



# We sow hope... and hope is growing!

## NEWSLETTER



A woman from South Sudan presented the Dancing Stick to Mary.

### HOPE FOR PEACE IN SOUTH SUDAN

In 2015, SowHope made its first visit to South Sudan. Mary Dailey Brown and Dr. Pam Ogor traveled there to meet with Mary G, SowHope's partner, who organized meetings with local women. Devastated by war and famine, most women are at a huge disadvantage. They live in constant fear for their safety.

Mary asked the women what their dreams for the future are, they said overwhelmingly: "We need peace." They discussed and decided that to improve their lives they wanted to have community gardens to help feed their families. SowHope provided the seed money for that project.

Next, after Mary G held a development training conference, six groups from four different villages were formed totaling 284 women. Each group received start-up money for micro-loans from SowHope. They started various types of small businesses including selling coffee and sugar.

In April 2017, Mary returned to South Sudan and saw improvement in the lives of those women despite the country's current situation. Concerned for their safety, the group was forced to abandon the community gardens which were on the outskirts of their town. Fortunately, most of them continue to have small gardens on the land close to their homes. The six microfinance groups have all doubled, and one even tripled, their portfolios. They have generated profits that allow them to grow their businesses without further financial assistance. Now, they are asking for leadership training.



SowHope has made a difference by inspiring more than 280 women entrepreneurs in South Sudan. They know that their development skills are valuable and are thinking of taking these skills, as a bridge, to women of the enemy tribe. They are dreaming of peace in South Sudan.

Mary G, SowHope's partner in S Sudan.

#### SOWHOPE EXISTS

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



Afghanistan is known as the land of blue burqas.

### WHY AFGHANISTAN?

Data from the United Nation and UNICEF show that Afghan women face the following challenges:

- Women are physically, emotionally and sexually violated 90 percent of the time.
- More than 50 percent of Afghan girls are engaged by the age of 12 and nearly 60 percent are married by the age of 16 to far older men – some in their 60's. They meet their husbands at their wedding. Many of those engagements and marriages are forced and entail physical abuse including a combination of beatings, rape, and forced prostitution by their much older husband.
- Because of their lack of education, young wives have low status in the family and are more likely to be abused by their husbands and/or in-laws.
- 85 percent of the women have no formal education and are illiterate.
- 40 percent of the girls attend elementary school and only one in 20 girls attend beyond sixth grade.

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the Afghan government has passed laws that affect women. Although their rights are gradually improved, violence against women remains rampant.

In April 2017, SowHope visited Afghanistan and began funding a project. Our partner supports women who are victims of domestic violence by providing a place of refuge, counseling and economic empowerment. We have seen the deep desire of women there to care for themselves and their children in a safe environment. Please support SowHope as we work to inspire deserving women around the world.

### YOU'RE INVITED - SAVE THE DATES!

#### "WE SOW HOPE" DINNER

Thursday, September 28, 6:30 pm  
at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park  
Event Sponsors: see the new options at  
[www.sowhope.org/events](http://www.sowhope.org/events)  
Table Sponsors: sponsor a table for \$500

## BOARD MEMBER, JUDY KRUGER

Judy Kruger was initially drawn to SowHope after attending an art exhibition that displayed the many faces of women whose lives had been changed by its projects. She continues to support SowHope's mission of economic empowerment, the establishment of health clinics, and provision of literacy programs. These missions align with Judy's own passion for meeting the needs of women in countries where no such assistance exists.



As a board member, Judy fulfills her primary responsibility by spreading the message and goals of SowHope. In an effort to grow supporters and revenues, she aims to foster the greatest impact for impoverished women. Her international experience with foreign direct investment and passion for the mission gives Judy a unique perspective. She loves reviewing projects and hearing the

## NEED A SPEAKER FOR YOUR GROUP?

Several years ago, Mary Dailey Brown founded one of the only global organizations dedicated to basic holistic care of women. Her dream was to inspire impoverished women around the world promoting good health practices, learning to read and do simple math, and running small businesses. This organization, SowHope, has changed the lives of thousands of women in some of the most difficult places in the world to be a woman. Want to hear her story and be inspired? You'll be amazed! To book this dynamic storyteller, contact the SowHope office: 616.433.1575 or email [info@sowhope.org](mailto:info@sowhope.org).

stories of women who have been inspired by SowHope.

Judy loves reviewing the projects and hearing the stories of women who have been positively impacted through SowHope's projects. She looks for long term success at SowHope and knows, from her perspective as a board member, that the organization is right on track.

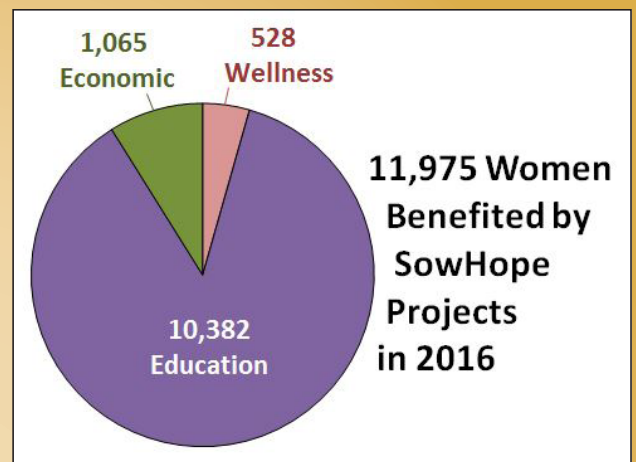
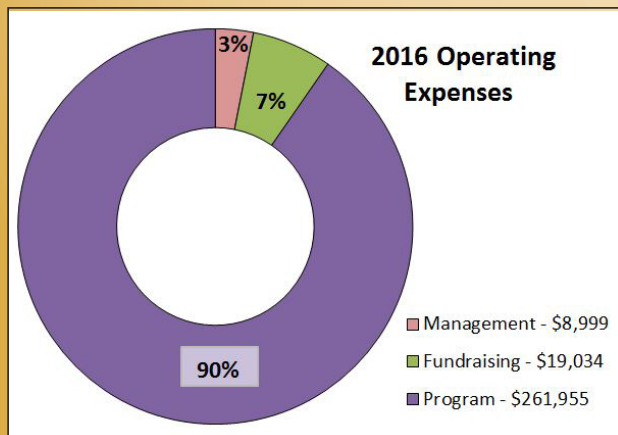
## 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

SowHope exists to inspire impoverished women in the developing world by promoting wellness, education, and economic opportunities.

Here are some of the highlights of 2016, our 11th year of existence:

- SowHope's income for the year 2016 was \$319,635.
- That took us past the all-time mark of \$2 million raised during SowHope's history.
- During 2016 SowHope funded 18 projects in 8 countries, which impacted 11,975 women.
- This brings the all-time number of projects funded by SowHope to 136, in 16 countries, with 73,986 women impacted.

It is only through the support of you, our donors, that this global impact could be possible. Thank you for helping to change the world into a better place.



Country	# of Projects	# of Women Helped
Bangladesh	1	200
Congo	2	500
India	1	2,020
Jordan	1	17
Kenya	2	8,015
Nigeria	3	71
S. Sudan	1	500
Uganda	7	652
<b>2016 TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11,975</b>

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Lizbeth Leeson - Chairperson  
Aaron Hoxworth - Vice Chairperson

Benjamin Borisch - Treasurer  
Ndeye R. Ndao - Secretary

Kathy Crosby  
Kimberly Gill

Diane Joppie  
Katie Kirouac

Judy Kruger  
Genevieve Sabala