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30 years of Sahakarini

Celebrating Our Years Together in Solidarity with People Around the World

We've come a long way in 30 years, building connections and contributing 2.8 million dollars to development projects in eight countries around the world. Education, health and economic stability continue to be key needs of people everywhere, and remain the foundation of our mission today.

We had the opportunity to celebrate our founders and our many years together on August 23 of this year. Sahakarini was founded by Gordon and Mina Schieck, Norm and Eloise Umbach, and Jack and Jane Ross. The goal was not only to raise funds to reach out to people living in circumstances many of us can barely imagine, but also to get involved. By building relationships with the recipients of our contributions, we've had the unique opportunity to learn about the lives of others, and what matters most to them.

The specifics of what each community needs and how it can meet those needs varies greatly. We're always listening – and growing – to provide appropriately. As our President Alan Fielding pointed out in his recent interview with Dan Jensen of The Camrose Booster, "of the world's 100 largest companies in 1912, 29 were bankrupt by 1995, 48 had disappeared, and only 19 were still in the top 100. It is estimated that about 10 per cent of businesses and organizations disappear every year."

Our careful attention to relevance, accountability and solid connections to the people we serve keep us going strong after three decades of service. As you'll read in this season's newsletter, there are many ways the hopes and dreams of our founders are still going strong, and many ways we as supporters can get involved.

This year the board reviewed our vision, mission and values. We can never emphasize enough that we work for the improved quality of life for the poorest of the poor in developing countries. We are a registered Canadian charity, working together with project partners with shared vision to support programs in the areas of education, health, economic and community development.

Thanks to the support of our founders, volunteers, donors, community members and funding partners, we continue this work. As long as there are people around the world struggling to provide even the basics for their loved ones and their communities, Sahakarini will be there to learn and contribute what we can.



Mina Schieck passes symbolic torch to Kaitlyn Ganser, one of our newest board members and a student at Augustana.

Founders Jack and Jane Ross and Mina Schieck cut the anniversary cake.



An Update from Dr. Luke and CCDO in India

The Charitable Community Development Organization (CCDO) has been very busy working with 20 villages and 5 urban slums to ensure a well-rounded approach to development.

CCDO has trained people in all 25 communities in working together to the benefit of their communities, and in accessing outside resources for assistance when necessary.

Working through the government's Exemplary Villages program, the Councils and CCDO have been able to help many families build new houses with reinforced concrete roofs in place of thatch. These provide durable protection from weather and from the ever-present threat of fire.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in which the Councils and CCDO have helped many enroll, provides agricultural workers jobs such as school construction and desilting of irrigation tanks during the non-growing season. The income provides welcome stability for the farmers and their families. Many of those unable to work due to disabilities or age are now receiving small government pensions.

CCDO has seen a great improvement in hygiene and waste management, thanks to widespread educational initiatives and partnerships with local government in providing adequate water access and sanitation facilities. Instances of water borne illnesses have decreased dramatically and access to vaccinations has improved, reducing common diseases and infections.

Primary professional healthcare continues to be a priority. Many men and women have been able to return to active life and work following cataract surgery. Care for women during and after pregnancy, including medical advice, tests, vitamin supplements and transportation to area hospitals has resulted in no maternal deaths and only one infant death in the past six months. An orthopedic surgeon, a pediatrician, and a gynecologist have been participating in the health camps, bringing much needed professional expertise. Information on HIV/AIDS is also part of the health camps. Testing

is encouraged and support provided. Young couples in particular are being urged to take testing prior to marriage. Over 150 people with HIV/AIDS have been identified, and the CCDO is developing ways to support and reach out to them.

A day care centre for the elderly and the disabled serves 15 people from two urban slum areas, providing them with healthy meals, clothing and support in hygiene and health concerns. They are taught skills such as candle and detergent making and given counselling as needed.

A Domestic Violence Control Project has been well attended by women, and stories of families being transformed for the better are already surfacing. Local pressure for men to behave appropriately is developing. Some Councils have actively intervened, advocating for the women and informing families of the legal consequences of abuse.

Many women have adapted the skill training and advice they have received to suit their own situations. They are establishing ways to complete their chosen work from home and using their connections in the surrounding communities to secure customers. Agricultural changes have been successful in improving access to water for livestock and crops, as well as preservation of soil. The drought that was causing hardship to the area has ended and with the rains, the fields are green and the irrigation tanks are once again full to capacity.

