



SELF  HELP
INTERNATIONAL

2025 Spring Newsletter

information@selfhelpinternational.org
www.selfhelpinternational.org
319-352-4040

*Antonia, small business
owner in Nicaragua
that partners with SHI*



Salamatu and her son Malik, are participants in Growing Healthy Food, Growing Healthy Children program

A MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director



Friends,

As you no doubt know already: farmers are a resilient bunch. In the face of unpredictable rain patterns, each season farmers rise to the challenge and make adaptations to grow the food that feeds their families and their communities.

Thanks to agronomic training from Self-Help, farmers in Caño Luis, Nicaragua (page 7) are increasing yields and teaching their neighbors and relatives what they've learned.

Likewise, farmers in northern Ghana reported that despite the drought and flooding last year, they'd still increased yields and generated a profit. They, too, attributed the success to support from SHI in the form of training and input loans. Plus there was a ripple effect: small businesses such as Rukayatu's (page 4) were busier than ever helping process the increased yields after harvest.

Our training is working for those who have participated, but there are still too many families who don't have enough food to adequately nourish their infants. In January, I met with four moms whose infants had graduated from moderately malnourished to normal range thanks to a partnership between Self-Help and Ghana Health Services, which was a huge win. But I also met with one woman whose child remains severely malnourished despite additional food supplements. When I asked her if she'd be able to replicate the porridge recipe at home, she told me that even if she knew the right ratios for the recipe, she didn't have food at home to make it.

Our goal is to increase the fund for women's micro-credit and agricultural input loans by \$33,500 to support more than 350 families in Ghana and Nicaragua in the next 6 months. The increased fund will expand our impact in Nicaragua to 150 more women like Martha in Nicaragua (page 6) to start a new small business to improve financial security, and support 200 farmers in Ghana to increase the amount of land under cultivation and by extension, food availability and household income. The farmers have access to land to cultivate, but

it will be left barren if they're not able to access these input loans. With the funds available, we'll prioritize issuing loans to the most vulnerable first - particularly widowed women farmers.

Self-Help is not funded by USAID. We don't rely on government grants to operate. We rely on the generosity of individual donors - people like you, who partner with us to make a difference.

Together, we have the power to make commitments to farm families in rural Ghana and Nicaragua, and to follow through on them.

We're 90% of the way to reaching our \$33,500 goal thanks to the generosity of readers like you. We're looking for 35 households to donate \$100 (or more!) to fund the need. Your donation today will make a meaningful and lasting impact for one more family to better feed and nourish themselves in the year ahead.



The need is great. Please join us.

Nora Tobin (she/her)
Executive Director

Rukayatu's Path to Empowerment: From Struggle to Stability

Story by Ernestina Glikpo, Communications Manager

Rukayatu Ibrahim, a resilient mother of eight, has transformed her household through determination and support from Self-Help International's Microcredit Program.

When Rukayatu first approached the program, she received a loan of GHS 1,000 (\$67). While it helped her start improving her business, it wasn't enough to meet her growing needs. Undeterred, she worked hard, repaid the loan, and applied for a larger amount. On her third loan cycle, she received GHS 3,000 (\$202)—a game-changer for her family.

With the loan, Rukayatu invested in a groundnut shelling machine, a purchase that saved her time and labor while increasing her efficiency. She used the remaining funds to buy maize for resale, boosting her income even further.

"Now, I can provide for my family without worry," Rukayatu shares. "I've bought new clothes for my children and myself, paid hospital bills, and ensured we have tea for breakfast every morning—something we couldn't afford before."

Rukayatu's story is a testament to how access to financial resources and training can empower women to create lasting change for themselves and their families. She stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration for others in her community.



Rukaytu visiting with SHI staff and board members, January 2025. From left to right: Benjamin Kusi, Nora Tobin, Julie Pennington, Rukaytu Ibrahim, Will Erken and Edna Baloo

Give Today



Give a Donation:

- Mail checks to Self-Help International
207 20th St. NW, Suite A, Waverly, IA 50677
- Give online at www.selfhelpinternational.org/donate or scan the QR Code

Give a Planned Gift: Contact Nora at 319-352-4040 to make arrangements today. All requests for anonymity will be honored.

Give us a Like: Like Self-Help on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Give a Shoutout: Spread the word with your club, church, or civic organization. Staff and board members would love to speak about Self-Help's mission.

Give your Time: Get involved and volunteer!

Call Kassi Bailey, Deputy Director at 319-352-4040 or email kassi@selfhelpinternational.org for any questions.



