





A Quiet Strength

Welcome to Year 2 of our “more” theme!

In Year 1, we reflected on Isaiah 61:1 – *The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.* We contemplated how we, as Christ’s sent ones, could proclaim the good news that “In Christ, there is more!”

In 2018–2019, we will celebrate the transforming work that Jesus can do in the lives of those who mourn and grieve – *They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. [Isaiah 61:3b NIV]*

I am encouraged when I see the transforming work of God in the lives of women who might otherwise have reason to despair. I am inspired by my sisters in Christ who, in obedience to the Spirit, reach out to easily overlooked women, offering tangible help and proclaiming the good news of Jesus.

Each one of us, through Christ, has received an invitation to exchange our ashes – what we’ve lost – and our burdens – what we are needlessly carrying – for His life-giving presence and provision. Jesus, who is gentle and humble in heart, invites us to be rooted and established in his love, filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:17–19)

As we continuously receive life, help, and healing from Jesus, a quiet strength emerges. And it is beautiful. Like an oak tree, we are rooted and strong – a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

We have retained the “more” theme for a second year, but we have chosen a new set of projects to support. In this packet you will see a brief description of each project. An accompanying video is available online at <http://www.greatcommissionwomen.org/resources/videos/>

It is my prayer that the women and children impacted by the projects we’ve chosen this year will find their life and strength in Jesus. I pray the same for you.

God bless!

Jen Vogel, National Director, Great Commission Women



The following projects have been selected for support throughout the 2018-2019 GCW ministry year. In addition to providing compassionate care and tangible help to suffering and overlooked peoples in these areas, project coordinators and their teams remain fully committed to proclaiming the good news of Jesus to those who have yet to experience His loving embrace.

"They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor" (Isaiah 61:3b, NIV).

SILVER LINING ORPHANAGE | ASIA/PACIFIC | \$31,500

Orphans find safety and security in a children's home that provides a loving, parented family structure. Local seminary students help lead this ministry.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY CENTER | MEXICO | \$31,500

Hurting and overlooked women receive spiritual guidance, legal and financial counsel, and 48-hour crisis-care intervention at the Circle of Care Women's Ministry Center, a ministry of Breath of Life Alliance Church in Guadalajara.

SANTIDOUGOU WIDOWS CENTER | BURKINA FASO | \$31,500

Young, deaf women receive sewing machines and training, and widows are given access to soap-making equipment and a moringa press at the Santidouougou Widows Center. Daughters of widows receive one-year scholarships to complete high school.

CAMA ORPHAN PROJECT | VIETNAM | \$31,500

Single mothers are resourced to begin small, income-generating activities. Orphans receive tuition, school supplies, and monthly rice portions.

CRISIS PREGNANCY SHELTER | NORTH & CENTRAL ASIA | \$31,500

At-risk migrant moms in crisis situations will receive temporary residence, practical support, counseling, and mentoring in life and mothering skills through the ministry of the shelter.

Great Commission Women

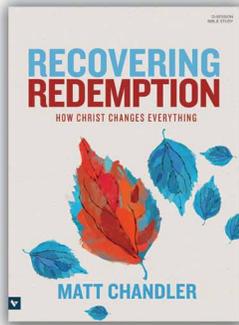
an auxiliary ministry of **THE ALLIANCE** | www.greatcommissionwomen.org

Please consider partnering with the Great Commission Women by making a Kingdom investment in these critical projects. Your tax-deductible donation can be made by check to The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Please indicate "GCW Project" in the memo line. You may also donate online at greatcommissionwomen.org/give/.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance
Attn: Donor Services
8595 Explorer Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

NOTE: Your gifts to the GCW National Project also support U.S. Alliance multicultural ministries, Great Commission Women, and the Great Commission Fund.

