

EMPOWERMENT

Global Health Connections Quarterly Newsletter



Sustainable Futures

Welcome to this edition of "Empowerment," where we explore the powerful synergy between empowerment and sustainability. At Global Health Connections (GHC), we remain steadfast in our commitment to the core principles of empowerment and sustainability. These guiding pillars are not just abstract concepts but integral elements of our mission to foster lasting, positive change in the communities we serve. By equipping individuals with the tools and knowledge they need to drive their own progress and ensuring our initiatives have enduring impact, we lay the foundation for resilient communities.

We are excited to embark on a new chapter at GHC, as we proudly announce the launch of our upcoming remote pilot Community Health and Empowerment Clubs (CHECs) on Mfangano Island and in Kajiado County. These pilot programs represent a significant step forward in our efforts to extend our

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reach and amplify our impact, further aligning with our vision of a world empowered with health, equity and prosperity. Beyond these pilot programs, we are expanding into two additional villages in Kisii and Homa Bay Counties, increasing our total number of CHECs to 19. For more information on our new villages, please refer to the Global Grant section of the newsletter.

We're especially proud to share that 5 of these 19 villages have now become self-sustaining and are thriving on their own. This achievement aligns perfectly with our long-standing goal at GHC to develop sustainable, self-governing communities. The success of these villages is a powerful testament to the effectiveness of our approach, highlighting our commitment to fostering empowerment and resilience. It ensures that the positive impact we help create will continue to prosper within these communities for generations to come.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

At Global Health Connections, we believe in the strong connection between empowerment and sustainability. Our Community Health and Empowerment Clubs (CHECs) are designed to create lasting, positive change by equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge to sustain their progress even after we depart. By fostering a sense of ownership and self-reliance, we ensure that communities continue to thrive and innovate independently. The true measure of our success is when a village remains vibrant and self-sustaining, driven by the empowered individuals within it.

Through comprehensive health and economic training, coupled with leadership development, we lay the foundation for long-term stability. Our approach emphasizes community involvement and capacity building, which are crucial for maintaining the momentum of progress. As we celebrate all of our communities' achievements, we recognize that sustainable development is an ongoing journey, not a final destination. By working together, we are establishing a foundation of resilience and sustainability that will benefit and enrich future generations.

--Mimi Gordon



Village & Apiary Updates

Our Community Health and Empowerment Clubs (CHECs) are thriving, with members actively participating in a range of economic initiatives. Across 15 villages, GHC oversees 33 income-generating ventures. Notably, 672 members are dedicated to beekeeping, while 402 members are involved in various other projects.

In Kisii, most members focus on beekeeping, alongside napier grass cultivation and soap making. In Homa Bay, activities include cereal production, rice farming, quarry mining, tailoring/sewing, and water purification, among others. Recent honey harvests from Ititi, Mokubo, and Tabaka yielded an impressive 119 liters. Our four newest apiaries boast 194 colonized hives out of 240, and with additional hives being delivered soon, we will have a total of 476 hives in our apiaries!

Our rice farmers in Kanyamfwa have been remarkably productive, completing three harvests in their first season, with an average yield of 10 unmilled sacks per harvest. After planting the second season's crop in late March and harvesting it in June, they are now preparing for the next harvest within the coming month. Building on this success, we are excited to expand rice farming by allocating 2 acres of land in our new global grant village, Maugo.



As shared in our previous newsletter, one of the key concepts we introduce during the health curriculum is the merry-go-round funding method. Following this, at the conclusion of the financial literacy curriculum, we introduce the concept of table banking. In essence, a merry-go-round program involves a small group of members who regularly contribute small sums of money, typically on a weekly basis. The funds are pooled at each meeting, and one member receives the entire amount on a rotating basis. Table banking operates similarly, but instead of rotating payouts, members contribute to a collective "bank," which then provides low-interest loans to members in need.

We recently introduced a 2-week "Entrepreneurial/Business Management" refresher course for members who have already completed the 10-week Economic Curriculum. Equipped with the knowledge gained from both courses, along with merry-go-round and table banking funds, these members are now demonstrating their

entrepreneurial spirit by either embarking on individual ventures or collaborating on group income-generating projects. A notable example is in the Nyasumi CHEC, where several members pooled their resources to purchase a solar-powered chicken incubator (see pictures). The machine can hold up to 192 fertilized eggs, which they source from local distributors. After the 20-21 day incubation period, they will have 192 chicks ready for sale. The members are enthusiastic about this new venture and anticipate generating a consistent supplementary income.



