

Spring Edition



March 2018 | information@selfhelpinternational.org | www.selfhelpinternational.org | 319.352.4040

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Fighting Back Against Fall Armyworm

"I am scared to death about fall armyworm," Dr. Pedro Sanchez said in the opening day of the World Food Prize's 2017 Borlaug Dialogue. "The fate of African food security hinges on addressing this clear and present danger." That's why the 2002 World Food Prize Laureate is calling on the world's scientists to develop a comprehensive response to the pest, and to share that knowledge and the necessary resources with the smallholder farmers on the front lines as quickly as possible.

Fall armyworm first arrived in Africa in January 2016 and can fly up to 100 km in one night. It has now spread to more than 28 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Ghana, and destroyed more than 740,000 acres of maize on the continent, the staple food for more than 200 million Africans, according to the Sierra Club.

Our team in Ghana identified the threat posed by fall armyworm at the start of 2017, and met with farmers at Adankwame last February to discuss production for the upcoming planting seasons. Last year, Self-Help provided technical and financial support to the seventeen women in Adankwame Farmers Association. They were trained on improved agronomic practices and given loans to purchase seeds, fertilizers and herbicides to produce maize. Despite poor rainfall, the farmers were able to cultivate Quality Protein Maize (QPM) and after harvest, paid their loans in full without default.

However, with the emergence of fall armyworm in their farm fields, they were hesitant to grow QPM in 2017. At the time, there were no known measures to prevent fall armyworm infestation, there were insufficient

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Learning to Feel Comfortable in Their Own Skin

As part of SHI's ongoing training and advising, as well as micro-loan disbursement and collection, SHI micro-credit officers Yolanda and Aracelly regularly travel to each community served through the micro-credit program. And on one recent visit to Las Azucenas, they began to notice something new: there was a new energy in the community. A new curiosity.

As they were visiting homes of the women who had been active in the micro-credit program for a while and were nearing graduation, their neighbors began to gather to witness the training sessions and listen to the advice given. Yolanda and Aracelly invited the neighbors in, and taught all

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Self-Help International Welcomes Two New Directors to the Board

Dr. Ann Bell

Ann Bell grew up in Colorado and earned a B.S. in Physical Sciences from Colorado State University, with a major in Chemistry and minor in Physics and Mathematics. She earned her MD from the Uniform Services University of Healthcare Sciences F. Edward Ehdert School of Medicine, and went on to serve in the United States Air Force for 14 years. Ann is a recently retired physician of Mayo Clinic who practiced Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery in Waverly until 2010.

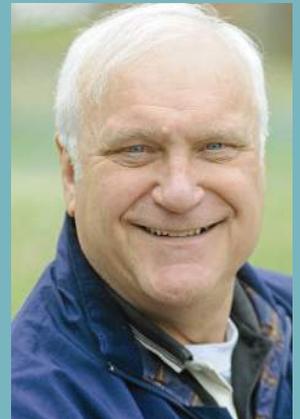


Ann traveled with Self-Help to Nicaragua during her first term on the SHI Board of Directors from 2012-14, and is now joining the Board for a second term of service after moving back to Waverly, Iowa to be closer to her grandchildren (with one more due next month!). She enjoys being involved with Self-Help because she says she "understands the need to act globally and locally."

Fun Fact about Ann: at one point, she was a hot air balloon pilot!

Jerry Perkins

Jerry Perkins has covered farm and agribusiness news, both domestically and internationally, for more than 40 years. After graduating from George Washington University, he joined the Peace Corps, working in agricultural and community development programs in Panama and Nicaragua from 1970-72. He returned to Iowa in 1976 and started his journalism career at the Guthrie Center (IA) Newspapers in 1976. Jerry worked for the Des Moines Register from 1978-88 covering the suburbs, local government and agribusiness, and then served as public affairs director of the Iowa Corn Growers Association and the Iowa Corn Promotion Board from 1988-93.



In 1992, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, he took a leave of absence from the corn growers and spent seven months in Stavropol, Russia, managing the Russian-American Agribusiness Center, which assisted Russian agriculture in becoming more market-oriented. Jerry returned to the Des Moines Register as Farm Editor from 1993-2008, during which time he regularly covered Dr. Norman Borlaug's work to alleviate hunger and wrote several stories about Self-Help's work abroad. He took an early retirement from the paper in September 2008. From July 2009-March 2018, he was the editor of BioFuels Journal, a quarterly magazine that covered the ethanol and advanced biofuels industries. Jerry and his wife, Peggy, live in Des Moines, IA and have three grown sons and one granddaughter.

Memorial and Honorary Gifts

In honor of Gail Stelmacher
by Bikal Adhikari

In honor of Rhonda Arends and Anne Gish
by Jane Arends

In honor of Dr. Ann F. Bell for her birthday and a merry Christmas
by Richard Bell

In honor of Mary Jane Oakland
by Sue Benson

In honor of Karen Skovgard's birthday
by Armenta Buckingham, Charlotte Schultz and Jody Rains

In memory of Mary and John D. Ramsey
by Kathryn Carey

In honor of my kids and grandkids
by LaRue Clark

In honor of Karen Skovgard and Evelyn Kinsinger
by Cherry Coen

In memory of Gene L. Davis, who worked in Pakistan on small tractor production
by Frieda Davis

In loving memory of Joan Stadola
by Pastor Richard Druckrey

In memory of Janet Natvig Dotseth
by Randi Ellefson

In memory of family members and Lorena Arns
by Hilda Fedeler

In honor of the ordination of Elizabeth Walch
by Grace Lutheran Church, Grafton, WI