Bible Studies*



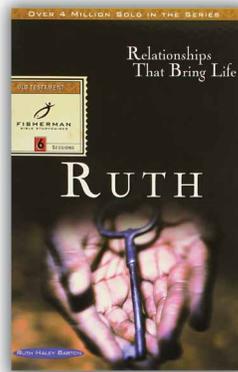
RECOVERING REDEMPTION: HOW CHRIST CHANGES EVERYTHING

by Matt Chandler
\$18.98 on Amazon
(25-minute DVDs needed)

All of us can have a sense of dissatisfaction. Typically, we look for solutions in four places—self, others, the world, and religion. But none of these can satisfy. The gospel is the remedy for everything in our lives, including our struggles, difficult circumstances, and broken relationships.

Recovering Redemption is about recovering what is lost and broken—our relationship with Jesus. Those who have been Christ followers for years will find that these 12 sessions will help connect the dots of their faith, serving as a bridge between salvation and maturity. This is also an essential study for new believers. Through this series, you can get traction in areas where you feel frustrated or stagnant in your relationship with the Lord as well as enhance your relationship with Him and others.

Personal testimony: We watched the DVD together and discussed it. During the week I went through the three devotionals, which really helped me internalize the things that we learned and discussed in our group. This is an amazing study—very foundational and formational!
(Samantha)



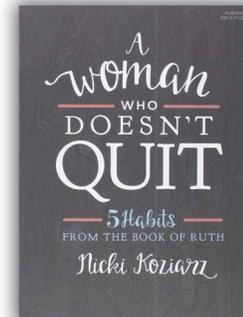
RUTH: RELATIONSHIPS THAT BRING LIFE

by Ruth Haley Barton
\$6.39 on Amazon

Bring hope, faith, and love to your relationships! The biblical character of Ruth was striking in her ability to do just that. Even in the midst of tragedy and difficulty, her presence blessed and influenced friends and strangers in her community, the man she grew to love, her children, and her in-laws.

This six-week *Fisherman Bible Study Guide* uses Ruth's story to help you reflect on your relationships, inviting you to move in ways that will lead you into life-giving patterns of relating.

Personal testimony: It's impossible not to apply God's Word to your everyday life after doing this study, which is easy to use and to lead. I learned so much from this study on Ruth even though I have previously studied the book and heard numerous sermons on it.
(Summer)



A WOMAN WHO DOESN'T QUIT: 5 HABITS FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH

by Nikki Koziarz
\$18.25 on Amazon (Optional DVDs available)

Every woman will eventually face the temptation to give in and give up. But something transformative happens when she perseveres in the face of difficulty and pain.

A woman who refuses to quit influences her world in ways she could never have imagined. In six sessions, this study focuses on the Moabite woman's five practical habits that kept her eyes on God: Ruth accepted the assignment of refinement, followed through on her commitments despite her feelings, remained open to the movement of God, gave others what she needed, and moved forward in faith.

Personal testimony: I'd definitely recommend this study if you're looking for something that encourages and challenges you. I am not using the videos, but I still can complete the book without them. (Angela)

Stories from the Field - Women's Ministry Center

by Bob and Cheryl Fugate,
Alliance international workers to Guadalajara , Mexico



Claudia

After her husband was late coming home from work one night, Claudia, a faithful member of our church, Breath of Life, received the call that so many Mexicans fear. It was Luis' kidnappers, demanding a ransom. If she didn't pay it, they would kill him. Claudia knew she would likely never see him again.

Although Claudia was a believer, Luis was nursing a 20-year grudge against God. Last year, two of their daughters accepted Christ and were baptized. Although Luis refused to attend their baptism, Claudia refused to give up on him.

After hanging up the phone with Luis after his abduction, Claudia prayed, **"Lord, I don't think I will ever see my husband again; please take care of him."** Claudia couldn't go to the police, as that would ensure her husband's death. Kidnapping victims in Mexico are warned by their abductors that if word gets out about their abduction, the entire family will be killed.

In desperation, Claudia took a risk and called Breath of Life's assistant pastor. He prayed with her and informed Bob and Cheryl of the situation, and they joined in prayer. No one else in the congregation could be told.

One Sunday morning while Luis was still in captivity, Claudia testified to the congregation, "God is faithful!" By selling what she could and obtaining a loan, she was able to meet the required ransom. Luis was miraculously released.