PICTURED ABOVE LEFT: A NYAMECHEO MEMBER IN FRONT OF HER NEW DRYING RACK
PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT: THE NYASUMI CHICKEN HATCHERY GROUP AND THE SOLAR PANEL



Marketing Updates

With the introduction of our new logo, we also took the opportunity to update our Vision, Mission, and Values to better reflect the full scope of our work.

At Global Health Connections, our new Vision, Mission, and Values are the guiding principles behind everything we do. Our Vision—A world empowered with health, equity, and prosperity—reflects our commitment to creating a brighter, more equitable future for all. Our Mission—Connecting Communities to Innovative Health Initiatives and Economic Sustainability Programs—drives our efforts to make a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve.

Our work is shaped by five core Values:

- **Empowerment** – We believe in equipping individuals and communities to take control of their futures, fostering self-sufficiency and resilience.
- **Community-Centered** – Our approach is driven by the needs and voices of the communities we serve, ensuring their active involvement and ownership of solutions.
- **Sustainability** – We are dedicated to creating lasting change through sustainable practices that promote long-term health, economic stability, and environmental stewardship.
- **Innovation** – We embrace innovative approaches and solutions to address complex challenges, continuously improving our programs and impact.
- **Compassion** – We approach our work with empathy and understanding, deeply committed to the well-being of the individuals and communities we serve.

These principles are the foundation of our efforts, guiding us as we work to empower communities and create sustainable, lasting change.





New Global Grant

In our June newsletter, we shared the exciting news that we had recently submitted our new Rotary International global grant. We are now thrilled to announce that the grant has been approved, and we are on the cusp of launching CHECs in our new villages. This expansion includes four new villages, two of which will be the first remote pilot CHEC projects for GHC. Our plan is to enroll 125 villagers per club, resulting in 500 new direct beneficiaries and approximately 3,000 indirect beneficiaries.

Below, you'll find the new villages and their respective economic projects:

- Nyamokenye village in Kisii County → Beekeeping
- Maugo village in Homa Bay County → Rice Farming
- Soklo village (pilot CHEC) on Mfangano Island in Homa Bay County → Beans, Nuts and Roots Farming
- Kimuka village (pilot CHEC) in Kajiado County → Chicken Farming

Over the course of 13 weeks, the GHC team diligently trained our remote team members—Lynn and Grace in Kimuka, and Quinter in Soklo—on the GHC health, economic and leadership curriculums. We then brought them to Kisii for several days of practical, hands-on activities and village visits. They are now fully prepared to successfully launch and manage these new CHECs.



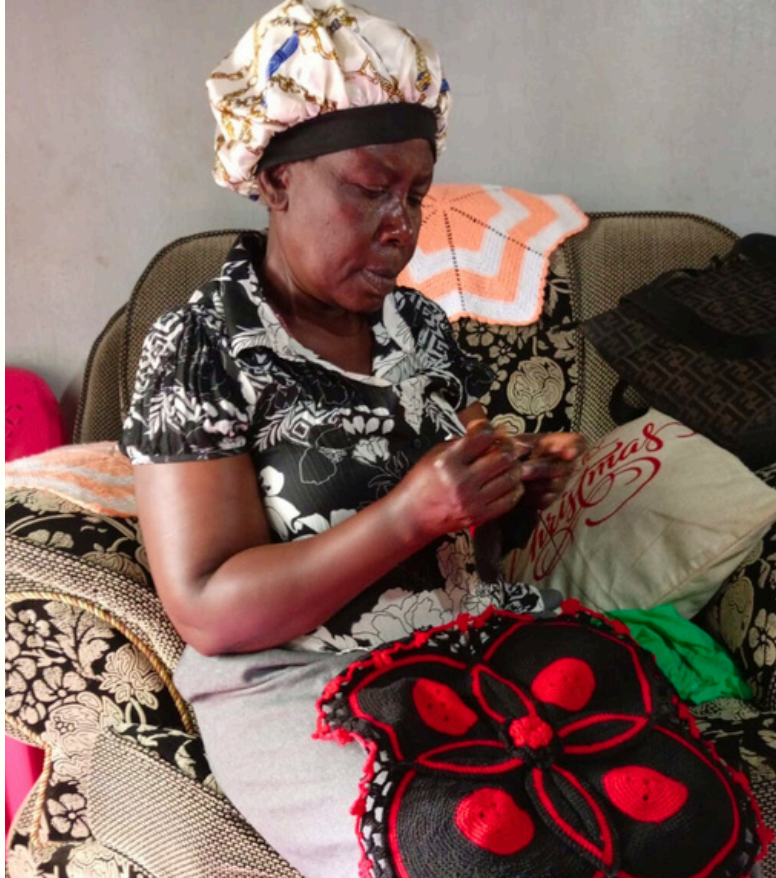
PICTURED ABOVE: VILLAGE LIFE IN SOKLO VILLAGE ON MFANGANO ISLAND. PICTURED
BOTTOM: THE DAM, THE MAIN WATER SOURCE, IN MAUGO VILLAGE IN HOMA BAY

