



SowHOPE Newsletter

"Where there is despair, let me sow hope." FRANCIS OF ASSIS

SOWHOPE IMPACTS AFRICAN WOMEN

This spring, SowHope made a field visit to evaluate nine projects funded during the past year. Dr. Pamela Ogor, a founding board member, accompanied CEO Mary Dailey Brown to Africa for the evaluation. Together they evaluated two projects in Uganda, six projects in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and one project in Kenya.

Here is the impact of the projects: nearly 1000 women received access to microfinance; over 3200 women were trained in AIDS prevention; and over 1200 women were assisted during childbirth at maternity clinics supported by SowHope. As a result of these positive findings, SowHope funded four more projects in the DRC, two more in Kenya, and one in Uganda.

Every year nearly 500,000 women die in childbirth. Many of them live in Sub-saharan Africa and most of them die alone and unaccompanied. These deaths could be avoided with the help of someone who has even cursory midwife training. One woman with such training in Uganda, Catherine N, used a \$130 microloan to build a 10x8 room next to her house, which she dedicates as a birthing clinic for local women. Since opening her clinic, she has helped, on average, 35-40 women a month to deliver their babies. She was proud to show the records that all of her patients have survived.

Another success story observed was an enterprising woman, Mary W. who scavenges from a city dump in Kenya, finding plastic bags and other materials that she washes and uses to create bags and jewelry. She sells her clean products in the marketplace – an amazing example of recycling! Such achievements are typical of women who are given the encouragement of a micro loan or small business training.



Josephine, a local leader and SowHope's Kenyan partner, stands with entrepreneur Mary W holding recycled bags and necklaces she created.
(Photo Inserts are close-ups of the bag and jewelry)

Mary and Pam were joined on the Africa evaluation trip by Dr. Ramya Ramanath, a professor from Grand Valley State University, who went along to conduct research on SowHope for a scholarly article she is writing about the dynamics of cross-cultural NGO partnerships working together for development. Ramya, an expert in the field of International Nonprofit Administration, was very impressed with what she experienced. She says, "I had rarely considered the power of faith in shaping development work. SowHope is not a religious NGO, but it interweaves faith and development in ways that are remarkably effective in reaching out to some of the most difficult regions of East Africa. Seeing SowHope at work in the field was both a beautiful and intense experience and to journey with it is, perhaps, the only way to understand this young, versatile organization."



Professor Ramya Ramanath & Dr. Pam Ogor with leaders in Bunia, DRC

PHOTO EXHIBIT & RECEPTION

SowHope's 4th Annual Photo Exhibit, Beauty and the Burden, held in the lovely Goei Center on March 26th, was a smashing success! Over \$26,000 was raised at the event, and this amount is being matched by an anonymous donor for a total of \$52,000! Thank you to all who attended and for your generosity.



2011 Beauty & the Burden: Photo Exhibit Fundraiser

BIG RESULTS FROM SHORT TALK

When Steve Van Scoik was elected governor of the Northern Indiana Rotary District, he and his wife, Lynda, were both encouraged to come up with a fundraising project they would each promote throughout his year-long reign. Lynda, who had recently attended SowHope's 3rd Annual Beauty and the Burden Photo Exhibit, immediately decided she wanted to raise \$450, enough for SowHope to sponsor one literacy class of 15 women in India.

Unaccustomed to public speaking, Lynda worked with her daughter to develop a brief but succinct speech to present the literacy project. Lynda displayed pictures of women reading, explaining that the smiles were reflective of increased self-esteem, personal net worth, and ability to help their own children go to school through the knowledge they gained from the 9-month literacy class. Then she passed the basket.

Lynda gave her two-minute speech 55 times during one year as she and her husband visited each Rotary Club in their district. Much to her own surprise and delight, this May, Lynda was able to give SowHope a check for \$10,000 – the grand total of the funds her short speech raised! Thanks Rotary District 6540!



Lynda Van Scoik presents a \$10,000 Rotary check to SowHope representatives Bonnie Conley & Mary Dailey Brown

SPREADING the WORD ABOUT SOWHOPE

SowHope presentations have been given at luncheons, college gatherings and formal meetings; they've been held in living rooms, schools, churches and civic halls across the country. The emotional impact of the needs of women in developing countries is so profound that people are moved to help. A 7th grader's father wrote, "Our daughter was so inspired when you came to her school this past year that we decided as a family to contribute to your organization." The family has donated over \$2,000.

Recently the word has gone out to Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois, while another trip covered Washington DC, Virginia, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Texas, Georgia and Florida have...

BROTHERS COMPUTE FOR SOWHOPE



Volunteer Devon McAvoys helps Doreen Mangrum on the computer.

SOWHOPE EXISTS

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

At a dinner party last year, two young men heard about the need for computer assistance with SowHope office tasks. The brothers instantly recognized that they could both support SowHope and gain experience in applying their expertise to real-world problems. They have so far created a volunteer database and a complex macro that speeds up the processing of SowHope's tax-deductible receipts.

As students, Cameron and Devon McAvoys have more time than money, but their knowledge of computers, databases, and programming gives them a genuine instrument of support for their favorite charity. Carefully dedicating a small portion of their free time each day has worked well for them. Their discipline has made them able to finish their tasks on time, without radically changing their daily schedule.

The brothers recommend volunteering as a wonderful way to use your strengths to help others, and invite you to match your skill set and interests to the needs of SowHope. What are your pursuits or hobbies? How could they benefit SowHope? These creative brothers are an inspiration to us all.

...SPREADING the WORD Continued

...heard of the mission, as well. Wherever it is explained how SowHope meets the needs of women in the developing world, eyes are opened, hearts are moved, and people give of their time and their money. Invite SowHope to come to your town – and watch what happens!

MORE WAYS TO HELP SOWHOPE

- Invite SowHope to speak to your community or social club, school, workplace, house of worship, or women's group, etc.
- Host a fundraising event in your home to inform your friends and family about the important work of SowHope.
- Include SowHope in your company's matching gift program.
- Encourage your friends/family to "like" us on facebook.

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