A Joyful Reunion

Several days after Luis was reunited with his family, he was ready to open his heart to God. The couple approached Bob to tell him that Luis wanted to surrender to Christ.

Prior to his abduction, Luis told Bob that he had sensed the Lord speaking to him. He had prayed, "Lord, I need to return to you. Help me to straighten out my life." Luis said that throughout the ordeal he never feared for his life; he was at peace, which further infuriated his captors. He knew God was answering his prayer.

Luis promised Claudia and Bob that he would listen to the Holy Spirit's voice and begin attending church with his family. He has followed through on that commitment, with Claudia overjoyed yet still unable to tell anyone else what happened.



Claudia, her daughter and Cheryl Fugate

Claudia is not the first woman to deal with this type of horrific experience, and she won't be the last. But we can come alongside women like her, sensitively providing support during the terrible hardships they endure.

Stories from the Field - Women's Ministry Center

by Bob and Cheryl Fugate,
Alliance international workers to Guadalajara , Mexico



Carmen

As she did most afternoons, Carmen asked her 21-year-old son to walk to the corner store for some bread. On one such day, her life changed forever—it was the last time she ever saw him. Deep down, she knew he was another of the thousands of victims killed each year in Mexico's drug wars. Veracruz, the coastal state where Carmen lived, is a hotbed of drug cartel activity and noted for its unmarked mass graves.

Unable to bear the pain of living in the city where her son's life was claimed, Carmen moved to Guadalajara to be near extended family members.

One day she showed up on a Sunday morning at Breath of Life. She had noticed our signs outside, "Christian Church," and arrived looking for hope—something to help her make sense of the tragedy in her life.

When Carmen attended one of the church's new visitor's breakfasts, she shared her story with the group, relaying how every weekend over a year's time search parties had looked for her son but never brought back any news. She had come to Guadalajara to start anew and get away from the horrible memories.

Recently, the government of Veracruz discovered a mass grave on one of the local beaches that was filled with more than 250 dismembered bodies. Carmen was notified and asked to provide a DNA sample for her son to determine if his was one of the bodies.

Can you imagine as a mother being asked to do such a thing? Unfortunately, this is all too common in Mexico, where violence and corruption are out of control—there is no one to trust and no one to offer consolation or counsel.

One Sunday morning, about six months after Carmen became a part of the congregation, a small smile spread across her face—something no one had witnessed. This was the transforming power of the gospel for this grieving mom. She was praising the Lord for the peace and joy that comes with the assurance of God's love.

As of this writing, Carmen has received no news from the DNA testing. She may never know the answers to her questions. Yet she continues to sing songs filled with the new hope and love she has experienced in Christ. Her heart is full through relationships shared in her new community of faith.

The vision for Circle of Care is to give more women, who have similar stories like Carmen's, a safe place to share their heartbreaking stories, receive support and love during their painful ordeals, and to be a beacon of hope for transformation—even in the face of tragedy.

We are living in a broken world, and we as the Church need to do our part—no matter how small it seems—to bring hope into the darkness and see it transform one woman, one mother at a time.

Stories from the Field - Crisis Pregnancy Shelter

Eastern Europe



Gloria

Our shelter director, Maddie, received a phone call last month from a woman who works outside of our city assisting females in crisis. “I don’t know the culture of migrant women, or how to help them,” she told Maddie. “But there’s a migrant lady here in great need. **I’ve heard of your ministry to women like her; can you come and help?**”

So Maddie went to meet “Gloria,” whose situation encapsulates the reason we are starting our Crisis Pregnancy Shelter.

At age 14, Gloria was given to a man in marriage in her home country—she was her husband’s fourth wife. He brought her to our city, and then abandoned her, leaving her pregnant and alone. When her baby was born, she was taken to an orphanage because Gloria had no means to care for her.

