

Reclaiming Our Democracy

Healing the Break Between People and Government
20th Anniversary Edition

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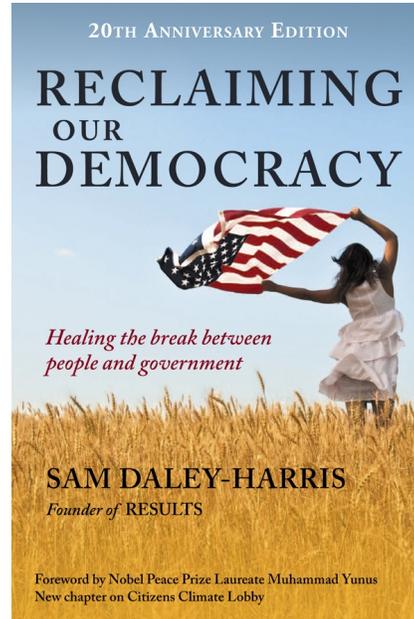
Twentieth Anniversary Edition

Introduction

The premise of this book is that citizens, working within a powerful structure of support, can make a real difference in creating the political will to solve national and global problems including a dramatic reduction in child mortality and hunger around the world. But for most people that premise is doubtful at best and absurd at worst. We are haunted by this secretly held, and for many, unconscious belief: while we know we can love and nurture those close to us and can make a difference in our communities, most of us mistakenly believe that we don't really make a difference in the larger world. The idea that we can be anything more than mere spectators to change at the national or international level, especially with our voices as citizens, seem ludicrous to most people.

This 20th anniversary edition has a new chapter on the groundbreaking work of Citizens Climate Lobby, an increasingly powerful new advocacy group following the RESULTS model, and another new chapter on the Center for Citizen Empowerment and Transformation, a new initiative focused on spreading the original concepts developed by RESULTS.

When examined more closely, the approaches laid out in this book help dispel the myth that you and I are powerless to make a difference in the



world. Let's start by looking at what deep citizen engagement has helped accomplish.

Launching a child survival revolution

RESULTS started working with UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant in the mid-1980s to make the survival of children a global priority. At the time 15 million children were dying each year from largely preventable malnutrition and disease. One little-known child survival intervention, oral rehydration therapy, allowed families to prepare a sugar, salt, and water solution that could save the lives of some 5 million children who died each year from dehydration coupled with malnutrition. Another child survival intervention, vaccination against six child-killers like measles and tetanus, could save an additional 3.5 million young lives a year.

After RESULTS volunteers generated 90 editorials in 1986 in a successful lobbying campaign to triple the child survival fund from \$25 million to \$75 million, Jim Grant penned the following in a hand-written note:

I want to convey my heartfelt thanks for the unflagging and satisfyingly successful efforts of RESULTS on behalf of vulnerable children and mothers everywhere. I thank you in my mind weekly, if not more often, for what you and your colleagues are accomplishing—but I thought I should do it at least once this year in writing.

Four years later RESULTS Educational Fund organized candlelight vigils around the world seven days before the 1990 World Summit for Children.

In his opening remarks to 71 heads of state and government at the Summit Grant said:

One week ago over a million candles were lit by ordinary people around the world for the success of this Summit. Each of those candles represented the inextinguishable hope in the hearts of people everywhere that, amid all the problems and dangers of the years ahead, the world can still be made a better place.

RESULTS' advocacy on child survival, begun in 1984, has continued to this day. Over the last 29 years child death rates have dropped from 41,000 a day in the early 1980s to 19,000 a day in 2012. Now there are credible calls to reduce preventable child deaths to zero by 2035. The work continues as does the need for more and more empowered citizens.