• Clothes Recycling
• Education
• HIV/AIDS Prevention
• Food Security and Agriculture
• Community Development
• Poverty Reduction

Working Together for the
Global Community

ANNUAL REPORT
2010
“Through our actions we seek to promote cooperation and understanding across countries and continents.”

— Planet Aid Mission Statement
Planet Aid is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that collects and recycles used clothing and shoes and supports international development projects. It is registered with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as a private voluntary organization (PVO).

Planet Aid began recycling in 1997 in the Boston area. Today our clothes collection boxes can be found across many major metropolitan areas of the United States. Planet Aid sells the clothing it collects to distributors, who make it available to customers in the United States and worldwide at a low price. The net proceeds are then donated to help people in developing nations meet basic needs. Planet Aid supports community-based development projects that improve health, increase income, aid vulnerable children, train teachers, and enhance the overall quality of life of people across the globe.
In 2010, Planet Aid collected 95 million pounds of used clothing and shoes. This achievement is a testament to both the generosity of the thousands of businesses and community organizations that hosted one or more of the 13,000 collection bins we have distributed across the United States, as well as the many individuals who stopped by one of those bins to donate their items. We were able to provide $12 million in support of development programs in lesser-developed nations. I want to thank everyone for helping; we could not have done it without you.

Across the globe, individuals are facing increasingly difficult challenges. In the latter half of 2010, the World Bank reported that approximately 44 million people were pushed into extreme poverty in middle- and low-income countries. This was a direct result of the spike in world food prices, particularly in wheat and corn markets.

The reasons for the spike are complex and range from the diversion of food production to biofuels to the dry conditions caused by global warming. Regardless of the underlying reason, the trend in food prices has deepened the problem of hunger and malnutrition, making it the number one risk to health worldwide.

Fortunately, there is reason for hope. In Malawi, for example, smallholder farmers have made substantial progress in increasing the amount of food they produce. Planet Aid is proud to have assisted these farmers in increasing sustainable crop production, diversifying planting schemes, and raising income. As described in detail on page 19 of this report, we supported these farmers through a highly effective program called Farmers’ Clubs.

Another major area of our support went to education. The need for primary school teachers is very great in Africa, especially in rural villages where there may be only one teacher per 70 students. To help remedy the situation, we supported teacher-training colleges in Angola, Malawi, and Mozambique. These institutions are together graduating up to 3,000 new teachers per year.

Our support for education also extended to vocational training for youths entering the job market and to a program in India that helps young children who have dropped out of school to support their families. I invite you to read more about these and the other programs we support on the pages of this report.

I want to thank everyone again for their contributions. Because of it we can save precious resources while creating momentum toward lasting positive change in areas of the world where it is most needed.

—Ester Neltrup
Planet Aid is committed to helping poor and disadvantaged citizens improve their lives and make future generations better off. We support communities in some of the poorest regions of the world through projects addressing health, education, food production, and income generation.

Planet Aid is committed to peace and to humanity’s well-being. We care deeply about the Earth that we share with millions of other species. Reusing discarded items from the rich part of the world as a vehicle to increase income and improve lives in other parts is good for the Earth and thus benefits us all. Through our actions we seek to promote cooperation and understanding across countries and continents. Our objectives are:

**Emergency and Disaster Relief**
- Serving victims of hunger, war, natural disasters, atomic accidents, plague and other disease outbreaks, and other catastrophes.
- Assisting with victim relocation and rebuilding areas hit by natural and man-made disasters and accidents.

**Development**
- Serving poorer nations, the poorest of the world’s populations, and supporting relevant and empowering development initiatives.
- Undertaking a broad range of development projects worldwide, including but not limited to: building schools, establishing clinics, providing microfinancing to small enterprises, supporting farming, and nurturing small-scale industry.

**Protection of Natural Habitat**
- Protecting threatened elements of the Earth’s atmosphere, soil, plants, and animals.
- Initiating actions to preserve rivers, seas, and forests.
- Undertaking other projects aimed at protecting the natural habitat of the Earth.