\$250

can help provide farmers training and extension services



\$125

sponsors a start-up loan for a woman to pursue her new business



\$500

can set up one chlorine bank to distribute tablets to maintain clean water

Women’s Empowerment Boosts Family Income & Self-Confidence

Story by William Edwards, Nicaragua Committee Chair

Women in rural Nicaragua have long filled traditional roles of maintaining a household and tending to backyard gardens and animals. Self-Help International (SHI) has provided women in the small communities around San Carlos with the means to become small-scale entrepreneurs.

By providing micro-credit loans and basic training in business management SHI has helped over 300 women add to their families’ incomes, enabling them to provide education for their children, invest in home improvements and enjoy better diets. It also helps families stay in their home communities instead of migrating to other regions or countries.

The program has financed a wide variety of businesses, as shown in the table below.

Aracelly Cruz, the current SHI Women’s Empowerment Program (WEP) Officer, conducts workshops in rural neighborhoods explaining basic topics such as accounting for income and expenses, managing funds, marketing and basic food preparation and sewing. She also discusses how women can bolster their self-confidence and manage their health issues.

The results of the Women’s Empowerment Program have been so encouraging that **we’re working to expand the service area to serve an additional 200 more women** in the adjoining community of San Miguelito, and hiring a second program officer to introduce the programs. Self-Help International is funded totally by private donations. Your contribution can help fund the salary, travel expenses and micro-credit loans for this expanded program.

Purpose of Loans since 2016	Number of Loans Made (since 2016)
Open a small business in their home	123
Open a store in their home	113
Prepare and sell food and drink items	104
Raise pigs and chickens for food and income	52
Buy and resell clothing	36
Buy and resell cosmetics and jewelry	27
Sew and sell clothing	22
Purchase materials for constructing an improved oven	19
Plant a home garden or plot of corn	17
Sell items from a catalog or online	4
Total	517



Farmers Serving as Agents of Change

Story by Rodolfo Ricardo Hernandez Navas, Nicaragua Agricultural Extension Program Officer

In Nicaragua people depend greatly on corn and its derived products as staples in their diets. Self-Help International (SHI), in its commitment to helping people help themselves, has taken on the challenge to introduce to farmers a new variety of corn that has high nutritional value and is more productive. Besides a high protein content, the INTA-Nutrader seed has a good flavor and consistency plus excellent storage qualities.

In addition, SHI promotes a new form of planting known as the double-row technique. On a small area of land it is possible to harvest two to three times the production obtained with the traditional varieties, utilizing a denser planting population and adequate fertilization and pest control.

Some farmers from the community of Caño Luis, located 35 km from the SHI headquarters in San Carlos, shared their experiences partnering with SHI. All of them agreed that by using the INTA-Nutrader variety and new growing practices they are making a change in their community. Other farmers learn by observing the results they obtain on their plots.

Now the growers say, **“We are going to be an agent of change in our community, teaching our relatives and neighbors. We thank Self-Help International for taking the time to not only introduce us to a new high-quality variety of corn but also to support us with training and with credit to purchase the necessary inputs to realize its potential.”**



MEET EMILIO

Leader of the Caño Luis community

“The seed and the planting method were new to me and the other farmers...The INTA-Nutrader corn had a sweet taste and satisfied the stomach. My wife cooks it preparing tortillas and other foods. We like that it can last a long time without preservatives or refrigeration, because here we do not have appliances that can preserve our food.”



MEET ANTONIA

Farmer from Caño Luis community

“From the four pounds of seed that I planted I obtained 300 pounds of corn, which is a very good yield...With the seed that I set aside to plant and that I gave to my daughter, I am making sure that for next year we will have quality corn and enough for everyone’s consumption. I want to thank you for including me in this agricultural project and for **providing us with knowledge through training, follow-up visits and supervision. When we are left on our own, we get discouraged and do not follow the recommendations, but the SHI technician always supports us with visits and phone calls.**”

Why We Give



"We support SHI because the Teen Girls Club makes it possible for young girls to stay in school and complete their education. The girls do not have to take time away from school due to the lack of resources or because they are having their period. We feel SHI is making a positive impact on the lives of many young women in Ghana."

Mark and Gail Stelmacher



Gail Stelmacher teaching women to sew reusable sanitary pads in Ghana, February 2017



You can support Teen Girls Club!



Giving Girls the Confidence to Learn

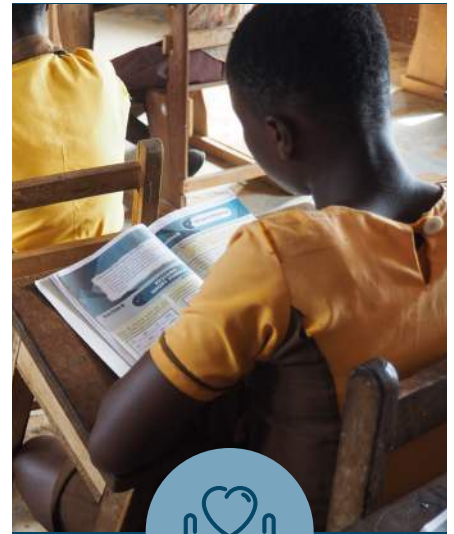
Story by Ernestina Glikpo, Communications Manager

In five vibrant communities in Ghana's Ashanti Region, young girls eagerly gather for their reading and writing class, excited to learn. These sessions, organized by Self-Help International's (SHI) Teen Girls Club, provide a safe space to study and grow.