God brought some local believers into Gloria’s life who helped her find housing. They also assisted her in obtaining legal custody of her daughter, who was a toddler at the time. But when Maddie met with Gloria, this young mom still had **no resources, little grasp of the local language, and no means to support herself**. She was also pregnant again and deeply concerned that her unborn child might also be placed in an orphanage—not a safe option in this case.

Maddie **showered Gloria with hope and love**, providing her warm clothing, a listening ear, understanding from years of experience with women in similar situations, and the **good news**. The young mom heard all of this for the first time in her heart language and was overwhelmed. Although she was resistant to the idea of needing a Savior, Gloria begged Maddie to keep visiting her. She then asked the circle of local believers to tell her more about their faith.

Our women’s shelter team interceded for Maddie during her visit with Gloria. When she returned, they got to work, gathering more items that Gloria needed: a stroller, a used phone, baby clothes, and manicure tools, the latter of which Gloria hopes to use to earn an income.

But Gloria’s most urgent need—**safe housing where she can continue to learn and receive support**—isn’t something we can offer yet. We hope we can soon! In the meantime, we are helping Gloria as much as we can, including talking with her about her options. We will continue connecting with and supporting Gloria and her little family, always pointing them to our only true hope—Jesus.

Stories from the Field - Crisis Pregnancy Shelter

Eastern Europe



Amy

Recently, our team at the Crisis Pregnancy Shelter received a phone call from a local pastor's wife. Someone in her church had found a young migrant woman lying unconscious on the sidewalk, and they wanted to know how to help her. (This pastor's wife knew that we had started a ministry to migrant women in crisis, which is why she called us for advice.) It turned out that the young woman, "Amy," had been beaten by her drunk, common-law husband and thrown out in the street. Her arm was broken in the process. When he had learned that she was pregnant, he wanted her to get an abortion. She was reluctant as she had had one previously and did not want to repeat the experience. When we met Amy, she was terrified for herself and her 18-month old son, who was still with his father.

Our team made some quick phone calls to address Amy's needs, praying fervently for wisdom about how best to help her. We soon found temporary housing for her with a local believing woman from Amy's same people group.

Our shelter director, Maddie, counseled Amy, advising her of what next steps were possible. A woman in a crisis situation like Amy's often feels that she has run out of options; part of our job is to help her discover what resources are available and to connect her to the help God is orchestrating to provide her. Since Amy's desire was to return to her home country, we contacted a women's shelter there and arranged for her acceptance into their program.

Meanwhile, the woman who took Amy into her home showered her with compassionate care. Through another believer, Amy heard the gospel and the truth about a Savior who loved her deeply. Amy's heart was opened, and she made a decision to accept Christ as her Savior.

Soon after Amy's decision to follow Christ, her son's father agreed to release the child into her care. We purchased airline tickets and sent mother and son back to their home country, knowing they would be greeted by believers who would continue God's work in their lives.

In our work with migrants, we are often only a small part of their story. We may not know what God has been doing in their lives before we've met them, and we often lose touch with them because of their very transient lifestyles. But we are committed to "write the chapter" God has given us in each migrant woman's life with grace and wisdom—and then trust Him with the rest.

We look forward to reuniting someday with Amy in heaven, and hopefully learn how God has used her to spread His Kingdom!

Stories from the Field - CAMA Orphan Project

by Mau Le,
Alliance international worker with CAMA Vietnam



Name: Ngoc*
DOB: 7/15/2007
Grade: 5



Ngoc contracted the HIV virus during childbirth. She never knew her father, who passed away from HIV-related causes when she was three months old. Ngoc and her mother live in an old storage shed on the corner of their extended family's garden; meanwhile, Ngoc's older sister, who is not HIV-positive, lives on the property with the relatives in their larger home. Sometimes Ngoc is envious of her sister because she's healthy and lives happily with other family members.

Ngoc's mother does farm work and other hard labor to earn a meager living for her and her daughter. But she is unable to hold a long-term job because of the wearing side effects from her HIV-medication.

Everyone in Ngoc's life is afraid to have close contact with her. She feels rejected and unloved, abandoned by her family and community, and often asks why people hate her and her mother. At school, teachers and students keep their distance from Ngoc. She wishes that her extended family and her sister would play with her.