**Building the Organization**
- Serving the general public and making it possible for people to participate in activities of the organization.
- Establishing educational facilities for training personnel and volunteers.
- Forming members’ associations, initiating support groups, and establishing a worldwide cooperative network of participants and activists.

**Research and Innovation**
- Developing methods and systems for the implementation of organization’s objectives and activities.
- Producing and distributing informative materials to the public containing basic knowledge as well as specific information about the organization’s activities.
- Producing educational, informative materials for use by schools related to the organization’s activities.
The average American purchases approximately 70 pounds of clothing per year. Over time, nearly 85 percent of this clothing and other textiles will get disposed of in the trash (on aggregate about 9 million tons per year). But the U.S. EPA tell us that 99 percent of the clothing we throw away is recyclable, which means that a tremendous quantity of T-shirts, shoes, and slacks are being needlessly sent to rot in our landfills.

To think of all that usable clothing literally going to waste is almost tragic, especially since there are so many people in need. Even worse, it takes so many resources — so much water, so much fossil fuel, so much land — to produce the garments we wear. To send them to an early grave is indeed a senseless waste. To better understand the full extent of the loss, consider these facts:

**Polyester and Nylon**

These synthetic fibers are not grown but made directly from petroleum, a non-renewable resource. Polyester is the most commonly used synthetic fiber in clothing, and is created in an energy-intensive process that produces large volumes of greenhouse gases. The process also emits hazardous volatile compounds, particulants, and acid gases such as hydrochloride. The fibers are formed at high temperatures and demand large quantities of cooling water.

Nylon is no better than polyester. Its manufacture produces nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas 310 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Neither polyester nor nylon biodegrade.

**Rayon (viscose)**

This synthetic fiber is made from wood pulp, generally grown on large plantations. Often the tree used is eucalyptus, which draws up phenomenal amounts of water, causing aquifer recharge problems in sensitive regions. The pulp is treated with hazardous chemicals such as caustic soda and sulphuric acid, which produces a waste stream.

**Cotton**

Less than 3 percent of agricultural land in the U.S. is planted with cotton, yet 20 percent of all pesticides and 22 percent of all insecticides are used on these fields. Among the more hazardous insecticides used on cotton fields is the neurotoxin aldicarb — one drop of this poison absorbed through the skin can kill a human. Genetically modified cotton has lowered pesticide use, but has introduced environmental risks at a new level.

Cotton grows in hot climates and is irrigated heavily. According to the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association, more than 250 gallons of water are needed to grow the fiber needed to make just one T-shirt, while a pair of jeans requires almost 1,000 gallons.

Additional chemicals are used to soften cotton fibers, strip them of their waxy texture, and bleach them white (the bleaching involves dioxin producing chlorine compounds). Additional chemicals are used to dye the cotton and fix the dyes. Dye fixatives often require use of toxic heavy metals.

Growing cotton also has occupational exposures. Cotton pickers in developing countries suffer from respiratory illnesses and skin irritations and disease. Women suffer disproportionately, as cotton picking is often a seasonal job taken for 2-3 months of the year to supplement family income.

Organic cotton offers a viable alternative to conventional cotton, as are fibers made from hemp and bamboo, which grow very fast and can be cultivated on marginal land. However, producing organic cotton or these alternative fibers remains considerably more expensive and out of reach of most consumers.
It is unlikely that the system of production that creates our clothing and shoes will significantly change anytime soon. We thus must minimize the impacts of this system now by making maximum use of the garments we use. Don't dispose! Donate your used clothing today.

