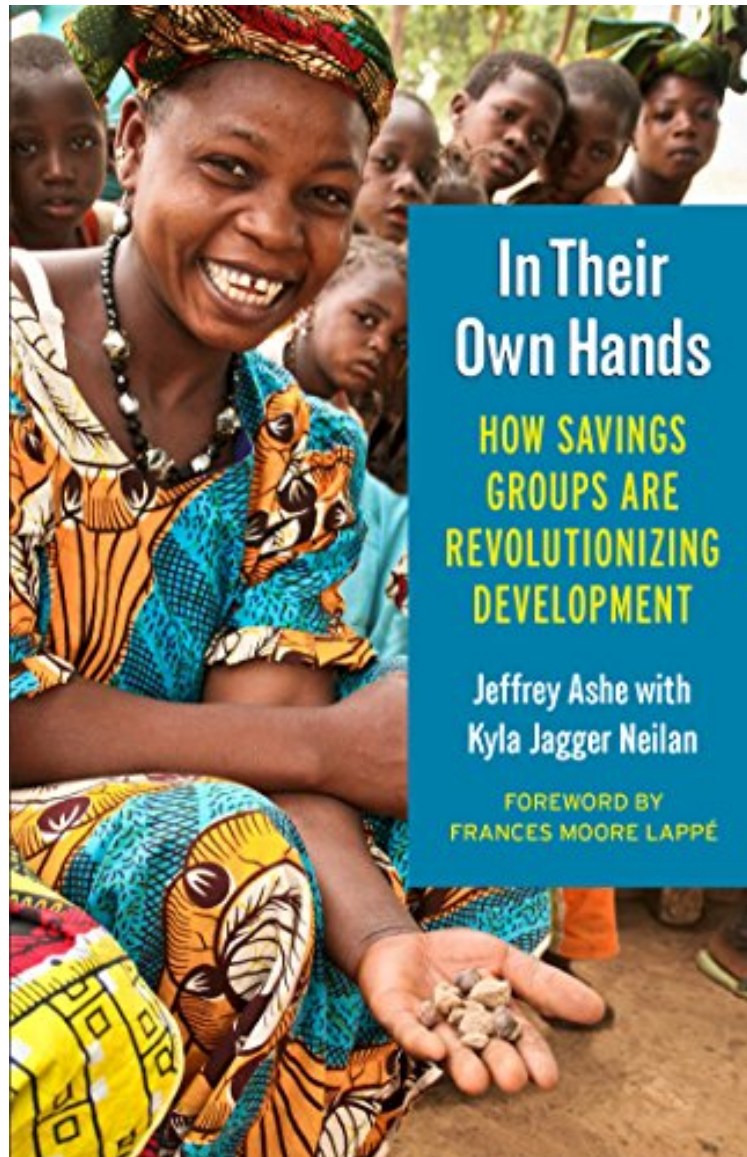


(Free pdf) In Their Own Hands: How Savings Groups Are Revolutionizing Development

In Their Own Hands: How Savings Groups Are Revolutionizing Development

Jeffrey Ashe, Kyla Jagger Neilan

**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*



DOWNLOAD



+

READ ONLINE

#1400856 in eBooks 2014-09-15 2014-09-15 File Name: B00K5WB5CA | File size: 36.Mb

Jeffrey Ashe, Kyla Jagger Neilan : In Their Own Hands: How Savings Groups Are Revolutionizing Development before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Their Own Hands: How Savings Groups Are Revolutionizing Development:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Enjoy! (Full disclosureBy Anthony C. GoochAnyone with an interest in economic and political development will want to read and re-read this book and have it in their library. It is

of special interest (and very challenging) for those of us who have chosen microfinance and other forms of access to traditional financial services as important instruments for enabling the "poorest of the poor" to find their way out of poverty. Enjoy! (Full disclosure: Jeffrey Ashe, a pioneer in microfinance, was one of my professors at Columbia's School of International and Political Development--SIPA.)

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The new Bible for work with poor people

By Mal Warwick

In an even reasonably rational world, *In Their Own Hands* would serve as the Bible for development professionals and the basic textbook for students, philanthropists, faith-based activists, and business executives who aspire to improve the lives of poor people. Though this book advocates a particular methodology to promote financial inclusion, it's the best overall introduction I've ever read to working with poor people in the Global South. If you have any interest in this topic, whatever your background or perspective, you owe it to yourself to read this brutally honest book.

