



Reports from the Field 2018

Gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and the Presbyterian Hunger Program are impacting livelihoods around the world. Here are updates and photos from a few of this year's partners whose projects are being supported by PHP grants.

Palestine



"I have been working on this land since I was 8. It hurt me to see it so ruined, as if I have betrayed it. But not anymore, now it is alive, and so am I." —Moti

Moti' recalled how all the greenness around seemed like a dream just couple of months ago. He said, "Our land is our life, but nobody seems to even know we exist. Until you came."

Moti's land was dredged during the armed conflict. "I was destroyed in 2014. They announced a peace truce and we went to the field to get tomatoes to eat, but found nothing. My efforts were all in vain." To recover land for cultivating crops and gain money for his family's security, Moti' needed fertilizers, irrigation networks and seeds.

A project through the Improvement and Development for Communities Center (IDCO) and supported by the Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) came just in time to relieve farmers from their severe struggling. More than 80 farmers working to revive their land were provided with vegetable seedlings and training on environmentally sound agriculture and water saving techniques.

With irrigation networks, now Moti' can cultivate more crops on more space. Water can get further than before without dripping a major amount on the way, like it did with ruined lines. The needed vegetable seedlings boosted productivity. Moti' can now know that neither of his children will have to starve. And one of his sons, who had dropped out due to the family's inability to pay, can return to the university.

Niger

With support from PHP, the Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger (EERN) is establishing cereal banks for the first time. Six rural villages were identified, and each village provided a place to serve as their cereal bank. Training was provided, and 112 sacks of locally-purchased millet were divided among the banks to get them started. The EERN finds hope in seeing a way to help solve one of the biggest difficulties that the people in its local communities have faced for a long time.



Guatemala

With PHP support, the Alliance for International Reforestation (AIR) has been working with families in Quiché, Guatemala, to implement sustainable farming in their communities and schools.

Don Diego is a respected leader in the southernmost rural region of Quiche. He is president of the community group that chose to work with AIR Technician Josue Ajcalon in learning Sustainable Farming. Families and communities who volunteer for this work are making quite a commitment, as it requires attending regular classes, working in a tree nursery weekly, and changing their farming methods.

In the first year, Don accepted Josue's challenge of using AIR's "Bocashi" compost and no chemicals in his fruit orchards of peaches, plums, and apples. These fruits are sold at local markets, providing essential income to his family. Don also agreed to plant pine trees instead of crops in a small barren field that was collapsing into the life-giving stream below. He acted on faith and was astonished to find that his fruit orchards produced the same quantity of delicious fruit without spending one cent on chemical fertilizers or pesticides! His children do not have sore throats from the chemicals, and he has more income from the sale of the fruits in local markets in just the first year of participating in the project.

Already this year four permanent tree nurseries have been established for both agroforestry and restoration of forests with pine trees. A program at a preschool is offering bi-weekly training for parents. The parents are learning about nutrition and how to grow more food on a plot of land. They are being introduced to new organic vegetable gardens, as well as a few fruit trees. While they are already benefitting from new vegetable gardens, within just a few years, their corn and bean crops will be measurably larger – a benefit of farming with trees.

More than 41,500 tree seedlings have been planted, and they will be transplanted onto mountain slopes and fields from June – September. Seven natural springs have had tree seedlings planted around them, and two community streams are now being protected from erosion.



United States



Denver Food Rescue is working to assist thousands of people in the low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in Denver who lack access to affordable and healthy food. Last year with support from PHP, they created four new No Cost Grocery Programs and increased weekly distributions, reaching nearly 10,000 new people. One of the No Cost Grocery Program representatives shared, “Partnering with Denver Food Rescue has helped us to ensure that refugees in the Denver area have access to fresh, healthful foods. The consistent work of DFR and its volunteers has helped make the transition out of food insecurity possible for hundreds of families working to rebuild their lives in America.”

Haiti

Through a Lambi Fund project in Haiti supported by PHP, 120 participants received loans to initiate or increase their businesses. 26 have already fully repaid the loans! Participants are planters and women small enterprise leaders and are members of the Organization for the Development of Gwomon. They are also serving as volunteer managers of the fund project. Benefitting from training and experience with managing the fund, the managers make decisions about repayment terms and amounts that will be loaned.

Planters are using their loans to increase food production, and the small enterprise leaders have sold more food and other products in the local markets. Already parents have reported the ability to keep paying for their children to attend school.

Members of the Organization for the Development of Gwomon came from 11 communities for their launching meeting. It is in these community locations where reforestation is planned. Training included information about monitoring and watering systems. Volunteers and community members have mixed soil and planted more than 16,000 fruit and forest tree seedlings—grapefruit, papaya, lemon, Moringa, and cedar. Two people were hired to support the nurseries until the plants are transplanted in their permanent space, where they will be monitored for another year.



Community residents work together to fill out seedling bags and seeds for various trees. This is an opportunity for increasing awareness of the environment and for learning how to improve and reforest the community.

Thanks to gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing and the Presbyterian Hunger Program, dozens of projects like these are supported each year. In 2018, PHP is supporting work in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the United States.



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