Researchers at the Technical University of Denmark determined that a consumer's purchase of 100 second-hand garments saves between 60 and 85 new garments being produced from virgin material. The corresponding environmental savings for each pound of used clothing is as follows:

- 3.6 lbs. of CO₂ emissions saved
- 700 gallons of water saved
- 0.3 lbs. of fertilizer saved
- 0.2 lbs. of pesticides saved
Thanks to grant support and the generosity of people who donate to our recycling program, we provided nearly $12 million in direct and in-kind support to 45 international development projects in 2010. These projects established and operated schools for street children and orphans, provided teacher and vocational training, and helped prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and provided care for those already infected. Other projects we supported assisted small-scale farmers to increase crop yields and income, enhanced environmental protection, helped fight malaria, and provided nutritious meals for vulnerable children and adults in impoverished communities.

Planet Aid is registered with USAID as a private voluntary organization (PVO). It is also a member of the Federation Humana People to People. Headquartered in Zimbabwe, the Federation comprises 32 national associations, effectively uniting more than 330 projects in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. More than 12 million people in 43 countries are involved in or impacted by these projects on a yearly basis. For more than 30 years, the Federation has been helping empower individuals and families to improve their living conditions and livelihoods, providing them with the needed resources and know-how while encouraging cooperation. Working together with people in some of the poorest areas of the world, the Federation is developing the capacity of communities to build a brighter future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>US $</th>
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<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
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<td>Teacher Training</td>
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<td>TCE - HIV/AIDS education and prevention</td>
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<td>Academy for Working Children</td>
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<td>ADPP Polytechnic College, Maputo</td>
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Community development: 33%
Education: 18%
Food security and agriculture: 18%
Health: 22%
Capacity building and development: 7%
In-kind and other programs: 2%

Distribution of Support by Sector
Alberto in his classroom at the Boane Primary School in Mozambique
“One of the greatest challenges teachers face is raising literacy levels,” said Alberto, who teaches grades 6 and 7 in the village of Boane in Mozambique. “Most students entering grade 5 do not know how to read,” he indicated.

Alberto’s chief responsibility is to teach mathematics and physical education at his school, but his dedication inspired him to do more. In the past year he organized an after-school program to help students who could not read or were having difficulties reading; the group has been meeting twice a week.

In 2010, Planet Aid, helped support primary school teacher-training in Mozambique, by donating to colleges such as the one Alberto attended in Maputo. We also supported similar colleges in Angola and Malawi (partial funding for the Mozambique and Malawi colleges came from the U.S. Department of Agriculture). In cooperation with each country’s ministry of education, the graduates of these colleges teach in elementary schools in rural areas where there are critical teacher shortages. In some areas the ratio of students to teachers had surpassed 70 to 1.

The 26 colleges Planet Aid supports are producing approximately 3,000 new primary school teachers per year. The training programs emphasize innovation and self-reliance, recognizing that teachers in Africa frequently work in schools with scarce materials and limited facilities. Teachers must be prepared to create exciting learning environments with the barest of means. They must contribute to making a difference in the lives of children, helping to improve academic achievements and increase attendance and pass rates. But that’s not all. In addition, teachers must understand their larger responsibility to the community in which students live. Graduates of the colleges Planet Aid supports understand this responsibility. They learn through first-hand experience that their role must go beyond the confines of the classroom. They understand how to assess a community’s needs and are taught how to initiate projects that will make a difference.

In Alberto’s case, he knew that literacy was an issue throughout Boane. He thus organized a weekend adult literacy program. The lessons quickly became very popular and his class soon filled. “Being a teacher is not easy,” Alberto concluded, “but seeing the results of how you can be helpful is a big motivation.”
Vocational schools supported by Planet Aid in Africa serve youth who drop out of school, orphans, and the underprivileged who do not enroll in government and private training schools due to limited space and unaffordable school fees. Internships often lead to employment and provide practical training in technical and entrepreneurship skills. The schools enable youth to become economically productive, either in formal employment or self-employment.