This year, SHI set out to distribute **800 notebooks and 15 boxes of pens** to support these dedicated young girls. Already, **350 notebooks** have been distributed in the first phase—each one a stepping stone toward literacy, confidence, and empowerment. For many of these girls, owning a simple notebook is more than just having paper to write on; it represents opportunity.

"I can now practice my writing at home," says Esther, a 14-year-old participant. "I am in module three of the reading class, and these books will help me learn every day."

With each pen and notebook, donors are fueling the aspirations of girls who might otherwise struggle to access basic educational materials. This initiative is not just about supplies—it's about giving girls the tools they need to write their own futures. As SHI continues its mission, we invite you to be part of this transformative journey. Your support ensures that every girl in the program has the resources she needs to learn, grow, and succeed. Together, we can empower more young minds, one book at a time.



\$100

supports one Teen Girls Club member with after school reading & writing lessons for 1 year

\$680

supports one girl to attend senior high school for one year

\$1,500

supports skills and empowerment training session for a one Teen Girls Club. Currently SHI supports 5 Teen Girls Club





Memorial and Honorary Gifts

October 30, 2024 – March 25, 2025

In memory of Dorah Asamoah

by Afua Asenso

In honor of Reldon and Margaret Beck

by Edith Norris

In memory of Paul and Doris Beetz

by Leslie and Richard Althaus

In honor of Nancy Shor and Charley Binde

by Rose Mary Pratt

In memory of George Cummins

by Andrea Holveck

In memory of Carl Dillon

by Diana Blake

In memory of John Donaghy

by Nancy and Gary Guthrie

In memory of Elaine Dove

by Mary Ver Steegt

In honor of Packy Doyle and Bridge Point Romeoville

by David Haigh

In honor of granddaughters Stacie, Angie and Gabi

by Janice and Dave Dressel

In memory of Dr. Margaret S. Emmons

by Susan Emmons, Esquire

In honor of Will Erken

by Ronald Erken

In memory of Linda Erlandson

by Anonymous

In honor of Myron Glasnapp

by Sue Glasnapp

In memory of Maxine Greek

by Becky Ubben

In Honor of William Gutowski

by Virginia Shenk

In memory of Alfred and Norma Happel

by Larry Happel

In memory of Dr. Dale Harpstead

by Merry and David Fredrick

by Donna Grady

by Karl and Amy Harpstead

by Harold Sollenberger and Janice Mace

by Reverend Elizabeth Walch

by Jack Walch

In memory of John Walter Kidd

by Eunice and Bruce Bassler

In memory of David Knezovich

by Kyle Knezovich

In memory of Deborah Legvold

by Steve and Dee Legvold

In honor of Pat Martin

by Mary Hultman

by Margaret Wellbrock

In memory of Tom Michel

by Merry and David Fredrick

In memory of Jack Mock

by Donna Paulsen

In honor of Fran and Howard Mueller

by Merry and David Fredrick

In memory of Bill Northey

by Rod and Eileen Swoboda

In honor of Mary Jane Oakland

by Anonymous

by Chuck and Kathy Glatz

by Wanda and Doug McCay

by Barbara and Jerry Oakland

by Dot and Steve Prater

by Beth Wunder

In honor of Mary Jane and Dave Oakland

by Anonymous

In honor of Julie Pennington

by Gregory Dickson

by Gregory Unruh

In honor of Dennis and Elizabeth Popplewell

by Anonymous

In honor of SHI Nicaragua staff

by Merry and David Fredrick

In honor of SHI Ghana staff

by Merry and David Fredrick

In honor of all past & present Board and Staff

by Pete and Mary Jo Hall

In memory of Jeff A. Smith

by Merry and David Fredrick

In honor of Maureen Tobin

by Constance Cohen

In honor of Nora Tobin

by Elizabeth Beck

by Mary Butler

by Maureen Roach Tobin & Terrence M. Tobin

In memory of Fr. Pat Tobin

by Anonymous

by Kevin Tobin

In honor of Nadine Weisbrod

by Pamela Bleckwenn

Leadership and Staff

IOWA*

Nora Tobin, *Executive Director*
Kassi Bailey, *Deputy Director*
Stacy Bastian, *Des Moines Office Manager*
Amanda Hesse, *Waverly Office Manager*

