



# Sharing Opportunities with Women NEWSLETTER

## COVID-19 UPDATE FROM SOWHOPE PARTNERS

**A**round the world, COVID-19 is wreaking havoc in the lives of people. Those who were suffering due to poverty face even more struggles and danger due to unemployment and food shortages caused by lockdowns. At SowHope, we hear from our partners that people are truly suffering as their meager incomes dwindle within

days, leaving no money to buy essentials vital for survival, such as food and water. SowHope focuses on sustainable development; however, this crisis calls for greater charity. In response, we have provided several partners with stimulus funds. Here are some brief updates from our partners and the women we serve.

### SIERRA LEONE



The project in Sierra Leone is a group agricultural project. Eighty women were allowed by local authorities to go to the fields, even during the Covid pandemic, to do farming as long as they social distanced. They were so grateful to be able to do this. Not only did they grow enough food for themselves, they were able to sell much needed produce in the community. Being in the group really encouraged them to persevere through the pandemic.

**Fatima**, one of the beneficiaries, said, "Before, I did not have tools or seeds to farm but this group project has supported me with these and now I am able to farm. If not for this, I would not have been able to feed my family during this pandemic. Things are really desperate here and we have all benefited a lot. Thank you!"

### KENYA



Beneficiaries who received support said, "We want to give our gratitude and appreciation to SowHope. Thank you so much for remembering us at such a time as this. Some women lost family members due to starvation and mental illness, stemming from job loss. Many more women are still struggling for survival. These women are trying to keep their businesses alive. We are still struggling because of COVID-19."

### NEPAL



The Nepal mask-making project has really taken off. **The 17 women trained there made over 45,000 masks that have sold very quickly. Ten of the women have started their own businesses and they have trained 4 more women.** Some of them have moved to other cities, where there is even more opportunity to sell masks.

One woman, **Harimaya**, comes from a very poor background. She used to do physical labor, but like many because of Covid, she lost her job. Harimaya has to care for her husband, who is paralyzed from a construction accident, as well as his mentally ill brother. Through the project, she was trained in how to make masks and is now able to make money to support her family, all while working from home. She says, "I am so very happy to to make masks! Thank you!"

### INDIA

SowHope assisted 110 women tailoring students by providing food rations, masks, and cleaning supplies. Maturia, whose husband works as a day laborer, said, "I want to thank the leaders for providing the food during this pandemic situation. This will help us survive a whole month." Amrutha, her husband, and two sons are from a stone cutting tribe. She said, "During the lockdown, our work has been stopped. We were left jobless and were facing hard times. I am grateful to SowHope for providing food rations during these tough times."

### SOUTH SUDAN



Our partner in South Sudan, **Rhoda**, helped 65 women receive Covid prevention awareness training, soap, food, and watering cans. The women went back to their own communities and spread the prevention awareness. **Mary** - "SowHope is really a friend indeed; I was not expecting any help this year because the Coronavirus distorted everything in the world. I am very happy to receive the food and the other hygiene kits provided by Rhoda. We have gained back our hope. The community at large has seen the love SowHope has for us women."

**Elizabeth** - "This is the happiest I have been since knowing about the coronavirus! I was not expecting to even survive, but with the help of SowHope and Rhoda my hope has risen, and I have helped others from the training to prevent the coronavirus from spreading in our village."

### BANGLADESH

"We thank SowHope for helping 240 families during this epidemic", says **Bobita**, our partner in Bangladesh. "We are so grateful for the help for the local people. Many did not



get government or local assistance. This project was a big support for them. None of the women in the Tea Gardens area got COVID-19, but the people have no jobs because of the epidemic."

## “WHY 2020 IS THE BEST YEAR TO GIVE”

“For it is in *Giving* that we *Receive*”  
– St. Francis of Assisi

Over the last few years, there have been several changes to charitable giving rules that have caused would-be donors to pause their giving. Recently, most of the tax benefits for cash giving to your favorite charitable organizations have been restricted based on whether or not you itemize on your federal tax returns.

