



Location: Tanzania

Partner: Ashoka: Innovators for the Public

Issue Areas: Armed Conflict, HIV/AIDS and Other Diseases

Points of Interest: Direct Communication with Project Leaders, Ability to Adopt a Rat

The Organization

APOPO was initiated in response to the global landmine problem. APOPO's overall objective is to develop an efficient method for the detection of landmines and UXO (unexploded ordnance) in order to facilitate the repatriation of refugees, distribution of emergency aid, general development, and a mine free environment in effected countries.

As a spin-off application, APOPO started to train Hero RATS to detect pulmonary Tuberculosis. TB kills more youth and adults than any other single infectious disease in the world today. Yearly, up to 2 million people die worldwide from TB.

Why the Need?

The last half century has seen numerous wars break out in Africa, Asia, Europe, Central and South America, and the Middle East. These wars resulted in planting millions of landmines, and long after the end of the conflict, this deadly legacy continues to claim thousands of lives. According to the Landmine Monitor, there are unexploded ordnance in over 70 countries and seven non-state areas which have caused over 5,000 casualties in 2008.

Every day about 15 people are killed or maimed by a landmine and total mine affected land is about 1158 miles². In Africa, landmines killed, injured and disabled over 950 people in 2007. Thirty-two African countries are affected by landmines.

The demining field relies on very few technologies. Current methods of demining are too expensive, especially for African countries where this problem has the greatest impact, and have not been equal to the task. The most used demining method is manual clearance. Expert deminers use metal detectors to detect and remove landmines. However, the method is too slow because in African soils, which contain high levels of iron, false indications are too common. In optimum circumstances, a human deminer will scan about 50 square meters a day. This process is too slow to be effective. Also, donors are losing interest in funding the costly process of humanitarian demining in favor of issues where more immediate results can be obtained and social impact is easier to measure.

Likewise, medical testing for critical diseases is often too expensive or too challenging for countries and communities to undertake. In the case of Tuberculosis, the WHO (World Health Organization) reports that Africa is the only region not on track to achieve the Stop TB 2015 goal of halving the prevalence (infected but maybe not diagnosed) and deaths from 1990 levels. There is an urgent need for a fast and cheap, first line screening tool to detect suspected TB cases early.

How Team Efforts Translate to Impact

TB Detection: \$1 pays for TB screening for one patient.

Landmine Detection: \$7 will give one APOPO HeroRat training in landmine detection for one month. \$10,000 will pay for the cost of HeroRats to clear a soccer field size patch of land to give back to the community to use for family farms, soccer field for the local children, or allow safe passage for livestock.

The Partner

Ashoka's vision is that of a global society that is able to respond quickly and effectively to social challenges everywhere. The organization's mission is to shape a citizen sector that is entrepreneurial, productive and globally integrated, and to develop the profession of social entrepreneurship around the world. Ashoka identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs - extraordinary individuals with unprecedented ideas for change in their communities - supporting them, their ideas and institutions through all phases of their careers. Rather than leaving societal needs for the government or business sectors to address, social entrepreneurs are creating innovative solutions, delivering extraordinary results, and improving the lives of millions of people. Ashoka has invested in more than 1,700 Fellows (recipients of support) in 60 countries. Those Fellows have transformed the lives of millions of people in thousands of communities worldwide.

NGC's Approach to Sustainable Global Change

NGC and our Global Partners believe that people in communities all over the world are the real experts and know their community and solutions to their own problems. We want to advocate and educate others on behalf of this model of sustainable global change. Additionally, we seek to empower our grassroots Global Projects with the financial resources to create change at the grassroots level. 100% of funds your team raises are sent to APOPO.

By sending your team's funds directly, your project organization has the power to decide the best way to use the money. Since money will be spent in the community, your funds will also support the local economy.

APOPO employs local community members to train and work with rats in the mine fields and test for tuberculosis. Both deactivating mines and diagnosing diseases invests resources back into the local economy.

Additional Resources

Partner Website: <http://www.ashoka.org/>

Project Website: <http://www.apopo.org/>

CIA World Factbook (Tanzania): <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tz.html>

Embassy of Tanzania: <http://www.tanzaniaembassy-us.org/>

Related News: <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/tanzania605/>

See your team binder for more ways to educate your team about your project.