In honor of Rebecca Nunley and Barb Gardner
by Kristing Heeter

In honor of my nieces and nephews
by Kathy Kahoun

In honor of Maureen and Terry Tobin
by PJ & Claudette McDonald

In honor of SHI staff
by Joe Milana

In memory of Charles Neil
by Eunice Neil

In memory of Ray and Gwen Nelson
by Carol Nelson

In honor of Keegan Kautzky
by Kevin Olberding

In honor of Gina Paul
by Kathy & Kevin Paul

In loving memory of Ruth Knutsen
by Eugene and Gerri Rall

In honor of Josie, Soren & Linnea Beckstrom
by Marilyn Van Roekel

In loving memory of Father Victor Phelan
by Patricia Saylor

In honor of Maureen and Terry Tobin
by John Schmidt

In memory of J.T. Scott
by Sue R. Scott

In honor of Bob and Carol Richardson Smith
by Barb Smith

In honor of: Brian, Anne, & Bridget Smith Barb Smith and Rod Hoffman, Doug, Kate, Megan & Lindsay Smith Patty and David Ressler
by Carol & Bob Smith

In honor of: Anne, Bridget, Megan, and Lindsay Smith
by Carol & Bob Smith

In memory of Dave "Lags" Lageschulte
by Donna Speake

In memory of Steven Sutter and Thomas Sutter
by Marjorie Sutter

In honor of Angela Bunger's birthday
by Allyson Therien

In honor of Elaine Dove
by Mary VerSteege

In honor of Dale and Mary Harpstead
by Elizabeth Walch

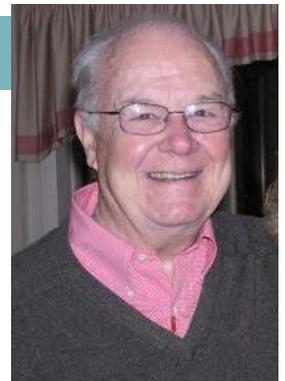
In honor of Helen Tandoh
by Anne and Ivan Webber

In honor of Gail Stelmacher
by Cynthia Thorland and Fritz Weitz

In Memory of Kenneth R. Roach

Kenneth R. Roach, 90, of Detroit, MI, grandfather of Self-Help Executive Director Nora Tobin, was an avid world traveler who instilled a love of travel in his children and grandchildren. Ken visited 61 countries, often with his wife of 65 years, Helen, or one of his 7 children and 16 grandchildren. On behalf of the family lumber business, McCausey Lumber Company, he traveled to Ghana on several occasions. He brought home stories and

souvenirs, especially wood carvings, purchased from local entrepreneurs he met along the way. He loved to call Nora to find out where in the world she was, and ask about the price of lumber in Ghana. The Roach and Tobin families wish to extend their deepest gratitude to friends who made memorial gifts in celebration of Ken's life, and his belief in the importance of education, love of international travel, and entrepreneurial spirit.



*by Rich and Laura Barrent
by Susan Boe
by Shannon Cofield
by Volker & Brigitte Dietzel
by Shannon and DeLane Duval
by Jim and Martha Fifield
by Scott Galenbeck and Leann Treloar
by Deb and Rick Giarusso
by Bob and Ann Gernes
by Julie Hess*

*by Jim and Linda Holcomb
by Heather and Jeff Jergens
by Ray and Mary Keables
by Mary and John Lepic
by Holly and Mark Lyons
by Maggie Maloney
by McCausey Lumber Company
by Sue and Jim Meimann
by Pat Miller
by Kirk and Sara Nelson*

*by Kathy and Kevin Paul
by Katie Pauley and Jonathan Frank
by Rick and Ann Pauley
by John Schmidt and Deb Wiley
by Paul Scott and Shawn Burke
by Anjela Shutts and Pete Kitundu
by Jim and Kathy Stavneak
by Nancy and Keith Swanson
by Cynthia Thorland & Fritz Weitz
by Catherine Witte*



Asking questions during women's health training

Self-Help International Teen Girls Club has been helping teen girls stay in school and complete their formal education since September 2016. Since unplanned pregnancies are a leading cause of girls dropping out of school, and often dooms them to a lifetime of rural poverty, Self-Help has been leading workshops for the Teen Girls Clubs on topics requested by the participants, their mothers, and community leaders such as reading, community clean up, citizenship, and reproductive health education. The basic education initially offered was insufficient for some young women, and women of all ages in the villages we serve began asking for more comprehensive family planning services. We knew that women's health was critical to the health of the whole family – particularly if they're the only breadwinner and only earn income on days they're healthy enough to work – yet the medical knowledge required was beyond our areas of expertise. We needed a partner who could offer high quality education and affordable healthcare services by trained health professionals.

Despite determined efforts, initial inquiries to potential local collaborators were fruitless. Here in Ghana, efforts by local community development organizations with similar goals to partner each other are often met with skepticism and yield few results due to a perception that the organizations are competing rather than complementing each other's role. Yet against the odds, today we are pleased to be partnering with a professional health body in Ghana to deliver the needed health services to our cherished communities.

In August 2017, while visiting Ghana, our executive director called a meeting of Self-Help International and Marie Stopes International staff. At the meeting, she laid bare the mission and vision of Self-Help International, and listened to the vision and mission of Marie Stopes International. The team at Marie Stopes International (MSI), led by Stella, was already well aware of the numerous connections between women's health and the health and financial wellbeing of the children and family. They came to the conclusion that if MSI could offer health services in villages where SHI was already actively supporting women's micro-credit groups and teen girls clubs, we would both better achieve our ultimate goals of a healthy and hunger-free world. MSI graciously accepted the invitation to partner with SHI to facilitate healthier communities.

On August 11, a team of health workers from MSI provided education and screening on reproductive health for SHI micro-loan beneficiaries during a leadership summit held in the village of Bedabour. During the leadership summit, the village elders and religious leaders present learned about MSI and the requests of their community members to access quality health services, and pledged their support of such endeavors.

