.

Chameleons do not harm people. Contrary to what most people think, you will not die or change colour if bitten by a chameleon. The animal actually helps us by eating grasshoppers and other insects that our garden plants and crops. These are very good reasons why we should let them live.

Chongololo

Why Do Cockroaches Exist since They Don't Help in Any Way?

58secs.

This is a very good question and the answer has got to be that everything has a part to play in nature. Both cockroaches and flies are part of nature's waste disposal system. In the wild they eat dead animal matter. Flies also drink nectar from flowers and fertilize them by passing pollen from one to another.

Many insects have found a new habitat, living with people. Flies and cockroaches like to feed on human waste and rubbish. Unfortunately, they sometimes carry germs from rubbish onto our food. These germs can make us sick, so we should remember to cover our food and keep our homes and surroundings clean. If we do this, flies and cockroaches will not trouble us much.

Chongololo

Development Quotation

30secs.

“Southern Africa has more resources, minerals and energy potential than South East Asia. Where the latter has an advantage is in human resources. With South Africa now on the scene, we are now beginning to tackle our weakness in human resources. I am convinced that by the middle of the 21st century, we could be talking about Southern African lions up there alongside the Asian tigers.”

Christon Tembo, Vice President of Zambia/ the Courier.

Porcupine's Children

5mins. 43secs.

Porcupine was very fond of his little family of spiky baby porcupines and when he returned home one evening to find them gone, he was in despair. Anxiously, he cast about for signs to tell him what had happened. The foot prints which he found belonged to Goya, the wild cat. “That thief!” Porcupine was furious. “I will catch him!” and he tracked the spoor to the base of a tall tree. Sure enough, he could hear his babies squeaking and crying high up on the branches.

Just then, a little old man came along the track. He saw Porcupine's distress and asked what was the matter. “My children have been stolen by Wild Cat and hidden up in this tree,” explained Porcupine sadly.

“Don't you worry,” said the old man. “I will get them back for you.” He then set about chopping down the tree until it crashed to the ground. Porcupine hurried to rescue his children, while Wild Cat, who jumped out of the tree as it fell, ran away into the bush, pursued by the little old man.

Bounding through the long grass, Wild Cat bumped headlong into Hare and the two of them went sprawling into a thicket of reeds. The old man did not see their collision and ran on, thinking he was still chasing Wild Cat.

“My, my, you are in a hurry,” gasped Hare, as he picked himself up from underneath Wild Cat. “What's the trouble?”

“That old man was chasing me because I stole Porcupines children,” Wild Cat explained.

“Never mind, Wild Cat,” said Hare. “Because you are my friend, I will help you.”

The following morning Hare sought out Porcupine and started conversation with him. “Greetings, Nhungu I hear that your children were stolen yesterday. What you need is a really safe place to put them. It so happens that I have a secret hole which nobody else knows about and I will hide your children there if you like.”

“Thank you very much, Hare,” Porcupine was most grateful for this offer and felt much happier as he helped carry his little family to the hole and deposit them safely inside. But, as he walked away in one direction and

Hare in the other, he heard Hare calling, "Quickly, Wild Cat, come quickly!" Poor Porcupine. Realizing that he had been tricked, he ran back to the hole, as fast as his short legs could carry him and reaching it just before Wild Cat, flung himself across the entrance. Eventually, Wild Cat realized that he had been thwarted again and left Porcupine in peace.

Furious with Hare and thirsting for revenge, Porcupine approached Khala the lion. He explained what had happened and asked for Lion's help to teach Hare a lesson he would never forget. Lion was pleased at a chance to get his own back for several grudges he had against Hare and promised his help willingly.

When he came face to face with Hare, he growled in his most threatening manner. "What did I hear about you and Porcupine's children?"

Although Lion's manner was terrifying, Hare did not panic. He backed slowly away step by step, explaining ingratiatingly, "You must have been told a lie - I was protecting Porcupines children by hiding them in a very secret hole of mine. Come, let me show you the place, Lion." Then he turned around and shot off into the bush. With a roar, Lion was after him and Hare had to dive down his secret hole, to save his own skin.

As it happened, there was a thunderstorm brewing and Lion did not fancy getting wet. He plucked out his whiskers and stuck them in the ground around the top of the hole, then sought shelter from the coming rain in the thick bush. Hare saw the whiskers and thought Lion was waiting for him, so he sat there until the rain began to fall and little rivulets of water came running down into the hole, washing the whiskers down with them. When Hare first saw the whiskers floating towards him, he screamed and shouted for help, thinking that Lion was coming down to get him. One of the whiskers brushed his paw and he picked it up to look at it closely. Then he laughed.

"These are old Grandad's whiskers - nothing to be afraid of!" So, Hare dropped the whisker in a puddle, climbed out of the hole, and ran off home.

Shangani Folktales

The Girl Who Made Her Dream Come True

3mins. 45secs

{This is the true-life story of little Sarah Kellet triumphed over a devastating personal tragedy and still achieved a childhood ambition. }

In May 1985, Sarah Doherty Kellet climbed McKinley Mountain in Alaska, U.S.A. But this is not a run-of-the-mill story of a determined person managing to scale a daunting mountain peak.

As a child Sarah wanted to become an athlete. She trained hard in swimming and cycling, and also loved the beauty of mountains. Then in 1973, at age 13, tragedy struck - she was involved in an automobile accident that almost killed her. Contrary to the predictions of the doctors that initially examined her, Sarah lived and worked hard to regain her health. Sarah began taking part in sports again and within one year she was doing well enough to participate in competitive sports, winning numerous sports competitions for the handicapped. Meanwhile, her love for the mountains never dwindled.

Sensible and cautious, she started with easier mountains, while she developed her mountaineering skills. As her skills and experience grew so did her goals - she had eyes on Mt. McKinley, the highest peak in North America, towering to a height of 6,194 meters and with weather halfway up as cold as the North Pole.

Her chance to climb Mt. McKinley came in 1985 when she was invited to join a four-person equipment testing expedition. She had been invited due to her determination and courage. Of course, Sarah had special equipment made for her condition but imagine going down a snowy slope on crutches or swinging out away from and plunging down on one foot! Now that takes courage.

On April 29th, 1985 the uplifting experience began. For Sarah her test came when she had to climb up a steep ice wall of about 4,900 meters. Although not long for able-bodied people, it was too steep for someone on crutches. Still carrying her backpack, Sarah climbed on with the rest of the team. The team established a high camp at 5,243 meters and had to stay there for three days when a severe storm broke.

On May 19th, the sky cleared slightly and the team could continue. They stayed on schedule with Sarah doing everything that the rest of the team did. The more than 12 hours later, in the Alaskan twilight after a long grueling climb, the team reached the summit. Sarah had attained her goal and also made her mark in mountaineering history!

Just like Sarah, adolescent life may not always run smoothly. We could decide to just go on feeling sorry for ourselves and then taking the easy way out, enjoying the short-term benefits, or take a pause and plan positively for the future.

It might seem that the odds aren't in your favour as a young person trying to make something work for yourself, but more often than not, the truth is that we constantly face great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations.

AHI/Growing Up.