Under guidance of skilled instructors, students transform their classroom knowledge into practice in workshops using the tools of the respective trade. The schools also work closely with local employers to match the skills needed for available jobs with the training provided to students. The concluding internship period places students at worksites, allowing them to learn to apply their skills in real world settings. This training gives them exposure to actual working environments and their related pressures, helping them gain the maturity to cope with the expectations of their future employers.

Sample courses offered at the vocational school are as follows:

Tropical Agriculture. Focuses on developing modern agricultural skills, including sustainable and organic farming methods, water management techniques, drought resistant crop cultivation, and basic business skills.

Carpentry and Joinery. Focuses on developing woodworking skills for the construction industry. The program runs for a year followed by a nine-month practicum at a commercial enterprise.

Building and Construction. Focuses on developing basic construction skills. This program covers technical drawing, building calculations, building science, and workshop techniques.


Community Development. Focuses on developing knowledge, skills, and leadership capacity for community development work with a special focus on rural communities.
Vocational students learn to construct a hand-driven “rope pump” to provide reliable and affordable irrigation water.
The programs Planet Aid supports span a broad spectrum of development activities in 16 countries on 3 continents. The projects focus on improving the quality of education available to disadvantaged students, training smallholder farmers to increase food production, mobilizing communities to prevent the spread of HIV, organizing villages to secure clean water and improve sanitation, and much more. Our support helps produce immediate positive impacts while creating the energy and momentum needed to bring about lasting long-term development.
Krishna is 13 years old and in fifth grade. She was born in a village in Bihar, India, where her family had struggled to survive as smallholder farmers. In 2008, her parents packed up their belongings and took the children to Neemrana in Rajasthan, where they hoped to secure a better future.

Krisha has no regrets about leaving her village, which she described as primitive and where life was “very hard.” However the chance for more opportunity was not without its costs.

“Neemrana is a very expensive town,” explained Krishna. “It has many public schools but the fee is very high.” Krishna’s parents could not afford to send her and her two brothers to school. However, in 2009 the family found out about a school that helps needy children called the Academy for Working Children (AWC) in Neemrana, and enrolled Krishna and her brothers there.

“We are very happy in AWC Neemrana,” said Krishna. “AWC gave us books and also provided computer education and health check-ups. I learned many more things in this school.” Krishna was inspired by her teachers and found hope for the future. When asked what she would someday like to be, she responded, “I want to be a doctor.”
Despite India’s economic growth, at least 35 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are not in school. Rather than being educated at a formative time of their intellectual development, they work as rag pickers, servants at restaurants, or as laborers in the informal sector. Many arrive in the slums with their families, who come in search of the promise of India’s rising economic tide.

The Academies for Working Children supported by Planet Aid provide youth from disadvantaged families in India with the opportunity to attend school. This 2-3 year program inspires and supports students in completing their elementary school education through grade 8, either through classes offered at an academy or by entering the regular school system. Teachers help children develop basic academic skills and work with families and the local school system to help reintegrate students into a mainstream school.

Currently there are six AWCs operating in Jaipur, Neemrana, Gurgaon, and Ghaziabad. Each academy has an enrollment of approximately 300 students. The academies operate from a main center and five satellite centers. The latter are located in the heart of the slums where the children live, making it easier for students to begin attending classes.

One of the two centers in Gurgaon is sponsored by Dell Global Giving. This center, which opened in April 2009, is supplied with computer terminals and has a curriculum that includes internet technology education.
Joao Bernas grows food for his family on a small farm in the Gorongosa region of central Mozambique. Before participating in the Farmers’ Clubs program, Joao raised corn like everyone else did in his valley, producing barely enough to survive. With the subsequent training in conservation farming that he received in Farmers’ Clubs, Joao learned how to farm more effectively, enhancing soil fertility and making better use of water resources. He also expanded the types of crops he planted to include vegetables and legumes. The result was a near doubling of his overall production.