On Thursday, October 19, a team of four health workers led by Stella organized a talk program on reproductive health and teenage pregnancy for thirty (30) students who are members of SHI Teen Girls Clubs and their parents at Timeabu. Stella, a midwife, spoke to the girls about teenage pregnancy; how teenage pregnancy occurs and the dangers in childbirth as a teenager. She advised the girls to stay in school and focus on their studies so as to have a brighter future. Stella also advised the parents that, should the unexpected happen and their teenage daughters get pregnant, they should bring them to the hospital and never neglect them. The parents were receptive and took advantage of the occasion to advise their children to pay attention to everything they are taught.

Stella and her team repeated the education and training on Friday, October 20, in Bedabour. Teenage girls from Bedabour and Beposo converged in Bedabour for health training. In all, 95 women and girls attended the training at Bedabour. The talk was on teenage pregnancy and its effects on young mothers. Unlike girls from Timeabu, the girls from Bedabour and Beposo said they felt pressured by their family's economic circumstances to have amorous relationship with the men for financial rewards. It came up that some parents in the community have taken their daughters to local chemical sellers and herbalists for unsafe abortions. A bit shocked, Stella and her team advised about the dangers of unsafe abortion which can lead to the removal of the womb and leave a woman barren, and discussed local resources where the girls and parents can turn to for help if faced with such a situation. After the talk, MSI offered free health screening services to 10 women who requested further attention.

It was clear from listening to the mothers and daughters in these three villages that access to ongoing health services and advising from medical professionals was a previously unmet need that was in high demand by the rural communities. MSI is planning a series of health education and screening services for more communities Self-Help serves 2018.

No doubt, this partnership will go a long way to ensure that mothers are able to receive financial support to start and expand their businesses, generate income so they can take good care of their families, invest in educating their daughters as well as their sons, and enable their girls to be mindful of manageable family sizes, avoiding diseases, and well prepared to welcome a child when the time is right.

Augustine was born into a broken home. But thanks to your support of the school feeding program, he's getting stronger each day.

When Ataa was in her final year of junior high school, she found herself pregnant. Ataa's father became very agitated with the man who impregnated his daughter, and after series of disputes between the two families, the man was arrested. Ataa's father could not come to terms with the fact that his daughter had become a school dropout after investing so much in her education. He became a laughing stock among his peers, especially those who thought he was foolish to educate his daughter in the first place.

There was too much anger in the home, so, like many poor girls in rural Ghana, Ataa decided to leave the community and set out on her own. But she found that the world was tougher than she imagined. By the time she and her son Augustine returned home, they were both in worse condition.

Ataa's mother lamented, "Though, I am not a nutritionist, when I saw Augustine I knew right away he was suffering from chronic hunger." By then Ataa was expecting again. "I wondered how my husband and I could take care of Ataa, her pregnancy and her son." Eventually Augustine and his half-sister Suzy came to live with them, and they enrolled Augustine at Beposo KG1 where they are grateful that he receives free breakfast every morning. "I enjoy the porridge, especially when I am eating together with friends," says Augustine.

"I must say my grandson is not the only one who owns SHI gratitude," said Augustine's grandfather. "The zeal with which the children at Beposo Basic School eat the porridge is amazing, and I ask myself how many of these children would attend school regularly if no porridge was served?" Augustine's grandmother added in, "Every parent from Beposo must be thankful to God and Self-Help."

Augustine, now eight years old, is developing interest in school and his grandparents have high hopes that he will complete his education, become responsible and serve his community. Thank you for your support of the school feeding program, and supporting children like Augustine to get the nutrition their growing brains and bodies need.

At Self-Help, we know that fighting hunger isn't a quick fix. It requires both feeding interventions to support children already experiencing malnutrition; and at the same time preventing malnutrition for the next child by working with mothers to ensure they get adequate nutrition during pregnancy and while breastfeeding, and know how to nourish their weaning children. But you can make a difference - in fact, if you're reading this, you already have! Read more on page 6 about a pilot program for new mothers like Ataa in Beposo and how you can get involved.



Augustine with his sister, Suzy, and grandparents

How Self-Help's School Feeding Program Works

Self-Help International has been instrumental in starting feeding programs in primary schools in rural villages in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The feeding program trains parents, teachers, and other community members in improved agricultural practices to grow Quality Protein Maize (QPM). The village chief designates a plot of land, Self-Help provides the inputs to cultivate QPM, and community members raise the maize. At harvest, Self-Help provides storage bags so the maize can be utilized throughout the year in the school feeding program. A community volunteer fetches the water and firewood and prepares porridge – called "koko" – from the QPM each morning. Self-Help supplies sugar to make the mixture more palatable. Children love the taste of the porridge and get a healthy breakfast to start the day well-fed and ready to learn. Parents are more likely to send their children to school when they know free breakfast will be provided. Teachers report increased enrollment, improved daily attendance, and fewer children who leave school early because of stomach pains caused by coming to school hungry.

The children, parents, and teachers loved the school feeding program, but they could see for themselves that their children needed more nutrients and asked us how they could better fortify the porridge? So, as increased funding became available, we introduced intercropping to the school farms and schools began to plant groundnuts or cowpea in the rows between the QPM, which was then added to further enhance the caloric and protein content of the porridge.

Growing Healthy Food, Growing Healthy Children

by The Rev. Dr. Mary Jane Oakland



Families gather under a mango tree in Beposo to learn how to enroll in the nutrition intervention on February 23rd, 2018

Over the past two years, Self-Help staff members have measured the heights and weights of the students who are receiving breakfast porridge made from Quality Protein Maize (QPM) through the Self-Help school-feeding program when school is in session. In some communities, as many as 1 in 4 students' growth is already stunted when they start school. The children are not only short in stature, but stunting affects their ability to learn and long-term productivity for the rest of their lives that cannot be overcome by better feeding later in childhood or adulthood.

