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From: Boris Nikolic
Sent: Tue 1/21/2014 7:07:33 AM
Subject: FW: Our 2014 Annual Letter

For some light reading – Bill’s Annual Letter.

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From: Bill and Melinda Gates [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2014 8:00 AM
To: All Foundation Staff
Subject: Our 2014 Annual Letter

All,

What myths do you hear about our work that you’d like to debunk? What misconceptions about global health and development, foreign aid, U.S. education, and family homelessness block progress and drive you crazy?

We tackle some myths in this year’s [Annual Letter](#), which launches to the public today. Titled “Three Myths that Block Progress for the Poor,” it’s the sixth letter and the first we’ve jointly authored.

Here are the three myths we cover:

- **Poor Countries are Doomed to Stay Poor:** Many mistakenly believe that the picture of global poverty never changes when really, the world has gone through a remarkable transformation the past several decades. The prospects for helping even more countries make the transition to prosperity are promising.
- **Aid is a Big Waste:** Aid critics and the mainstream media often assert that aid simply goes into the pockets of dictators and that it’s a failure because it doesn’t cause GDP to go up, among other things. In fact, health aid actually delivers a fantastic return on investment.

- **Saving Lives Will Contribute to Overpopulation and Make the World Worse for Everybody:** Many people believe this and you can understand why. But in reality, when child mortality goes down, women decide to have smaller families and population growth slows. By focusing on basic health, relative prosperity, empowering women, and access to family planning, we can create a healthy, productive, sustainable future for everyone.

Please read the [Annual Letter](#), and share it broadly with your personal and professional networks. We also encourage you to share your reflections on the letter – and your own myths that block progress – with foundation colleagues on Yammer using the hashtag **#StopTheMyth**. Alternatively, you can email your myths to [Employee Communications](#).

To make it easy to share the letter with friends, family, and partners, we've put together this customizable [email template](#). For suggested tweets, refer to our [social media toolkit](#).

Together, we can start a conversation, change perceptions, and debunk the myths that hold back our work. Thank you for your support.

Bill and Melinda