News Behind the News:
April 2014

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Section One: Focus Countries

Afghanistan—Girls like these benefit from
GHNI computer education

Afghanistan

Women Seek Education

Recent elections reveal women still want to play a vital role in the future of all aspects of life in Afghanistan.

Transformational Community Development (TCD) education projects with computers still attract many girls as well as boys. GHNI-Afghanistan share, “The computer lessons at the new Computer Centre are going well with 45 students registered and taking classes. These focus on computer basics, such as Word, Windows and Excel…In addition, our Transformational Community Development (TCD) worker has found the opportunity to talk to locals about self-sustainability and community ownership. Our worker also taught TCD health lessons on blood pressure and Birth Life Saving Skills…Some locals from neighboring villages also attended lessons this time. Increased awareness of the computer and health lessons, good teaching, and opportunities for female participants are some reasons for the good attendance.”

Burkina Faso

Inter-Tribal Unity

This is one of the poorest countries in Africa. Micro business in the villages helps women become more self-sustaining. The training has also brought together previously opposing tribal groups.

Our GHNI Leader wrote, “In the month of February, five women were selected by the village of Saneba to go through a soap-making training. The women who went through the training, including one we call Mama, represented the two ethnic groups in the village: the Mossi and the Dagara. Relations between the two groups haven’t been great over the years, but this training has helped bring them closer together…The women spent three days learning how to make soap using locally-available resources as well as learn how to start their own small business. One of the women said, ‘We never could have imagined the day that they would have the possibility to make soap and sell it.’”

China

Reversing Rural Poverty

Poverty has officially declined, but there remain tens of thousands of rural villages where people survive on only rice or potatoes each day. With 3-4 good possibilities for a new work in the southwestern mountain area, two of GHNI’s top leaders traveled to the area in March to pin-point a village committed to change and a partner organization who is excited to train the people in TCD. The unique political and geographical challenges make this project a great opportunity for a catalytic partnership with an organization already working in the area. We are amazed at the opportunities!

Egypt

Women Effect Change

Urban poor women are the most difficult to help with sustainable development, according to many
experts. Our work in Egypt founded a pilot project and the women were taught how to maintain the sewing machines and then began sewing lessons. Each woman was offered a sewing machine “loan.” In taking a machine, each woman will begin making payments from the income generated from mending and selling garments. A GHNI-Egypt leader remarked, “We could see the joy on every woman because sewing machines will help each woman to increase her income, which helps her family in living.”

Ethiopia

Proving Self-Sustainability is Possible

Many NGO’s despair over the failure in rural Ethiopia to bring about sustainability. We have seen our project of self-sustaining development create a small movement! Led by nationals! The people in Meagaladi Village are now inspired after seeing the transformation in neighboring village of Garmaam.

They have dug three ponds to irrigate the two hectares (over 4 acres) of land in the community farm. GHNI has provided them with special seed for the three groups. Now almost the entire field is covered by different vegetables. As one of our leaders in Ethiopia stated, “The group members water the field everyday with all of the group members actively participating.” They are very eager to see the same transformation in their lives and village as well.

India

Rural Village Development

One of the biggest causes of urban poverty is the migration of the poorest villagers to the cities. The UN has pointed out that the best way to prevent this is rural village development, which GHNI is doing. As a GHNI leader in India states, “[GHNI’s] TCD is encouraging people not to go out of the village and teaching them how to grow their income while they are in the village. Growing second crop is one of the ways, but Bosam Marandi has gone one step further. Along with growing second crop, he is also doing multiple works to grow his income and has become a model for others.”

Indonesia

Villager Steps into Leadership

It is more and more evident that real transformation never happens unless it is led and supported by local villagers. Here’s what one GHNI leader in Indonesia says—

“Dg. Liwang has been a diligent & faithful champion for Tanakeke-Batu Ampara Village throughout our entire program—of more than 3+ years. By ‘champion,’ I mean that he consistently lead the community in developing new ideas, faithfully brought the GHNI team to and from the island, and helped make projects such as the toilet program happen. Without Dg. Liwang, the community of Tanakeke-Batu Ampara would not have toilets, water tanks, or be growing shrimp.

“He has been the catalyst in this community. He is now teaching other villagers. Dg. Liwang has been showing other villagers what it means to transform and how they can do that on their own. Dg. Liwang tells the community about the differences between development and relief.”