Roger Thurow's recently published book, "The First 1,000 Days," showed through case studies that in order to grow healthy children and avoid stunting: 1) Calorie and protein requirements must be met during prenatal development in the first six months of breast feeding and weaning; 2) Nutritional health is important during pregnancy and lactation; 3) It is very important that babies are exclusively breastfed for the first six months. While nearly all babies in rural Ghana are breastfed for a while, our survey found that only 36% of mothers in communities we serve practice exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months.

For that reason, SHI is piloting a program to grow foods that can be used as a more nutritional weaning supplement so mothers can prevent stunting of their children.

I traveled to Ghana in January 2018 to work with Self-Help's staff to develop a pilot program to grow local foods that mothers can use as a weaning supplement that would be more nutritional for the child to prevent stunting. Based on consultations with nursing and lactating mothers in the villages Self-Help serves, as well as nutritionists and researcher scientists working in Ghana, and hospital and community health workers, and crop specialists, we've designed an intervention to work with farmers to grow foods locally that would improve weaning foods for infants and provide a more adequate diet for pregnant and lactating women. We plan to launch this pilot intervention in the village of Beposo because of the demonstrated need based on growth data from schools and the demonstrated commitment of the Beposo community.

We will enroll up to 50 pregnant women in the program, and provide supplemental food packets to them during pregnancy and lactation. The mothers' weight gain in pregnancy will be monitored and the length and weight of the babies will be measured. The quality of both mothers' and babies' dietary intake will be tracked and the food security of their home circumstances will be noted.

At the same time, Self-Help's agriculture training team will teach intercropping of QPM with cowpeas or groundnuts to increase the protein content of the porridge and will partner with regional experts to teach farmers to grow orange-flesh sweet potatoes which are high in Vitamin A to add to the weaning food. In the future, the micro-credit program will play a role in introducing poultry production for family consumption and income to encourage animal-source protein consumption and enable mothers to introduce eggs in the diets of their weaning infants.

In order to enroll, the mother (and father when possible) must commit to both the farming and the nutritional counseling-educational components of the program. Although much of the one-on-one counseling and group nutrition education sessions with the Self-Help nutritionist will be provided to the mothers, we will be working to gain buy-in from the fathers and the entire community.

Babies born in Beposo will be followed until two years of age. The goal: no children will be stunted at 24 months of age. Similar interventions in other parts of Ghana and across Africa that combine nutritional education and the growing of nutrient-dense foods have found that this intensive support for a mother with one child will improve the health of all her future children, even after the intervention has ended.

The community leadership and the assigned community health worker, are eager to partner with Self-Help to improve the growth and health of the children. While the intervention will require an upfront investment, similar interventions in other parts of Ghana and across Africa that combine nutritional education and the growing of nutrient-dense foods have found that this intensive support for a mother with one child will improve the health of all her future children, even after the intervention has ended.

The Rev. Dr. Mary Jane Oakland is an emeritus professor of Food Science and Human Nutrition at Iowa State University and a retired Episcopal priest. She has served on the Self-Help International Board of Directors since 2006.

Would your family like to be responsible for ending the stunting and chronic malnutrition of mothers and children in Beposo?

This intervention will cost an estimated \$10,000 in the first year to serve 50 women and their 50 babies (or \$4 per person, per week) including securing a motorbike for regular transportation to Beposo, fuel, nutrition education and supplements, and ag inputs and training. If you'd like to make a one-time major gift to support some or all of the families so that the nutritional intervention can become reality, please contact Nora Tobin at nora@selfhelpinternational.org or 319-352-4040.

Fighting Back Against Fall Armyworm

Continued from Pg. 1

Improving Agriculture



pesticides available on the market to control the pests, and due to low rainfall, QPM yields the previous season were not encouraging, meaning that if the pests arrived, farmers' yields would suffer further.

"Information from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture has it that there has been fall armyworm attack on farms in our district and the attack is severe on maize. We have therefore decided that we shall not cultivate maize this year. We shall cultivate rice instead," said Fatima, Chairwoman of the Adankwame Farmers Association.

While Self-Help encourages farmers to grow crops with enhanced nutrition such as QPM and the orange fleshed sweet potato which is rich in Vitamin A, we are prepared to support farmers to do what is best for their families based on the information available.

It is uncommon for smallholder farmers to be this decisive, especially when loans are involved. Many smallholder farmers have defaulted in repaying their loans because they failed to critically assess loan conditions as compared to projected yields. Late disbursements, unfavorable climatic and market conditions have contributed towards high loan defaults among smallholder farmers.

Yet, training smallholder farmers to be knowledgeable in their operations, providing them loans on time and linking them to appropriate sources of information enhance their contributions to food security. While Self-Help encourages farmers to grow crops with enhanced nutrition such as QPM and the orange fleshed sweet potato which is rich in Vitamin A, we are prepared to support farmers to do what is best for their families based on the information available.

Self-Help supported the seventeen women with input loans for rice production to ensure their families had an adequate supply of staple crops for the consumption and sale and delivered the inputs to the farmers last March. The farmers were delighted to receive the inputs on credit and on time.

In June 2017, SHI's staff agricultural specialists visited the farmers and they were anticipating good yields. By September, they reported that the inputs provided by Self-Help have indeed helped to increase their yields and profits. Fatimatu, one of the group leaders said, "None of the 17 of us can say that her farm did not produce enough yield." She continued, "I visited all the 17 farmers' farms and assisted with harvesting and know what I am talking about."

All 17 farmers repaid their loans in full and on time – in fact, 10 women even repaid the loans ahead of schedule

saying they harvested and sold the rice earlier than expected, allowing them to enjoy the profits and repay the loans early to allow the funds to be used to help other women in need of financial support.