The good news is that with the passing of THE CARES ACT of 2020 - a benefit that has never been seen before is now available for cash donations. This new rule allows itemizers to deduct up to 100% of their Adjusted Gross Income. Unfortunately, if you do not itemize, then the cash gift limits are \$300 individually and \$600 for joint filers.

Despite this historic change, it is still likely that due to the severity of the economic impact of COVID-19, the majority of charities are expecting to see a decrease in giving.

For donors who wish to give more than the cash gift limits listed above, there is an analysis that should be done to compare

itemization strategies and cash or asset giving scenarios. Many times there are ways that will allow donors to give smarter assets than just staying with their individual cash giving limits. There are several ways to actually gift non-cash appreciated assets such as stocks, mutual funds, art, and real estate directly to nonprofit organizations.

Additionally, most people who have IRA accounts are not aware that they could give amounts up to \$100,000 per year from their IRA accounts. In 2020, there are special exceptions to the rules for mandatory IRA distributions. If you've already taken minimum distributions from your IRA, please have your tax advisor analyze whether those distributions were necessary. There are many other asset driven giving strategies that involve giving just the income from an asset while maintaining the asset for family heirs. In my experience, I have found that giving can be a great tool to teach family values to the next generations.

If you found any of this intriguing, then please contact your tax and financial advisors to discuss how you can creatively maximize your smart giving in the future.



SowHope Board Member: Al Longtin, Founder and CEO of Longtin Family Companies

As a follow-up: SowHope will be hosting a *free* online event to discuss these **Basic and Advanced Giving Strategies on Thursday, October 15th, at 7:15 pm, EDT.** Please save the date and feel free to invite your tax or financial advisor or friends that may have an interest in attending as well. Contact [aaron@sowhope.org](mailto:aaron@sowhope.org) to register.

## THE SOWHOPE GALA IS GOING VIRTUAL!

**BIG NEWS** for this year's gala! In light of COVID-19, we are moving from an in-person event to a full virtual experience. It's a new kind of SowHope Gala experience!

**On Thursday, September 24th, at 7pm AND 9pm EST,** we will be livestreaming the SowHope 2020 Gala: “Rise Up”, Presented by **Sonlight, Inc.** and sponsored by **Dentmeister** of Rockford, MI. This year, we will provide you with the opportunity to connect with friends and family to watch the event together online!

**Sponsor or Host a Virtual Watch Party:** To make this event a success, we need you to invite your people. One of the strengths of our event is the intimacy that comes from gathering guests at your own “table”. So, we are encouraging all of you to host your own family and friends! Invite them to join you to watch the event live together in your own Zoom breakout room to hear personal experiences and inspiring stories from the field.

SowHope will be providing the room and detailed instructions for you to make hosting a breeze. There is no geographical limit to this event, so think about your loved ones, no matter where they live, that would really like connecting with SowHope's mission. Invite as many guests as you want – good internet is the only limit!

Because of the reduced cost of the event, your sponsorship will go even further this year. Think about the extra impact of your gift for impoverished women in the developing world!

### Virtual Sponsorship Levels:

1. \$1,000 Gold Level
2. \$500 Green Level
3. \$250 Purple Level
4. \$0 – Be a watch party host and invite people!

Sign up to sponsor, host, or attend at [www.sowhope.org/gala2020](http://www.sowhope.org/gala2020). During this time, your support is more important than ever. Please attend, sponsor or host, and donate to this year's Gala event.

**Thank you!**

**P.S.** There is still time to be a corporate sponsor! Contact [aaron@sowhope.org](mailto:aaron@sowhope.org) for more information.

### SIGN UP TODAY!

SowHope's Virtual Fundraising Gala: “Rise Up”  
**Thursday, September 24, 2020, 7pm & 9pm EST**  
**EVERYWHERE ONLINE**

For event information or sponsorship opportunities,  
please contact Aaron Hoxworth:  
[aaron@sowhope.org](mailto:aaron@sowhope.org) | 616-433-1575

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