Formal education for children, especially girls, continues to be a struggle. In the past six months, fifteen girls between the ages of 6-14 have re-enrolled in school after dropping out to fill household roles, but many girls are still unreached.

The many interconnected successes of the CCDO's programs show how important it is to address all sides of how poverty can affect a community. The hard work and engagement of so many local people serving on councils and getting involved in the environmental and health initiatives is encouraging, and stands as a shining example of how the relationships we build can move us to accomplish great things together.

President's Message

Several people have asked me recently how Sahakarini decides to approve a project.

We start with a personal connection. We find out or hear about a person or organization we think would be a trusted project partner in some part of the developing world. Next we look at what this potential project partner is doing, or is proposing to do, in the light of our mandate which is to help the poorest of the poor to help themselves. We then look at the organizational structure of our proposed project partner. Because we often seek matching funding support from the provincial and federal governments, we must ensure that our project partner is a valid, legally registered organization in order to carry out the charitable work. We typically work with Christian organizations, but they must provide services to the entire targeted community. In other words, there must be no discrimination based on creed or race.

Once we have identified a suitable project partner, we examine the proposed project in detail to determine whether it is affordable, sustainable and likely to be able to meet its objectives.

As you can see, it is a rather complex and rigorous assessment process, but as projects are at the heart of what we do, we are always looking for more opportunities. And it all starts with a trusted project partner.

Alan Fielding



Coming Events

Monday, November 16 –

Wednesday, November 18

The Fair Trade or Local Made Sale

Featuring products from Canadian Lutheran World Relief projects worldwide
Augustana Campus,
the Faith and Life Lounge

Wednesday November 18

Documentary: Stop the Traffik

Addressing contemporary child slavery in industry and the sex trade
Discussion, activities and fair trade, refreshments to follow

7:00 p.m., Augustana Campus, the Chapel

Saturday November 21, 2009

Loaves and Fishes Dinner

Doors will open at 5, dinner at 6.

Tickets \$30, students and children, \$15

Norsemen Inn, Camrose

Film and Speaker Series

A partnership with Augustana and the U of A coinciding with International Week, February 2010. Sahakarini has received funding for this from the Community Spirit Fund.

Details to be announced

Another huge little project

Last year we reported to you the dramatic improvements in health thanks to the simple, safe, fuel efficient stoves and water filters we were able to provide for families in rural Guatemala. Burns and respiratory illnesses were down, people were drinking water instead of pop or bottled water, and only half as much wood was needed for fuel. Add to that the fact that dishes and other household items no longer needed the soot washed off before they could be used.

This year we have embarked on a second stove and filter project to help another group of families live better, healthier lives. This time we are helping to provide 87 stoves and 87 filters at a cost of \$60 each. Once again the families will have to make a small contribution and take training in the use and maintenance of the equipment to ensure that it is well used.

Directors 2009-2010

Alan Fielding, President

Herb Andersen, V-President

Dave Stolee, Treasurer

Mary Ellen Eriksson

Alan Ford

Margery Gaede

Kaitlyn Ganser

Jonathan Hawkins

Roy Hehr

Donna Phillips

Earl Rasmuson

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To donate online, go to www.canadahelps.org

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HIKE for HOPE raises \$10,000

It was a glorious brisk fall day, perfect for a walk in the park and barbecue with family and friends. Having young children on the walk, similar in age to the children at HOPE School was a good reminder of our many blessings and of the difference we can make for less fortunate children. Sahakarini supports HOPE School for Dalit and Tribal children from slums and hutments around Hyderabad, India. It gives them the opportunity they would not otherwise have to get an education and someday break out of the cycle of poverty into which they were born.

The program includes grades K-7. It encompasses instruction, books, uniforms which give a sense of pride and may be the child's only decent clothes, a hot lunch if

possible – again, perhaps their only good food of the day – and regular health care, as well as social learning.

HOPE School is accredited and follows the approved Indian government curriculum. Approximately one-half of the students are girls - an important step forward for girls and women.



- I would like to become a member of Sahakarini (no fee)
- Please change my address
- I would prefer to receive information by email _____
- Please send me information about _____



I would like to make a gift of \$50 \$100 \$150 \$200 \$500 Other _____

Gifts can be made: one time monthly for _____ months (by post-dated cheques)

NAME _____

Mailing address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____ Please use it for _____

Sahakarini is a registered charity Business number 11913 1936 RR0001 Fall 2009

Sahakarini is registered with CanadaHelps.org for donations on-line.

Helping the poorest of the poor transform their lives through partners we know and trust.