The group requested assistance with input loans again during the minor growing season this past November in order to free up funds so they could better meet their children's needs between harvests. Thanks to the Half the Sky giving circle in Des Moines, Self-Help was able to support the women again in the minor growing season, as well as 10 new participants who joined the group after seeing the successes of their neighbors during the major growing season. So far, things are going well and they expect another good harvest.

Ensuring food security is everyone's responsibility. All hands must be on deck! Thank you to all whose support is helping families in Adankwame adapt to changing conditions, make informed decisions, and better feed themselves!

Maize is the most important staple cereal crop grown by smallholders in sub-Saharan Africa. According to the Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI), maize accounts for more than half of all cereal production in Ghana, and one-fifth of the calories and protein consumed in West Africa. Yet fall armyworm has decimated the maize crop in Ghana since its arrival in November 2016, accounting for 45% of maize crop loss in the country last year. Since smallholder farmers grow the vast majority of maize in the country, they're the ones most affected by this attack. Ghana was among the first countries in Africa invaded by fall armyworm, which has now spread across all of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Self-Help's Fran Mueller & Virginia Lageschulte Training Center in Kumasi, Ghana opted to plant maize last season despite the threat of fall armyworm in order to test out ways to address the pest, and better advise the farmers and schools who cultivated quality protein maize (QPM) to contribute to the school feeding programs and their own household consumption.

We worked closely with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) Ashanti Regional Crops Officer to assess the cost, availability, and efficacy of inputs, to communicate the options to maize farmers, and to help them access the best inputs and ensure they were able to access authentic applications as fake products began to come onto the market.

Read the rest of this story online:

<https://selfhelpinternational.org/2017/12/20/fighting-back-against-fall-armyworm-part-ii/>



**Leaving a Legacy:
The gift that keeps on giving.**

Who We Are

Self-Help International is dedicated to alleviating hunger by helping people help themselves. Though our means of carrying out this mission has shifted over the decades, the mission itself has never wavered since Vern Schield founded Self-Help in Waverly, Iowa in 1959.

What We Do

We alleviate hunger by assisting the rural poor, small scale farmers and related enterprises in developing countries to become self-reliant in meeting the needs of families and communities through training, education, leadership development, and other forms of assistance.

Sustainable Development



Accessing Clean Water

Partnering with Community Water and Sanitation Committees (CAPS) to improve public health through community-scale water chlorination systems so families can lead healthier, more productive lives



Empowering Women and Girls

Offering women micro-loans and training to generate income to meet their families' needs, and supporting girls' education through Teen Girls Clubs



Ending Malnutrition

Establishing school farms and feeding programs to ensure children start the day hunger-free, and offering targeted nutritional support during the first 1,000 days of life



Training Youth

Addressing youth unemployment through practical training on low-land use agro-enterprises such as poultry, rabbitry, grasscutter, and mushroom production



Improving Agriculture

Helping farmers grow more and better food to nourish their families and communities through practical, hands-on training sessions and demonstration plots

Leaving Behind a Legacy:

Providing a gift that will change the lives of families forever.

Dear friend,

Thank you for your generous support of Self-Help International over the years. Perhaps you, as we do, still remember fondly the little red tractor called the "Self-Helper" that symbolized Self-Help's (our) early work to alleviate hunger and poverty. However, with time and experience, Self-Help has found more effective and sustainable ways to achieve the same goal.

We've gone from helping farmers improve yields by using Self-Helper tractors, to teaching improved agricultural practices, helping farmers grow more nutritious crops, empowering women, feeding children, and providing access to clean water. But through these changes, we've always stayed true to our core values of helping people help themselves.

You've been with us through all of these transitions-- not watching from the sidelines, but actively helping to ensure that we are serving those most in need in the best ways possible.

And your contributions have borne fruit! Families like Socorro's in La Reforma, Nicaragua are better off today because of your support last year. Families like Abena's and Ndgo's and Safia's in Nkawie, Ghana are better off today because of your support the year before. And more families like theirs will be better off next year, because of your support this year.

Sustainability is at the core of everything we do: ensuring that the services we provide today will make a lasting difference. Today, we're launching a legacy campaign to ensure that Self-Help is able to make a lasting difference for struggling families in need in perpetuity.

Because this mission to alleviate hunger and help people help themselves is important to you, we're inviting you to consider making a gift as part of your estate plan. Once you have provided for your loved ones in your will, consider including a gift to Self-Help to ensure that your legacy of fighting hunger and improving lives may continue.

The impact of your support is felt across the globe. Thank you in advance for considering taking your giving a step further. If you have further questions, please contact Nora Tobin, Executive Director, at 319.352.4040 or nora@selfhelpinternational.org.

Yours in Impact,



Fran Mueller,
Vice President,
Board of Directors



Dick Neal
President,
Board of Directors

For more information visit:
selfhelpinternational.org

For more information call: 319-352-4040

Celebrating International Women's Day

Learning to Feel Comfortable in Their Own Skin

Continued from Pg. 1

gathered about several business skills that would benefit their small enterprises.

For those who were more mature in the program, Aracelly and Yolanda introduced the concept of starting a community bank so that the women could begin pooling their savings and lending to one another. That way, as they grow their own profits, they can lend out their savings to other women in the community. Plus, since the group sets their own rules, they could opt to issue loans of higher value than Self-Help's current maximum. The women were excited to learn about the opportunity to still maintain their relationship with the micro-credit officers and receive consulting if needed, but also to have the ability to achieve self-sufficiency while still receiving helpful skills training.