Joao’s experience with Farmers’ Clubs is not unique. In Mozambique alone, the Farmers’ Clubs program has succeeded in increasing the area of land under cultivation among participating farmers and tripling household income. Similar results have been achieved in other countries. For example, in Guinea Bissau club members cultivated 170 tons of cashew nuts and significant amounts of groundnuts and beans. They started nurseries with mango, lemon, orange, and palm trees. Using the proceeds from the sale of their crops, 120 families acquired sufficient means to construct new houses. In Malawi, participants helped increase average production by 250 percent and income by more than 100 percent, while also reducing crop loss by 26 percent.

The Farmers’ Club development model was created by the Federation Humana People to People. The approach involves creating a network of clubs with approximately 50 farmers in each club. Together the farmers build simple irrigation systems and share tools, seeds, and other resources. The farmers learn from each other and from visiting extension workers and others with agricultural expertise. Workshops focus on topics such as crop diversification, bee keeping, or tree propagation. By organizing together, farmers are able to purchase in bulk, negotiate fair prices on products, share transportation costs, and get access to better markets.

In addition to improving their operations, farmers also work together to find solutions to the problems of floods, droughts, disease, and other potential disasters. For example, in China’s Yunnan Province, a disease outbreak threatened pigs on 60 farms. Thanks to farmers’ clubs, participating producers learned to administer injections to save their stock, while also learning how to stop future outbreaks. As a result, the pigs were saved, preventing a crucial loss of income for families.

Farmers’ Clubs
Sector: Food Security and Agriculture

Planet Aid provided support for Farmers’ Clubs in Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Mozambique, China, and Zimbabwe.
A farmer sells produce in a village market in Malawi. Planet Aid received funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food for Progress Program in support of Farmers’ Clubs in Malawi and Mozambique.
This hand-washing station was among those constructed as part of the Child Aid project improvements in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
The Child Aid Program seeks to create safe and supportive living conditions for children and their families across all sectors of a community. It embraces a “people centered” approach that empowers participants to become agents of change. Each project develops local capacity by organizing families to work toward preventing the spread of disease, improving the quality of education, increasing agricultural output, generating income, and caring for orphans.

Village Action Groups (VAGs) comprise the core organizational structure of the program and are a key mobilizing force. Each group is comprised of approximately 35-40 families, and as many as 85 such groups are formed in each regional Child Aid Program.

The VAGs tailor project activities to meet the needs of the communities. For example, the Child Aid project in the Equateur province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo involved 65 villages in 2010 that focused on reducing the rate of hygiene and water-related infections and deaths. The project succeeded in establishing many new potable water supplies and community hand-washing facilities. In Milagro, Ecuador, 800 Child Aid families focused on improving nutrition and established household vegetable gardens. In Toledo, Belize, Child Aid mobilized local youth to engage in community clean-up campaigns and HIV/AIDS awareness. At the same time in these and other countries, Child Aid projects have been building preschools, offering adult literacy and maternal health classes, organizing youth clubs, planting fruit trees, and building playgrounds. Child Aid demonstrates that there is no limit to the good things that can be accomplished when people work together to improve the lives of their children.
The Total Control of the Epidemic (TCE) program brings communities together to increase HIV awareness, decrease stigma and discrimination, and provide support for children and adults affected by the disease. The program was developed by the Federation Humana People to People and has been implemented in 11 countries. TCE is premised on the idea that when people understand the basics of how the disease spreads, know how to avoid infection, and learn their own HIV status, then they can make informed choices and change behavior.

TCE intervention is led by field officers who go door-to-door to help individuals understand the disease, develop prevention plans, and obtain testing. Their work has had a significant impact on increasing the number of pregnant women attending prevention of mother to child transmission services, the number of orphans and vulnerable children referred to existing social services, and the number of individuals being tested and receiving improved care.

Field officers work primarily in rural communities, closely cooperating with local health clinics and social service providers, and involving schools and youth clubs in awareness campaigns. Assisting the field officers are volunteers called “passionates.” As the name implies, passionates work diligently to make the program a success, setting up “Orphan Care Committees” and organizing “Positive Living Clubs” that support persons who are HIV positive.