It is exciting to see not only the community transform, but individuals within the community transform.
Jordan

Impact of a Community Center

The House of Ruth, in the Moab Desert, is proving to be a magnet for the poor villagers in 7 surrounding villages. As one GHNI leader wrote, “Sitting in the home of one of the women whose children attend English classes at the center, I was sipping on my coffee as she was talking about her day. Her hands were busy at work with the scarves and beads that I had brought her. She isn’t allowed to leave the home so I bring the supplies to her. She personally wanted to thank GHNI for all that they were doing for her children and for her village.”

Kenya

Determined Farmers

Rural animal herders have had a very hard time settling down in villages. As one GHNI-Kenya leader stated, “Mzee Halakhe and his family are some of those determined farmers. Mzee settled here with his animals many years ago. But after thousands of animals here died in recent years due to drought, Mzee decided to settle by the small stream of water and started learning a new life of farming. Life was not easy for a long time. He did not have much success. But we gave Mzee some training and some seedlings. Since then, he has been self-sustaining.”

Libya

Aid Welcomed

Benghazi has become ‘off limits.’ “We have relinquished all of our belongings,” shared our representative in Libya. They lost everything, but still have hope and love for Libya. The government officials and our Libyan advocates have remained hopeful that another way might be possible for both the distribution of wheelchairs and the complementary occupational and physical therapy training. What has now unfolded in Libya is that the city of Misurata, another port city, has become the secure UN and consulate base. All of the previous consulate offices have re-opened in Misurata. Misurata is northeast of Tripoli on the coast.

Myanmar

Using Local Resources and Teamwork

Electricity for rural villages has been a desire and policy of the new government. But change is slow and the villagers we are helping organized themselves without guidance. After a few months the committee made a partnership with the government and was able to get a needed transformer from the government.

However, they didn’t have enough money to install the transformer. Therefore, they sat for a meeting and discussed how to raise funds locally. They agreed to collect some money from every home in the village. That money still couldn’t cover all the cost to install the transformer. After another meeting to talk about raising funds, they got an idea to sell land that the village owns (combined-land).

Our GHNI Myanmar leader writes, “GHNI added some money as some toilets were repaired and dug so that they could start the project. Hopefully, the village will finish the electricity project this month.”
Nepal—Women attending slavery prevention lessons

**Nepal**

*Wells and Slavery Prevention*

To solve the long-standing demand of water in BT Village, we started to dig the wells with the help of GHNI. As there are more than 150 families in the village, one well isn’t enough. Therefore we started digging two wells in one place by replacing diesel pump, set with five horse power electric motor, in the village. Our GHIN Nepal leader wrote, “For digging wells, I formed the committees so that we could give the ownership of the projects to the villagers. The committee mobilized peoples in the village to the dig the well.”

Women in Nepal are also learning a lot about preventing human trafficking and slavery of different kinds. This new awareness will change the future of some women and girls!

**Nigeria**

*School Brings Sign of Hope*

In northwest Nigeria, where violence and poverty have plagued development, signs of hope are appearing by the initiative of the people themselves. Recently GHNI launched a partnership campaign to help the locals of one village build their first school ever. This is what Bitrus has to say about the Dogon Gada Primary School, “I am having a good time in this school. This is the first time I am going to school in my life. Our teacher is teaching us well. I came here to get educated so that I can become a medical doctor. I will surely achieve this with the help of God.”
Pakistan—Pakistani woman who experienced a healthy birth

Pakistan

BLiSS Saves Lives

WHO reports very high mortality for mothers giving birth and infants in Pakistan, where GHNI has worked for many years. Through partnership with nurses and midwives, a BLiSS (Birth Life Saving Skills) program began. For several months, BLiSS trainers lived within the villages, training women in midwifery. This way many women would be trained as a midwife, allowing each of the villages to experience an increase in safe, live births. One village reported zero birth-related deaths the following year!

Sri Lanka

Micro-loans Prove Better than Handouts!

A family in a village where GHNI is working applied for a loan which they received speedily. Our GHNI leader writes, “They were proud to show us their completed market with various items on sale. Sandanam tells me that as the shop has a beautiful appearance, his sales have shot up from Rs.300 to Rs.600 ($3-6). He tells me that he expects to increase his sales which will be sufficient to provide for the whole family and save for a rainy day. He tells me that this was made possible because of GHNI who gave him a loan.”

Turkey

Books to Aspiring University Students

Although Turkey is seeing good growth, many in the rural areas suffer from poverty and no cash for books! From the desk of our Regional Field Leader we receive a hearty thanks to those who contribute to the work in Turkey. Now many more students have a chance at a higher education and better jobs to support their families.
Section Two: Feature Article of the Month

**Syrian Special Appeal**

If you have not received our special appeal regarding the needs in Syria from Hal Jones, President & CEO of GHNI, please read this urgent plea.

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