A few weeks later, the two micro-credit officers returned to the small, rural community of Las Azucenas to host a beauty workshop for the daughters of the micro-credit beneficiaries. They wanted to demonstrate that the girls could also be a part of the program by helping their mothers and to give all gathered the chance to feel pampered. By learning how to do their own hair and makeup, the girls can spend less at salons in the area for services for important life events such as quinceaneras and weddings. During the training session, they learned how to trim, style, and brush their hair. The girls were eager to learn the different styles and spent the day practicing on each other. The teen girls and their mothers would then use these skills to generate income by charging others in the area small amounts to do their hair.

The most recent training for the women of Las Azucenas was hosted at the training center rather than their communities and focused not on business management or learning new skills, but on health. Thirty women attended the training, led by a doctor and a nurse from the local Ministry of Health. They taught the women preventative measures to maintain their health, educated them about sexual infections, discussed signs for early detection of breast and uterine cancer, and taught which signs and symptoms were reasons to seek immediate help from a doctor. Five women came forward with symptoms to seek help and learn how to better care for their bodies. Mammograms were performed for free for the women who attended. After the training, a visit was arranged to Laurel Galan Health Center, so that the women could also be a part of the program by helping their mothers and to give all gathered the chance to feel pampered. By learning how to do their own hair and makeup, the girls can spend less at salons in the area for services for important life events such as quinceaneras and weddings. During the training session, they learned how to trim, style, and brush their hair. The girls were eager to learn the different styles and spent the day practicing on each other. The teen girls and their mothers would then use these skills to generate income by charging others in the area small amounts to do their hair.

Women learning about the importance of healthcare receive a free pap smear test to follow through on the encouragement to get regular preventative health care screening. Our country program director, Jorge, provided transportation for the women and drove each of them to and from the clinic to the training center. The Nicaragua SHI staff also used one of the new and improved stoves to make lunch for all of the women after the training sessions. The SHI staff said they felt satisfied knowing that the women were not only receiving help to improve their economic obstacles, but also receive basic important services to improve their health so that they can face any obstacle in life. At the end of the training, the women expressed their gratitude, and said that after meeting the doctors in person in a more relaxed setting that day, they now feel comfortable visiting the clinic on their own when they need to in the future.

Thank you for your support of the women of Las Azucenas – from training in business management, to accessing micro-loans, to ensuring they're healthy enough to run their businesses – you're truly pairing education with the resources to put that education into action.



In Their Own Words: What Economic Empowerment Means to Women in Nkawie

Empowering Women

"I have six children: two are married and out of the house, one just finished high school, and three are in primary school. Ever since I joined the micro-credit program, I have had no difficulty paying school fees. The daughter who just graduated has started a poultry business, so we are getting more protein in our diets. And we own our own home, we don't rent. I am very proud." – Abena



"When my brother died, I took in his two children. Two of my grandchildren also live with us. I am able to feed all four of them and pay all of their school fees. Without Self-Help, none of that would be possible." – Ndgo



"Thanks to the loans, my business is moving along. I use my proceeds to support my children's school fees. Four are in basic school, and one is in senior high. I am very grateful." – Safia



"I have one child in high school, and use my proceeds to pay the school fees. Then my other child was in a car accident, and I had many expenses for the healthcare. If not for Self-Help, my business would not have survived. I would have had to sell everything to pay for the medical care, and then I would have been left with no way of supporting my family. But because of this micro-credit program, my business survived and I'm able to continue providing for my children." - Alimatu



"Before I began working with Self-Help, it was a problem to buy palm fruits to process. I had to buy the palm fruits in small, small quantities, which is more expensive than buying in bulk. Now, with the loans, I am able to buy in bulk so I keep more of the proceeds. I use my profits to pay school fees to keep two of my children in senior high school." – Esther



"Thanks to the micro-loans, I am able to pay school fees to keep my children in school. My business is stable. Having a regular source of income gives me peace of mind. My dream is that one day, I will be able to afford to send my children abroad to continue their education." - Dinah



"I have one child in teacher training college, and one just finished senior high school. I had no capital before joining the Self-Help micro-credit program, so it was difficult to support their schooling and also build my business. Now, things are much better." - Abena



"The loans have been very helpful. If you work hard, you can secure a better future for your children. I am able to feed and school my children, and still continue my business. I don't want my children to suffer the way I have, so I am very grateful." – Nasak



St. Theresa's Social Justice Week

On February 1st, SHI staff members and local volunteer Karen Skovgard visited St. Theresa's Catholic School during their Social Justice Week to talk with 3rd - 8th grade students about global hunger and poverty, especially access to clean water.

Students learned about the value of clean water, how much water they

use on a daily basis, and how they can help make a difference in their home and community.

The students participated in similar activities to those designed by Linnea Beckstrom of Waverly-Shell Rock Middle School. Read more about that activity below!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:

Are you a current or retired educator who would like to educate students in your area about global poverty? Contact us to join our speaker's bureau!

Sunday School Success

How does your Sunday School engage with missions? In October, Hazel Dell UMC focused on alleviating hunger. Students made posters, spoke during Sunday services, and cooked and served demonstration batches of the Quality Protein Maize-based porridge that Ghanaian school children in the program eat for breakfast at school every day. They also held a "noisy offering" to support Self-Help's school feeding program in Ghana (read more about the impact this has for children like Augustine on page 5). If your church is interested in replicating this project at your Sunday School, using our vacation bible school curriculum focused on clean water, or getting bulletin inserts for your next noisy offering, contact our office at 319.352.4040!



Eighth-Grader Creates Hunger and Water Simulation for Her School

by Donna Davis, Self-Help Volunteer

On January 18th, 50 eighth-graders gathered at Waverly-Shell Rock Middle School (WSR) to participate in a water and hunger simulation, led by Linnea Beckstrom, a 13-year old WSR student during their Community Build. Linnea, along with her mother, Josie, and brother, Soren, joined the Self-Help International team on a week long immersion trip in November after winning tickets from Self-Help's Spring Gala in 2017. The three spent a few days working with locals in Nicaragua and participated in the programs for farmers, beneficiaries of the micro-credit program, and visited some of Self-Help's chlorination systems that provide clean water to communities.

