



We sow hope... and hope is growing!

NEWSLETTER



DRC: Ruth Posthumus, Claudaline, and farmers with their goats

GOATS FOR BETTER FUTURE

Recently, we received a report from our partner in the Eastern Region of DRC, Democratic Republic of Congo, on the progress of their agricultural project.

In Autumn of 2015, a team from SowHope traveled to the DRC to meet with Claudaline, our partner, to evaluate her animal husbandry, farming, and health projects. In the DRC, farming and animal husbandry count for 72 percent of household income, with goats as the animal of choice for 80 percent of farmers. Due to a lack of training in farming methods and access to veterinarians, it is difficult to successfully farm and raise livestock.

Claudaline reported that SowHope's monetary support has helped her project provide farmers with agriculture equipment for planting and harvesting as well as seeds and land. Thanks to SowHope's help, the women have purchased more than 180 animals. They have access to veterinarians and agriculturists and information on farming methods. The ability to farm and raise healthy livestock has helped families increase their household income. Furthermore, women are able to send their children to school and can afford maternity necessities.

To date, your contributions to SowHope have benefited more than 17,000 women in the eastern part of the DRC through 34 wellness, education, and economic projects.

SOWHOPE EXISTS

TO INSPIRE
WOMEN AROUND
THE WORLD
BY PROMOTING
WELLNESS,
EDUCATION, AND
ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITIES



Thailand: Mina (r) and her apprentice selling pesto and peanut butter

BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Just last month, SowHope forged a new partnership with a non-profit organization based in Thailand that provides leadership and business training for women who are either victims of human trafficking, refugees, or have been displaced.

This project includes personal counseling, theoretical and practical business training. SowHope awarded a grant to our partner to support women from Cambodia, Eritrea, Nepal, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam, Uganda, and Uzbekistan. Each woman agrees to participate in service and work placement, educational and personal development, and community outreach.

During the intensive training, the women are learning basic job skills and experience a service opportunity. They attend classes that focus on personal development, join a therapeutic support group, and do research to find resources to assist them in the future. Many of them suffer from low self-esteem and identity crises due to being trafficked or displaced.

This SowHope funded educational project helps them to learn identity formation and to develop a strong personal narrative. They attend basic business classes that include management and presentation skills. More importantly, they have the opportunity to apply what they learn by working alongside other business women. One such business woman is Mina, a successful entrepreneur producing, as she describes it, "The best peanut butter and pesto in the world!" A former refugee herself, she supervises them in every aspect of the business, so that they have a real-life business experience.

For their final project, the women are required to write a proposal to establish a business or community outreach program in their newly adopted or home countries. The training will be completed at the end of this year.

Our experience is that this kind of project will completely change the course of women's lives for the better. You make it possible!

RSVP BEFORE SEPTEMBER 18

**Invite friends and RSVP
"WE SOW HOPE" DINNER**

Thursday, September 28, 6:30 pm
at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park
To register, go to:
www.sowhope.org/events

BOARD MEMBER, NDEYE ROKHAYA NDAO

“Aha! There is something I can do for Senegalese women who need help.”

That was Ndeye Rokhaya Ndao's reaction after she met Mary Dailey Brown, president and founder of SowHope. Ndeye has always dreamed of starting a non-profit organization that focuses on women, education, health, economic development and emergency preparedness.

She decided to get involved at SowHope and to learn all she could about running a non-profit organization. Ndeye has been a member of the Board of Directors since 2015. Currently, she serves as the secretary of the board.

Ndeye was born in Senegal and considered herself blessed to grow up in an environment that valued education. Even though it is not always the case in Senegal, her parents value education and allowed her to pursue college abroad by coming to the United States. She believes that education opens the door to wider opportunities. “SowHope's approach empowers women and gives them the opportunity to make changes and have ownership of their own lives,” she said.

Ndeye works as a Transition Coordinator at Wyoming High School near Grand Rapids, MI. She is the owner of a business that focuses on social justice and promotes African art made by her fellow Senegalese. By selling their art, she provides a way for them to earn income and exposes them to the international market. She considers her business a social enterprise. Her passion for helping women in need comes from her mother who was always helping neighbors, friends, and family members.

Ndeye earned her BA in International Relations from Grand Valley State University and is a student in the MPA Program with a focus in Nonprofit Management and Leadership. In addition to volunteering at SowHope and running her business, she loves working with women and children because they have so much to offer and can be trailblazers in making the world a better place.



SowHope Board Secretary - Ndeye Ndao

TRAINING: ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

In 2016, SowHope embarked on a two year project with our partner, Vinita from India. She is a local leader who encourages and empowers women from the slum areas near New Delhi to become more independent and self-sufficient through vocational training in cosmetology and tailoring. These women are at the mercy of their families and are often not allowed to leave their own homes.

Through SowHope's funded project, more than 300 women have access to trainers, high quality machines, and fabrics to start a tailoring business. Upon receiving a certificate of completion, many have gained employment or launched their own tailoring business. On average, they earn approximately USD \$150 per month. In some cases, they earn more income than their husbands do. Two women have established their own shops. Success of this program has caught the attention of the local government which provides a space to operate their businesses outside of their homes.

Despite India's economic and human rights progress, women are still at a disadvantage in the areas of wellness, education and economic opportunities. In the past five years, domestic abuse, rape and gender violence issues in India have caught both local and international attention.



India: Vocational training in tailoring

In addition to vocational training, Vinita also coordinates seminars that focuses on maternal and childbirth education that empowers women to learn about their rights to have equal protection against domestic violence and sexual abuse. They are encouraged to report any domestic abuse or rape incidents instead of remaining silent.

In less than a year, your contributions to SowHope have helped women in India to become more independent and self-sufficient. They are able to take charge of their own lives.



www.facebook.com/sowhope

NEED A SPEAKER FOR YOUR GROUP?

Want to hear more stories from Mary Dailey Brown and be inspired? You'll be amazed! To book this dynamic storyteller, contact the SowHope office: 616.433.1575 or email info@sowhope.org.

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