



EpiscoCare Newsletter: January to March 2013

Dear Friends

Greetings from Zamalek in Cairo!

The start of 2013 has been marked with continued conflict and political unrest, and we continue to feel the effects of the revolution which happened two years ago. As a result of this, the economy has continued to be very unstable, with many people losing their jobs and being unable to afford basic necessities, especially since many government subsidies have run out. During this time, we at EpiscoCare continue to try and provide much needed services to the communities.

The following information is intended to give you a small look into what has taken place over the last three months in our local Community Development Centers. Thank you for your support and help, especially as we try to meet the growing needs of the poor in Egypt.

Sincerely,

Miriam Ibrahim

Director of EpiscoCare

January 2013

Testing

The students at some of our centers successfully passed some tests that were designed to measure their improvement. They did very well compared to past tests we have given! Furthermore, some of the students have been honored with certificates from their schools, showing that they have achieved a great success. This project that we run services 60 children and 60 parents.

Coalition Project



A protocol agreement that EpiscoCare has held with the National Council for Population regarding Female Genital Mutilation has been renewed! We primarily use this protocol to support primary stage children, both boys and girls, in different aspects of life and basic health awareness. This is also extended to parents, especially in order to combat FGM. Education support is also important in this project in order to upgrade the academic levels of the children through tutorial classes along with environmental awareness classes.



February 2012

Beginning of School

The second school year term started in February; the Boulaq center wants to provide as much support for families as possible. We were able to provide around 80 families with exercise books that were obligatory for classes at government schools, and we were able to provide the needed stationary for less than half the price they would have had to pay normally. Marmar, one of our beneficiaries, has twins who are in their last year of middle school. She came to Boulaq and applied for exercise books, but only applied for one because she was too shy to ask for a second. Our social worker talked with her and convinced her that it was important to allow Boulaq to provide her with a second book and Marmar learned that God would take care of her children.



Coady International Institute

Coady International Institute has a large number of Egyptians as graduates who are currently in positions that provide them with the opportunity to positively affect their community. Coady decided to bring together all of their graduates for occasional meetings to exchange experiences and knowledge. As the new Coady graduates return to Egypt, they will bring back new knowledge to share. In February, EpiscoCare hosted all the Coady graduates while a few other people working in development organizations joined them. Another workshop, focused on training about Learning Organizations and Change, happened in March where three Coady Graduates led as they had received certificates on this subject.



March 2012

International Women's Day

On March 8, we held a celebration for the women who participate in programs at our centers. The event was held at the diocese and attended by 90 women from three development centers in Cairo. We were able to honor the ideas of women and say thank you to them for the work they do and roles they hold in their communities.



Mother's Day

As many of you know, Mother's Day in Egypt happens on March 21. In order to celebrate the mothers in our communities, we held parties in each of our centers and gave presents to each of the 500 women who attended. Through the My Dear Daughter program, 80 daughters and their 80 mothers attended a celebration. We held another celebration for the mothers of the children who attend our tutorial classes; 145 students and their mothers were in attendance.



More than 120 women attended the Boulaq center's mother day celebration. During the celebration, Madame Mariam and Madame Nadia were able to give advice about their lives as mothers. They shared memories about their own mothers and shared practical advice with the women about how to be good mothers. The women were given a mother's day gift and were able to spend time together drinking tea and eating biscuits.



The Samuel Habib Award

The Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services gives two of the Samuel Habib Awards each year to a recipient who is either a social leader or an NGO and one to a Christian leader who has played a role in helping society regardless of sex, race or religion. The Most Reverend Dr. Bishop Mouneer was privileged to receive the award on behalf of all of the workers doing social services based work under the umbrella of the diocese.

Madame Ansaaf's Memorial Service

Madame Ansaaf spent more than 40 years helping start and run the Boulaq center. She was born in 1923 in Assiut and was a great lady who started the program in Boulaq. She had a vision to target women in Boulaq and provide people with economic opportunities, start income generating projects and be self-reliant. The memorial service was a great celebration of her life and her heart for the poor. Many people shared their experiences and testimonies about her life and the effect she had on them.





Success Stories



Gina, an elderly beneficiary at one of our community centers has some children who are grown and one son who still lives at home. He has no job, so Gina had to ask some of her family members for help in order to buy a small oven to make baladi bread in. Some staff at one of our community centers provided her with flour and a small loan in order to continue baking and selling the bread. We are proud of her and her desire to start this small project.

At our international women's day celebrations, two of our beneficiaries shared their stories with us:

My name is Magdy and I am 66 years old. Ten years ago, my husband passed away and left me with seven children to take care of. My husband was sick because he was an addict, but I did not despair since I had a goal to be self-reliant and improve my income. In order to do this, I went to the EpiscoCare Community Development Center for a loan. I did my best to expand my project and pay for my husband's medication and my children's education. My children have now graduated and a few have started their own projects with my help, another is a police man and another owns a small car maintenance shop. I would like to thank the El Salaam Center since they so kindly supported me with loans and taught me so much, and I am especially thankful for God.

Magda Anwar is a volunteer at the El Salaam Community Development Center. She has told us the following story:

At the El Salaam center, I have learned a lot about development work and how I have an important role in the development of my community. I can help others learn to communicate better, discover their potential and teach literacy classes to adults. As a Muslim woman being employed at the center, my presence encourages all Muslim women to join the center and benefit from the activities and classes. I am happy to have a role in developing my community and at the same time learn a lot about dealing with my children, which has helped me be a better mother.





Prayer Requests

Please pray for all staff members, volunteers and people associated in EpiscoCare's projects; may they each fill the role assigned to them and may they find strength and encouragement in their work to the benefit of others.

Pray for the year 2013; that the presence of EpiscoCare be a light in the darkness for many people as poverty is increasing exponentially.

Pray that all Egyptians, men and women, rich and poor, Muslims and Christians may unite in the spirit of God's grace.



Contact Information

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