Stories from the field demonstrate the power of the program. For example, Sara is 53 years old and lives in the Ndlavela Barrio in Matola City, Mozambique. In 2010, Sara learned that she was HIV positive. “A TCE field officer was passing by my house,” she said. “We spoke about HIV. After our talk, I went to the hospital to make the test.”

Testing positive was a shock for Sara; however, she found the strength to take charge of her situation, receiving assistance from one of the groups organized by the TCE program. “I am in the Positive Living Club, where I get much moral support from the other people,” she said. “I feel like a different person, compared with the time before I joined. I had been feeling discriminated and stigmatized, now I am happy.”

Sara knows that to be HIV positive does not mean that she need be afraid or think that she is going to die. She advises others in her work as a volunteer with the TCE program to get tested and move on with life. “You can live long with the virus, as long as you take care of your health,” she said.
A TCE field officer working in a village in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Conducting a blood test at a HOPE center.
HOPE is an HIV/AIDS program that offers voluntary counseling and testing services and post-test services, conducts campaigns on early treatment of opportunistic infections, and provides support for those who have been affected by the disease. Through the many examples it offers, HOPE builds awareness that people with HIV can live with dignity, prolonging their lives and being productive with the support of their communities.

HOPE works closely with trained secondary caregivers to assist patients with palliative care. Volunteers help establish vegetable and herbal gardens to improve nutrition and immune function. Orphans receive support in the form of health education, and their guardians receive counseling and training in developing life skills. Through its outreach program, HOPE promotes prevention measures at schools, youth clubs, and throughout the community.

Through HOPE, an orphan is assisted in enrolling in school, an infected mother learns to take her ARV drugs regularly, a teenager learns about HIV in a youth club and teaches her schoolmates about the dangers of unprotected sex, and a grandmother receives food and blankets to care for her orphaned grandchildren.

Project activities are based around community HOPE centers. The center is a meeting place for HOPE activists and for support groups such as Positive Living Clubs and Orphan Care Committees.
In the United States, Planet Aid offers schools that place collection boxes on their property the opportunity to learn more about recycling. Each school is offered lessons and materials in recycling and protecting the environment as well as an invitation to visit one of our recycling centers. The pupils learn about the countries and projects supported by Planet Aid, and many participate in exchanges and conduct campaigns to help children like themselves in faraway places.
In 2010, Planet Aid moved its Baltimore-Washington Operations Center from Columbia, Maryland to a new facility in nearby Elkridge. The 52,500 square foot building will help accommodate the continued expansion of our local recycling efforts. In addition to the recycling operation, Planet Aid also consolidated its headquarters functions to the Elkridge facility.
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
December 2010

ASSETS

Cash and current assets $4,900,930
Property and equipment and other assets, net $5,266,615
Total assets $10,167,545

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities $4,711,599
Capital leases, net of current portion $1,006,411
Total liabilities $5,718,010
Unrestricted net assets $4,449,535
Total liabilities and net assets $10,167,545

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
December 2010

OPERATING REVENUE

Sales of donated clothing and other goods $27,458,861
Contracts - Federal $8,023,138
Other revenue $908,266
Total operating revenue $36,390,265

OPERATING EXPENSES

Program services $28,047,106
General and administrative $3,343,042
Fundraising and development $4,536,121
Total operating expenses $35,926,269

Foreign currency gains $93,010
Changes in unrestricted net assets $557,006

STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
December 2010

PROGRAM SERVICES

U. S. Clothing Collection and Habitat Protection $15,972,514
International Exchange, Training and Education $45,503
International Aid $12,029,089
Total program services $28,047,106

GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE $3,343,042

FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT $4,536,121

Total expenses $35,926,269

Allocation of Funds

- Program Service
- General and Administrative
- Fundraising and Development
Board of Directors

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Working Together for the Global Community

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