Although Linnea spoke little Spanish, she quickly adopted a respect for the culture and was stricken by curiosity after her many interactive experiences during her trip. After witnessing how Self-Help's programs work first-hand, Linnea returned to her home in Waverly and spoke with her mother concerning a possible group activity to help her classmates experience and understand what she personally witnessed in Nicaragua. As a supporter in all of Linnea's ideas, Josie

invited Jackie Steinkamp, the Development Director at Self-Help, for dinner at their home. Knowing Linnea's tenacity for learning, Jackie wasn't surprised when Linnea had a powerpoint ready complete with an action plan for how she was going to bring her school together to participate in a water and hunger simulation and provide a global, educational lesson.

After Linnea's initial meeting with Self-Help, she contacted her Waverly-Shell Rock Middle School teachers and set up several meetings over the course of a few weeks, discussing the logistics of her plan for an activity with her peers. As a result, Linnea's teachers, principal, and volunteers from the community were on board; and, on January 18th, during the Community Builders time block, Linnea was able to see her ideas brought to life.

Inside Waverly-Shell Rock Middle School, Linnea divided 50 eighth-graders into two groups, following an introduction to the program by Jackie and Linnea. Linnea shared some possibilities for young people to make a positive difference and that no matter your age or background, you can help others around the world.



Iowa Advance Special #229

Eighth-Grader Creates Hunger and Water

Simulation for Her School *Continued*

The first half of students stayed in the classroom, where they watched a presentation and journeyed through the life of an eighth grader in Nicaragua and their struggle to find safe, clean drinking water. They then participated in an activity where they learned how much water they were using per day, and how much was needed to stay properly hydrated. They were surprised to see that it was impossible for them to carry the weight of the water they used if they had to fetch their own water.

The second group of students were led to the hallway, where Josie walked them up and down the stairs for 15 minutes. They were given a bag full of small, painted blue rocks (symbolizing buckets holding water (rocks were used so that no clean water went to waste during this simulation). Some rocks had symbols on them: triangles, circles, dots, lines, and squares. After their "journey" with their bags, the students spent a few minutes analyzing which symbols they had on their rocks.

The groups gathered back in the classroom where they listened to a presentation on water-borne illnesses and their effects on the body. It wasn't a surprise, when Linnea's mother Josie, being a registered nurse, created a list of water-borne illness facts and their effects to aid her daughter's presentation. While in Nicaragua, Josie met Yolanda, Self-Help's micro-credit officer, who had recently given birth to a healthy baby boy. He quickly became sick with parasites, and Yolanda, despite being well-educated, could not understand how the baby was sick when she only provided bottled water for his formula. Josie asked, "What are the bottles being washed with?" It was in that moment that family realized the caretaker was using local water to wash her dishes. Josie told this example to the eighth graders, explaining to them that no matter how educated one might be, no matter how much they try to avoid the effects of dirty water, illness can affect anyone.

Josie then explained to the students that the symbols on their rocks represented cholera, dysentery, typhoid

fever, giardiasis, and, amoebiasis-five common water-borne diseases which often result in diarrhea, dehydration and sometimes death. Improper drinking water and lack of proper sanitation are responsible for 80% of all illnesses in developing countries.

The groups then rotated to the other classroom, where they then participated in a hunger simulation. The students received paper "passports" informing them of the rates of poverty and information about food waste in the U.S. The students traveled to three tables of 'global destinations' - USA, Mexico, and Nicaragua. Linnea presented a short preview and her two eighth-grade friends acted as "stewardesses", directing the global travelers to one of three countries while handing them a plate of food.

If the student was assigned to the United States table, they received a plate of hearty mac and cheese. If the student traveled to Mexico, they received an Outreach Program deluxe mac and cheese plate, which is a relief packaged meal full of fortified nutrients. The Outreach Program is a non-profit that organizes food packaging events around the country. The third group received just the package of the Outreach Program mac and cheese, uncooked with no silverware, as the table leader explained to them that unfortunately, this destination didn't have enough stoves to cook the meal.

All 50 students received a global experience in their middle school, thanks to Linnea, her family, and help from the community. When community members learned about Linnea's project, they quickly acted. Rosemary Hagensick from A&R Travel and Donna Dravis, SHI volunteer, led the students in their groups and even prepared all the food!

If you are interested in replicating the hunger and water simulations in your school or church, contact Jackie Steinkamp at 319-352-4040.

If you are interested in learning more about the Outreach Program, please contact them at 641-486-2550.



Top left: Volunteer Rosemary Hagensick, from A&R Travel, leads group discussion about poverty in Nicaragua.

Top right: Linnea Beckstrom (center) and friends enjoy a mac and cheese dish during the hunger simulation.

Below: Linnea's 50 eighth-grade peers and teachers enjoy a presentation about an eighth-grader in Nicaragua searching for clean water.



Providing Access to Clean Water



Socorro with her SHI brochure about the benefits of safe, clean drinking water



Clean water program officer, Orlando, makes a random visit to sample the water in the chlorination system



Children in La Reforma are now drinking clean water everyday

We Feel Safer with Clean Water

"We know that paying for the chlorine tablets is worth it. We can feel the difference!" - Socorro

Socorro is one of the 750 beneficiaries of Self-Help International's clean water program in the community of La Reforma, El Almendro in the state of Río San Juan in southern Nicaragua. She and her husband, Luis, have lived in their neighborhood, La Reforma, for more than 40 years. She tells us that before the water was chlorinated, her family fell victim to constant stomach ailments from the unsanitized water they drank.