GHANA*

Benjamin Kusi, *Country Director*
Castro Acheampong, *Logistics Officer*
Lydia Adomako, *Community Liaison & Gender Mainstreaming Officer*
Matilda Amanor, *Nutrition Programs Officer*
George Amuzu, *Agriculture Support Staff*
Benjamin Antwi, *Security*
Emmanuel Antwi, *Agriculture Support Staff*
Evans Appiah, *Logistics Officer*
Edna Baloo, *Microcredit Programs Officer*
Ali Mumuni Banye, *Accounts Officer*
Dominic Boakye, *Caretaker*
Florence Boama Boansi, *Microcredit Programs Officer*
Christopher Doe, *Microcredit Assistant Programs Officer*
Frederick Baamod Duubik, *Program Mgr. for Ag. & Entrepreneurship Development*
Emmaculate Etaah, *Microcredit & Agriculture Officer*
Ernest Tornu Eyiri, *Programs Coordinator for Strategy, Design & Evaluation*
Obed Ghartey, *Teen Girls Club Programs Officer*
Ernestina Esinam Glikpo, *Communications Manager*
Bridget Gyamfi, *Teen Girls Club Programs Officer*
Emmanuel Agyei James, *Nutrition Support Staff*
Roland Kyei, *Agriculture Support Staff*
Grace Marfo, *Teen Girls Club Programs Officer*
Isaac Yakubu Mwinibong, *Logistics Officer*
Constantine Nanguo, *Upper West Programs Coordinator*
Christiana Odeh-Agbozo, *Nutrition Programs Officer*
Richard Opoku, *Caretaker/Driver*
George Saforo, *Ashanti Region Programs Coordinator*
Justice Amoka Sam, *Community Crop & Livestock Officer*
Denis Tankpaa, *Upper West Support Staff (Volunteer)*
Sumaila Yusif, *Community Crop & Livestock Specialist*
Lawrence Zongo, *Community Crop & Livestock Officer*

NICARAGUA*

Jorge Luís Campos Solis, *Country Director*
Mario Jose Barberena Muñoz, *Agriculture Program Assistant*
Edelia Aracelly Cruz Torrez, *Women's Empowerment Program Officer*
Rodolfo Ricardo Hernández Navas, *Agriculture Program Officer*
Santos Hernández, *Security Guard*
Nelson Francisco Martinez Morales, *Agriculture Program Officer*
Orlando Jose Montiel Salas, *Clean Water Program Officer*
Carlos Alfredo Obando Ruíz, *Accountant*
Maria Gabriela Ruíz Obando, *Janitor*
Oliver Javier Salgado Machado, *Clean Water Program Officer*
Lucía Margarita Vega Galeano, *Program Operations Manager*



Jorge Campos, Nicaragua Country Director, and Benjamin Kusi, Ghana Country Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Pat Martin,
President

Richard Neal,
Vice President

Barbara Hatinger,
Secretary

Will Erken,
Treasurer and Ghana Chair

William Edwards,
Nicaragua Chair

Julie Pennington,
Development Chair

Nick Taiber,
HR & Nominations Chair

Dorothy Masinde,
Member

Doris Montgomery,
Member

Mary Jane Oakland,
Member

Jerry Perkins,
Member

Carol Richardson Smith,
Member

Keith Swanson,
Member

Emeritus Members:

George Cummins*
David Fredrick
Deb Giarusso
Robert Hellman
Jerry Larson
Maria Maixner
Fran Mueller
Howard Mueller
Dr. Warren Prawl
Dennis Preslicka
Dr. Bert Schou
Jon Tehven
Dr. Jim West

**Self-Help is grateful to George Cummins for a lifetime of contributions to global food security. May he rest in peace.*

* Listed alphabetically by last name after ED/CD.

Self-Help International
207 20th St NW Suite A
Waverly, IA 50677

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
WAVERLY, IA
PERMIT NO. 10



YOU'RE INVITED!

SHI SPRING LUNCHEON
(formerly Spring Gala)

MAY 14, 2025
12:00PM

LOCATION: WAVERLY AREA VETERANS POST
SELFHELPINTERNATIONAL.ORG/SPRING-GALA

SCAN TO REGISTER



Invite your friends!
50% off for first time attendees

Alleviating hunger by helping people help themselves since 1959.

Self-Help International

GHANA
Cadbury Hall
Kumasi, Ghana

NICARAGUA
Quinta Lidia, frente al Km. 288 (Este)
Carretera a Managua, San Carlos
Río San Juan, Nicaragua

UNITED STATES
207 20th St NW Suite A
Waverly, IA 50677
United States of America

Self-Help International
is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Tax ID: 42-0844679

(319) 352-4040
www.selfhelpinternational.org
information@selfhelpinternational.org

Please like and share
our posts on social media

