



## Mercy Corps' Social Venture Fund

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disaster, in hardship, in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action—helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within. Now, and for the future.

**Mercy Corps' Social Venture Fund is a seed and early-stage impact investment fund launched in 2015. We invest capital and provide a platform to accelerate the growth of disruptive startup businesses that have the potential to positively impact millions.**

Mercy Corps sees complex global challenges as an invitation: to pioneer paths out of poverty, to forge novel partnerships, to create solutions that break through entrenched challenges. But the traditional grant-based model of funding international development is limiting. It rarely promotes the flexibility and experimentation required to test new models that could sustainably deliver social benefit to millions of people in the developing world. Social entrepreneurs worldwide are at the forefront of introducing such models, often through for-profit ventures that require investment capital to expand their provision of beneficial goods and services.

The Social Venture Fund, wholly owned by Mercy Corps and capitalized through philanthropic sources, fills a critical gap in the impact investing market for seed and early-stage social venture startups (learn more about [“The Pioneer Gap”](#)). We believe that connecting these startups to the Mercy Corps platform will accelerate their growth and impact.

## Why Mercy Corps?

Mercy Corps' global field offices have deep, on-the-ground insight, with both access to and influence within challenging markets. Moreover, because of our market systems programming approach, we are constantly identifying, supporting and collaborating with innovative private-sector actors. In partnership with field offices, the Social Ventures team explores investment opportunities that align with local programming and address major development challenges.



### We bring Mercy Corps' resources to bear on startups through:

- » **More than 4,500 staff** executing social and economic development programming across 40+ countries.
- » **Technical experts** in a variety of fields, including agriculture, financial services, WASH, and energy.
- » **Strong relationships** with key government actors, private-sector entities and other influencers.
- » **Advisory support** from seasoned entrepreneurs and investors on the Social Ventures team.

## Our Approach and Focus

We invest in for-profit ventures that attempt to solve many of the big challenges that Mercy Corps' programs address:

**Geography:** Kenya, Uganda, Indonesia, Nepal

**Focal areas:** Agriculture, financial services, last-mile distribution, youth and female employment

**Investment:** US \$50,000-\$300,000 (equity, debt, quasi-equity)

**Stage:** Seed and early-stage

**Other criteria:** Close alignment with local field office strategy and priorities, innovation, potential to scale nationally and regionally (impact over 1 million people)

### Prospective portfolio companies need not have significant revenue traction but should:

- » Have a defined product or service, with a differentiated approach that can scale.
- » Have a full-time team in place.
- » Have a pilot or prototype in the market.

## Our Portfolio

As of May 2016, we have closed four investments in Indonesia and Kenya, including the following companies:



### **New Light Africa**

#### ***Nairobi, Kenya***

New Light Africa (NLA) is a direct marketing and distribution company that sells socially beneficial products to the rural poor. NLA's mission is to improve the quality of life for millions of people in Sub-Saharan Africa who primarily live off the electricity grid by offering products such as solar lights, fuel-efficient cookstoves, alternative fuels, water purifiers and water heaters. NLA, operating under the local brand HEYA! in Kenya, plans to build a widely distributed sales channel through local agents, with aggressive plans to offer financing in the sales process, from local retailer to end consumer.



### **Vasham**

#### ***Jakarta, Indonesia***

[Vasham](#) leverages a closed-loop business model to provide Indonesian smallholder farms with the financing, expertise, income security and market linkage they need to achieve significantly better standards of living. Vasham aggregates and provides a bundle of services to smallholder farmers growing staple crops. Those services include input and working capital loans, farmer advisory through mobile channels and field officers, and market linkage at an above-market price premium via its off-take partner. Vasham aims to serve over 200,000 farmers across Indonesia by 2020.

# Our Team and Advisory Board

Our Social Ventures team is composed of seasoned entrepreneurs, investors and consultants. We bring extensive experience in launching, scaling and advising disruptive startup enterprises in emerging markets. Based at Mercy Corps' U.S. headquarters and in our field offices in East Africa and Latin America, we aim to embed ourselves deeply in local startup ecosystems.

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**We are also fortunate to draw upon the wisdom and experience of the Social Venture Fund's Advisory Board:**

## **Tom Keffer**

Co-Founder | Rogue Wave Software

## **Gisel Kordestani**

Co-Founder | Crowdpac

## **Ned Lamont**

Founder | Lamont Digital Systems (Campus  
Televideo)

## **Mike Maerz**

Former VP Internet Products Division | Intel

## **David Mahoney**

Former CEO | iMcKesson LLC

## **Linda Mason**

Chair & Founder | Bright Horizons

## **Grey McLean**

Director | Aduvans Foundation

## **Lisa Valone**

Investor & Philanthropist

## **Jim Valone**

Partner | Wellington Management Company, LLP

## **Kent Walker**

Senior VP & General Counsel | Google

## **Susan Whitehead**

Investor & Philanthropist