author of "In Their Own Hands," about working with poor people

Jeffrey Ashe

In Their Own Hands represents the distilled wisdom Jeffrey Ashe has acquired over half a century of work with poor people across the globe. Ashe's experience in fighting poverty began in his mid-twenties as a Peace Corps Volunteer in rural Ecuador and has continued seamlessly through the ensuing decades. During most of that time, he was one of the world's leading practitioners of microfinance, with a career that began working for Accion International in Latin America several years before Muhammad Yunus's rediscovery of the concept in Bangladesh. Then one fateful evening thirteen years ago at Brandeis University, where Ashe is now a faculty member, he attended a lecture by a woman named Marcia Odell, director of the Women's Empowerment Program at Pact, who had introduced a novel approach to financial inclusion in rural Nepal. The method she described, village savings groups, had originally been developed by CARE in 1971 in Niger, but it was Odell's presentation that brought it to the center of Ashe's attention. Savings groups struck him as a brilliant answer to the shortcomings he had witnessed in microfinance. Ashe finalized a contract to evaluate her program in the field, and soon afterwards he began designing a similar effort to introduce into the desperately poor West African nation of Mali. Now, little more than a decade later, due in no small part to Ashe's influence, there are savings groups with ten million members in at least a hundred thousand villages in sixty-five countries. The leading NGOs that have spearheaded the effort—Oxfam America, Freedom from Hunger, CARE, Catholic Relief Services, Plan International, the Aga Khan Foundation, and Pact—have recently dedicated themselves to a collaborative effort to reach fifty million people by 2020. The key to understanding savings groups is that they do NOT represent a method to end poverty, as some of their more extravagant boosters have suggested. As Ashe explains, "Joining a savings group will not lift many out of poverty; no development initiative can deliver on that promise; but regular savings and a reserve of cash can help reduce life's uncertainties." To those of us who enjoy privileged lives in the Global North, that benefit may seem trivial. However, to the global poor, it can seem a lifesaver; which is why savings groups have spread so readily and persisted for so long in so many countries. In Mali, Ashe notes, "despite a coup, an insurgency in the north, a severe drought, an influx of refugees, skyrocketing food prices, limited opportunities for work outside the village, and faltering institutions, few Saving for Change groups have disbanded while many new groups have been trained by volunteers. Similarly, groups in Zimbabwe survived hyper-inflation, and groups in Nepal thrived after the withdrawal of outside support and a Maoist takeover of the region." Ashe cites "nine principles needed for success" that can be applied to any economic development effort, not just village savings groups: "Start small to learn, but plan for scale." "Simple is better than complex." "Build on what is already in place and already widely understood." "Design for change that persists long after outside agents leave and that spreads from village to village without outside staff." "Keep costs low." "Give nothing away." "Insist on local control." "Establish high performance standards and insist on meeting them." "Build learning and innovation into program design. Somebody should carve these precepts onto thousands of granite tablets and erect one set above the doorway of every NGO, every development agency, every university, every multilateral institution, and every business that seeks to improve the lot of poor people around the world. For the record, Jeff Ashe and I have been friends for nearly fifty years, since we met in a Philadelphia hotel room for Peace Corps orientation. We worked together closely in Peace Corps training in Puerto Rico and, after a year in-country in Ecuador, we teamed up with several fellow Volunteers on a project Jeff inspired to help implement that country's new agrarian reform law. There are few people anywhere in the world for whom I have more respect than Jeff; or longer experience to justify it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A compelling and effective approach to poverty reduction

By Terrence Isert, ProMicro Consulting LLC

A compelling Approach to poverty reduction

The idea that poor people and their families can save anything meaningful seems as ludicrous as the assumption by Muhammed Yunus in 1976 (*Price of Dream*) that small amounts of credit could help build poor families start businesses in Bangladesh. Jeff Ashe and Kyla Neilan's *In Their Own Hands* demonstrates both. In fact, the poor can do so effectively, on their own and with little to no outside help—a departure from the approach of the microfinance movement. When NGOs train participants and then "get out of their way"—these rural and urban groups perform best. Women and men in each group manage themselves and their money more effectively than constant NGO-interaction or supervision. The savings group movement enables not only the poor but the very poor to do what they could not do before: save first, then borrow from each other and continue the process

over and over again without help from the outside. Mr. Asher's chronicles his own personal journey from the Peace Corps volunteer forming solidarity groups in Guatemala to microfinance practitioner in Boston. He admits his own misgivings with the micro-lending movement (see this 2007 SSIR article here) and its microfinance institution-building efforts in the 1990s. He poignantly tells of his own sartorial discovery of these groups thriving in Nepal and his own efforts afterwards to launch them in some of the harshest climatic, economic and political environments across Africa and Latin America. The novel is a compelling read for anyone interested in exploring a poverty-reduction model that is easily scalable, highly-efficient, low-cost to implement and teaches people and their communities to help themselves by putting the power of choice in their own hands. Terrence Isert, ProMicro Consulting LLC, consulting that promotes small enterprise, community financing strategies and local economic growth initiatives

Two and a half billion people worldwide, most of them desperately poor villagers, need a better way to save and to borrow. Even the most innovative banking institutions can't reach them; savings groups can. In savings groups, members save what they can in a communal pot and loan their growing fund to each other for their short-term needs. Jeffrey Ashe and Kyla Neilan illustrate how these savings groups form and function and how little "outsider" support is actually required for their success. Drawing on decades of Asher's personal experience, this book describes how he developed Saving for Change, which leveraged the wisdom and strength of group members to train and establish new groups. This model has impacted the lives of 680,000 people across five countries. Savings groups are a "catalytic innovation" that bypasses subsidies, dependency, and high costs while effectively reducing chronic hunger, building assets, and empowering the community. Today, saving groups have 9 million members around the globe; with minimal support, membership could grow to ten times this number.