



Are we becoming indifferent?

Submitted by Luis Beteta

When my family and I moved to Illinois, my wife and I intentionally chose Oak Park for our residence due to its fame as a socially responsible community. Since then, I have learned to admire and respect Oak Park's concern and commitment to respond to the threats to our children's future.

In today's America, I believe the biggest threat is the division among us. This lack of common purpose is not only hurting us internally as a nation but is leading us to an even greater threat — the threat of becoming indifferent to the needs of the most impoverished children in this global village, the threat of not assuming the leadership role that we have as a powerful nation.

Two years ago, I had the blessing to visit Kenya with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and see how the U.S. international aid that we, the people, provide is changing lives. I recall to this day, Asha's eyes. Asha is a young mother in Kenya, I remember the gratefulness and happiness she expressed while seeing her daughter Farasi smile. As a father of three children, I can completely identify with her.

Asha had the opportunity to provide a better chance of life to Farasi, thanks to the U.S. financial aid that allows us in Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to help families that are now providing for their children what they need to be healthy and well-fed and ready to learn. Since 1990,



international aid from the United States has saved almost 100 million children and has reduced maternal mortality rates by 44 percent worldwide. But we can't stop there.

We need to make sure that each child has a solid foundation from which to reach the potential God gave him. That is why we need to invest in Child Development Programs (ECD). ECD programs prepare educators with appropriate teaching techniques that stimulate children's minds based on their age, such as singing, reading, playing with colorful objects, etc. We know that these programs work, and they only cost 50 cents per child per year.

As your neighbor in Oak Park, I would like you to write or call our Rep. Danny K. Davis and ask him to join representatives Castro (D-TX) and Fitzpatrick (R-PA) to originally co-sponsor legislation for the government to integrate ECD activities into international programs that focus on children, thereby improving the lives of vulnerable children.

Link: <https://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/10-1-2019/Are-we-becoming-indifferent%3F/>