



Global Health Ministries Newsletter

Because all people should have access to a healthy life.

*Photo, Angodobo, Androy Region, Madagascar
Second Crop, June, 2023*

Abundant Life



Traveling from the Lutheran Clinic at Antanimora, Community Health Nurse Nathalie visits the village of Angodobo.

Exhausted, but eyes still sparkling, Anica and ten other Community Health Nurses (CHNs) and volunteers celebrated the end of a good day. They had spent the day walking into remote villages to

offer COVID booster shots. A quick tally revealed that 72 people received shots this day. Anica chimed in with one story of a brave grandpa who was the first in his family to raise his hand for the booster shot. His example inspired 20 more of his extended family to accept a booster that day! Several days a week, these CHNs walk into communities. Today they brought shots, but another day they teach about nutrition, washing hands, using toilets, and a host of other habits to bring well-being to everyone. Together they work long hours for little pay. Their joy comes from seeing fewer people die of preventable causes, thanks to their teaching and service.

~ continued page 2

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

~ John 10:10



These nurses and midwives are among 40 GHM-supported CHNs working across Madagascar today. After receiving their nursing or midwifery degree they go on for specialized training in a 2-year program that prepares them for their vital community health work, reaching into often remote communities to expand access to health.

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CHNs share the importance of healthy habits like handwashing. The faucet at Angodobo's new well is especially interesting!

Each one believes that God has called them to serve ... to bring abundant life, in Jesus' name.

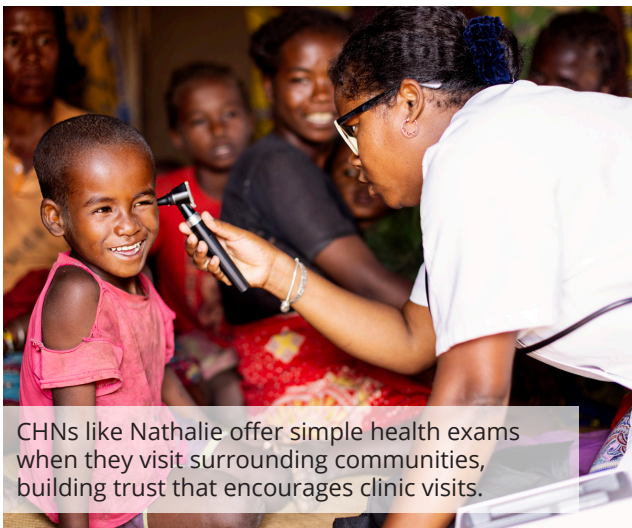
Three years ago, Global Health Ministries (GHM) helped launch a training program for CHNs through SEFAM, the Lutheran School of Nursing in Madagascar. Today 40 CHNs are fully trained and placed at 25 clinics across the island nation. These are hardship posts, in remote locations, serving the poorest of the poor. Each CHN mobilizes a network of 6-24 volunteer Community Health Workers to educate and promote healthy behaviors in communities numbering 1,500-2,000 people.

In July I visited one of these sites in southern Madagascar, in the Androy region. Water is scarce here and malnutrition is the norm for over a million people impacted by the persistent drought that has plagued this region. Here the CHNs are integrated into a water project sponsored by GHM together with partner Foundation, Seeds of Change. Using geological techniques associated with finding oil, GHM is partnering with SALFA (the Malagasy Lutheran Health Department) to locate water deep beneath the surface. This "Deep-Seated Water" is clean, abundant all year round, and doesn't depend on rainfall.



The deep water well at Angodobo has made this life-giving crop, and better nutrition, possible.

The CHNs have a vital role in this community-centered approach. Local residents serve as a trusted water team to maintain and protect the water. Drip irrigation and well-researched seed selection have brought two crops already this year to the village of Angodobo, one of the water project sites. These were the first dependable crops Angodobo has had in five years. Dependable water is making sustainable nutrition and income generation possible. Meanwhile, with information and encouragement from the CHNs and Community Health Workers, the community is beginning to adopt wider toilet usage, handwashing, good nutrition, prenatal care, and much more.



CHNs like Nathalie offer simple health exams when they visit surrounding communities, building trust that encourages clinic visits.

In 2023, three pilot sites including Angodobo have proven the concept and we anticipate reaching 15 more sites by the end of the year. The combination of water, agriculture, and CHNs mobilizing volunteers to bring healthier habits to thousands of the world's most vulnerable people is bringing abundant joy!