With a detached look in her eyes, Socorro pauses for a few seconds, remembering that the water that came from the faucet was often dirty and foul-smelling. She worried about her family and especially the health of her grandchildren. Socorro recalls that many of the families in the neighborhood requested a meeting with the group tasked with protecting and overseeing water, known locally as "ASODEAL." ASODEAL had recently hired a new water administrator who had heard about other neighborhoods in the El Almendro municipality having success with the CTI-8 chlorinators. The water supply in Socorro's and Luis' community at the time had a high contamination risk, so ASODEAL deemed that a chlorinator was the best option. The water administrator reached out to Self-Help International and asked our help to bring the CTI-8 chlorinator to La Reforma, which we were happy to do!

Today, the 750 people who live in 150 homes in La Reforma are enjoying safe, high-quality water thanks to the CTI-8 chlorinator. Every month the community uses roughly 15 chlorine tablets – much higher than average – because the water is so murky, but the community members say it's worth the cost for the peace of mind it brings them.

"In the mornings, we taste chlorine in the water," Socorro says. "Sometimes less, sometimes more, but we can always taste it a bit. And that lets me feel secure that our water is being disinfected every day."

She tells us, "The children are protected and they have learned that a little taste of chlorine in the water is worth their good health. Now, we no longer suffer from stomach pains and we feel great. The water is so much better than before. We do pay a bit more for water service – for example, in my home we pay 150 córdobas (\$3 USD) for our monthly water use. But we know that paying for the chlorine tablets is worth it. We can feel the difference!"



Rotary International has issued a global challenge to its members, asking them to work collectively to improve education quality and access — particularly for girls — by working with communities to improve teacher training, curriculum, and water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities. Self-Help is proud to partner with Rotary Clubs across Iowa to answer this call by bringing safe drinking water to communities across Nicaragua including:

Anamosa Rotary Club

Parkersburg Rotary Club

Rotary Club of Des Moines

Monticello Rotary Club

Waverly Rotary Club

Collectively, these Rotarians are responsible for bringing clean water to more than 10,000 people!

Would your club like to join in our current effort or schedule a club speaker?

Contact Dick Moeller, PDG of District 5970 & member of the Waverly Rotary Club at 319-290-7778.

MATCHING OPPORTUNITY

The Waverly Rotary Club and Redeemer Lutheran Church will match all donations up to \$12,500 to bring clean water to more than 16,000 people! Return the enclosed donation envelope with a designation to SHI's clean water program, or call the SHI office at 319.352.4040.

Self-Help International's Annual Spring Gala

"Once Upon a Time"

Once upon a time, Self-Help worked to alleviate hunger by helping thousands of people help themselves. As we continue to expand our programs and begin new chapters, we invite you to be a part of the story and help us create the "happily ever after" for many more.

Join us on Friday, April 20th, at 6 o'clock in the evening at the Prairie Links Event Center for a magical night making wishes and dreams come true (and let's not forget some tasty treats, too!). Heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served and a cash bar will be available. The storytelling will begin at 6:45p.m.

Dress as your favorite story book character or come as you are! Have your picture taken at our photo booth (props available for those who just can't decide!) and capture you favorite magical moments!

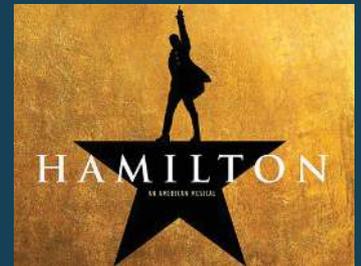


Win Tickets to Hamilton!

Hamilton: An American Musical, winner of 11 Tony Awards, is coming to Iowa this summer! All 24 performances are completely sold out, but don't worry if you don't have tickets yet, there's still a chance to get tickets to see Broadway's hottest show when it stops in Des Moines.

Win two tickets to see Hamilton at the Civic Center in Des Moines on Friday, July 13 at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$10 each, or 5 for \$40.

The drawing will take place on Friday, April 20th at or around 8pm at the Spring Gala in Waverly. Winner need not be present to win. To purchase your raffle tickets, complete and return the form below to Self-Help International at 703 Second Ave. NW, Waverly, IA 50677.



Spring Gala RSVP & Hamilton Raffle Ticket Purchase

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Spring Gala Registration - Friday, April 20th :
Number of attendees: ___ x \$40/person = \$ _____

Check here if unable to attend

Hamilton Raffle Ticket Entry Form
Single tickets: _____ x \$10 per ticket = \$ _____
Five-pack: _____ x \$40 for 5 = \$ _____

Additional donation: \$ _____
Total: \$ _____

I am including a check for the total made out to Self-Help International.

Please charge my credit card for the total amount listed on reverse side:

Name on Card: _____

CC Number: _____

Security Code: _____

Signature _____

Expiration Date: _____

Kindly return your RSVP by Friday, April 6th to Self-Help International
703 2nd Ave NW ~ Waverly, IA 50677

Mail-in raffle ticket purchases must be received by April 19th, or can be purchased during the spring gala on April 20th. Winner need not be present to win.



**THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®**

There's still time to direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Self-Help International.

Are you a member of Thrivent Financial who's eligible to direct Choice Dollars®? Choice Dollars charitable grant funds can make a world of difference to poor families in rural Nicaragua & Ghana as Self-Help International works to alleviate hunger by helping farmers increase yields and better feed their families. By directing Choice Dollars, eligible Thrivent members recommend where they feel Thrivent should distribute a portion of its charitable grant funds.

Directing Choice Dollars is easy. Simply go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more and find program terms and conditions. Or, call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt. Together, we can alleviate hunger among those most in need.

As a reminder, 2017 Choice Dollars expire on March 31, 2018. Direct yours to your favorite nonprofit today!



Support us when you shop for office supplies, birthday presents and more! When you shop at Amazon, start at smile.amazon.com/ch/42-0844679 and Amazon donates to Self-Help International.