We look forward to the rest of 2024 with optimism, knowing it holds countless opportunities to propel our mission and vision forward. With ambitious targets set, we are poised to reach significant milestones throughout the rest of the year and beyond. Although the work can be demanding, the unwavering dedication and passion of our CHEC members make every challenge worthwhile. We'll close this edition with one final story that truly embodies resilience, empowerment, and the entrepreneurial spirit.

Meet Joan Atieno Ongati, a 52-year-old woman from the Quarry group of Kanyipir CHEC. Joan possessed skills in sewing and knitting tablecloths and yarn seat covers but lacked the financial means to purchase the necessary materials. After GHC empowered her with insights on economic impact and provided seed capital for the Quarry project, she and her group began selling stones, making and sharing profits.

Using her share of the profits, Joan invested in materials for knitting. She is now successfully producing various seat covers and tablecloths, receiving numerous orders from different customers. Joan is delighted with her newfound ability to generate income and support her family through her craft.

Together, we are empowering communities and helping to create sustainable villages!



PICTURED ABOVE: JOAN ATIENO ONGATI FROM KANYIPIR VILLAGE

GHC Spotlight

Name: Mark Orondo

Title: Project Officer/Greener Hills Honey Manager

1. How long have you been working at GHC?

What is your area of expertise?

I have been working for GHC for 3 years now, and my area of expertise is beekeeping.

2. What motivated you to pursue a career in this sector, and what drives your passion for GHC's mission?

My admiration for GHC's work in the villages has greatly inspired me to pursue a career in this field. My passion for community work aligns perfectly with GHC's mission.

3. What strategies do you use to build trust and rapport with community members in rural villages in western Kenya? How do you ensure community participation and ownership in development initiatives?

I like to conduct research and show genuine interest in these villages, while listening to their needs and preferences. This helps build a strong rapport. Also, by actively involving them in daily activities and development efforts, they develop a sense of ownership over the initiatives.

4. Can you discuss a successful project or initiative you and the GHC Team implemented in a village? What were the key factors contributing to its success?

The GHC team has designed and constructed modern apiaries throughout our villages. This initiative has significantly enhanced the maintenance of robust colonies and improved hive colonization.

5. What strategies do you employ to ensure the sustainability and long-term viability of our CHEC programs and initiatives?

In our CHECs, we've trained strong leaders from among the members to manage the groups. Additionally, we've trained a special group in beekeeping, ensuring the sustainability of the group's activities even in our absence.



GHC Spotlight

6. What are your long-term goals and aspirations for community development in rural villages in western Kenya? How do you envision achieving sustainable impact and transformation in these communities?

From a beekeeping perspective, we aim to economically empower all our villages through the limited support we provide, and we plan to achieve this by ensuring 100% colonization of our hives across all the villages with apiaries.

7. What do you like to do for fun? What are some of your passions outside of work?

For fun I like visiting new places, watching documentaries and making new friends.

8. What's the best part about working for GHC?

GHC has given me an opportunity to bring out the best in me and am really grateful.

9. One random fact about me that most people don't know about me is....that I am so

caring about others that I sometimes forget about myself!



PICTURED ABOVE: MARK WITH THE KEGATI BEEKEEPING MEMBERS



We hope you will consider partnering with us in the following areas:

1. Individual Donations to support CHECs in current villages and expansion into new villages.
2. Adopt-a-Village or Adopt-an-Apiary Sponsorship: Work with GHC to learn about everyday life in Kenya while supporting the health, economic empowerment and sustainability of villages. By adopting a village or apiary, an individual or club will be immersed in the CHEC transformation process and will have the opportunity to see firsthand how GHC has a direct impact on empowering individuals.

Be sure to check our website for new information and our social media accounts for weekly updates!

www.globalhealthconnections.org