One of GHM's priorities is to partner at this local level as communities seek to find sustainable health in the face of poverty and minimal resources. As a partner with GHM, your support is reaching into communities like these in countries from Madagascar to Tanzania, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. Community health workers in each country are finding joy in their work as they see health in the faces of their neighbors. Thank you for your partnership to make this possible!

Rev. Doug Cox, Executive Director

Do Not Be Dismayed

For the first time in GHM's 36-year history, a container did not reach its destination, and we were devastated. The container, full of critical medical supplies and equipment for Phebe and Curran Hospitals as well as a host of other health centers and nursing schools in Liberia, was involved in an accident on the highway between Monrovia and Phebe that left it blocking the road. In the middle of the night a truck crashed into the container, setting it on fire and destroying all of the contents. Our partners were counting on these supplies, they were counting on us.

With the help of an amazing, generous donation, GHM was able to quickly put together an even more impactful shipment, replacing each of the items that was lost and adding some that hadn't been previously included. Within just weeks, a newly-loaded container was released, and it's already arrived at Phebe. An incredibly fast transit time across the ocean - door-to-door in just two months! And a new partner record for clearing Customs - just four days!

GHM has sent more than 300 containers overseas since the first one left Minneapolis in 1988. The safe arrival of this most recent, record-breaking container of life-giving medical supplies was met with great joy! God is good! Isaiah said it well: "Do not not be dismayed ... for I am with you."

Snakes!



Willie Voupawoe, head of maintenance at Phebe Hospital in Liberia, wrote in April that "our tractor is down and we need your help!" The steering rack was leaking oil and Willie needed a part. By May, GHM was able to source the replacement part and send it on the next container to Phebe. It arrived in July. Snakes lurk in the sea of grass on the hospital campus, some of them poisonous. The tractor - a John Deere sent in a GHM container in 2004 (it barely fit!) - is important. It helps keep the hospital campus clean, inspiring confidence in the services offered there, and the grounds safe for patients, visitors and staff.



CHWs serving among the Maasai in Tanzania, pictured in 2014 with GHM First Aid Kits at the start of the project (top) and concentrating on training in July, 2023. Most are illiterate so the data collection forms use pictures - it's critical to make sure the meaning is clear.

Among the Maasai

For the last two years, Community Health Workers (CHWs) connected to CHAP (the Community Hospital Alliance Program) in northeastern Tanzania have not received the government stipend that covered their transportation to different bomas. They are often short medical supplies, but people still come to them for help, and to know when to go to the health center. Despite challenges, the CHWs continue to show up, dedicated to using their knowledge to improve community health among the Maasai. Remarkably, all of the CHWs who started with the project are still active – almost a decade later!

GHM consultant Magdeline Aagard has also been part of this project from the start. In partnership with Empower Tanzania, Magdeline helped launch this project in 2014 by providing training for the CHWs and collaborating for data collection to chart the impact of their work on behavior change. Until the pandemic she returned every year to help refresh training, review results, offer encouragement. Her most recent visit was in July. Today, more Maasai women are delivering at health centers and more people are visiting the health centers when they're sick. More Maasai are knowledgeable about HIV and TB transmission and are getting tested. Results are encouraging but the CHWs know that more education is needed, especially to promote using latrines. Change takes time. But the dedication of these committed CHWs has built trust and impacted health for many Maasai families in this part of Tanzania.

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October Symposium

Join us for our annual gathering about global health! This year we look forward to hearing from Mike Toso, Johns Hopkins, and Dr. Amon Marti, Medical Director at Selian Lutheran Hospital, Arusha, Tanzania. Our theme:

Local & Lasting Change

9:30 am - 1 pm

October 28, 2023

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Register starting Oct 1 at ghm.org

GLOBAL HEALTH MINISTRIES

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Meet Brighton

Several years ago, Brighton Mkocha considered the impact of the church on his life and, with his bishop's blessing, decided to commit to helping people with disabilities in villages in the Iringa Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania (ELCT). He does not do this work alone. Not

only is there always a pastor from the diocese involved, but a church thousands of miles away in Eagan, Minnesota helps make his work possible. In partnership with GHM and Mobility Worldwide, Easter Lutheran is helping the lame walk and, more accurately, roll! Easter has sent a total of 168 mobility carts to Iringa through GHM. Some who receive the gift of a mobility cart are elderly and struggle with mobility challenges, some have lost a leg or a foot in a traffic accident, many are people with disabilities since birth. Now they can go to market, to school, to church - a blessing for them and for their families, who often are their caregivers. Kihesa Parish, Brighton's parish, is connected to Easter Lutheran through the companion synod program of the ELCA.