Only Ngoc's mother loves and nurtures her. But when her mom is too sick to care for either her daughter or herself, no one wants to help.

Today, Ngoc experiences love and care from CAMA staff. "I thank them for loving me, giving me a lot of hugs, praying for my and my mother's health, and financially supporting me so I am able to continue school and have food to eat monthly," she often tells us. "I pray that God continues to give me and my mother good health. I want to study medicine so I can help HIV patients."

*Name changed

Stories from the Field - CAMA Orphan Project

by Mau Le,
Alliance international worker with CAMA Vietnam



Name: Thanh
DOB: 5/20/2000
Grade: 12
Sister: Linh
DOB: 1/14/2003
Grade: 9



When Thanh was eight years old, her father died, leaving behind his wife, three young children, and his 68-year-old mother, who is blind. Thanh's family is severely impoverished, so her mother left for Ha Noi city to find work just after his death. She has never returned to visit her children.

Since then, Thanh has had the responsibility of looking after her grandmother and younger twin siblings. After school, she does all of the household chores. To earn a living for the family, Thanh takes on a variety of jobs, including babysitting, harvesting farm vegetables, and fetching river water for other people's homes.

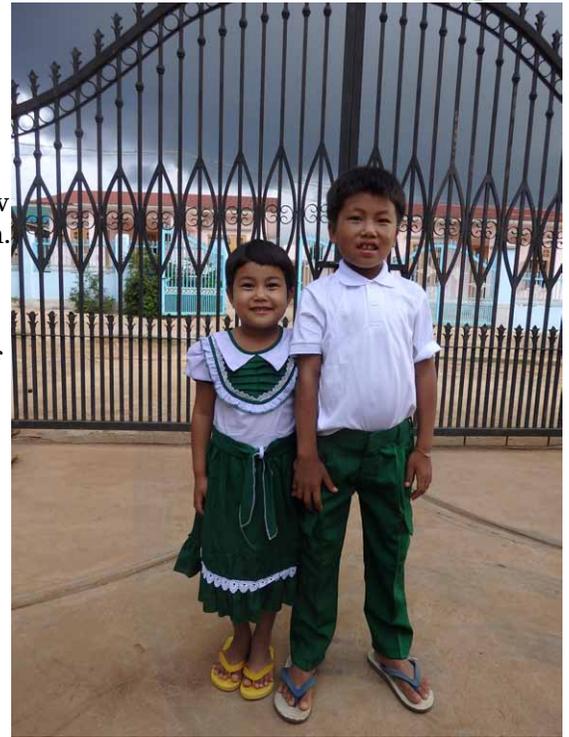
Thanh is thankful to CAMA for supporting her and her younger sister, Linh, with school tuition and rice so that they can continue school. Now a senior, Thanh hopes to pass a college-entrance exam in summer 2018. She wants to become a teacher and return to her village to teach disadvantaged children like herself.

Stories from the Field - Silver Lining Orphanage

by Joshua Yeung,
International worker with Silver Lining



“A Ge, dad is missing.” These were the words 5-year-old Rachel told her 7-year-old Paul three years ago; their drug-addicted father had abandoned them. Unfortunately stories like these are ones echoed by many of our children in our Myanmar orphanage. Opium abuse is a common theme in Myanmar and many of our orphans are exposed to it at a young age. These two siblings watched as their father came home moody and in a different state of mind on many occasions. They have few memories with him but still long for the day when he will return to them. With no financial support from their family, Paul and Rachel’s mother decided to work at a construction site. She did this in order to provide food and clothes for her children but it wasn’t enough. Recently the two sibling’s mother had a major surgery, which required a certain amount of time for rest and recovery to take place. Instead she rushed back to work and contracted a very serious disease caused by exhaustion and passed away shortly after. Already abandoned by their father, their mother was the last family member left in the world the siblings cared for. Paul and Rachel were orphans. The siblings remember days where they wouldn’t have enough to eat in their now empty home. Pictured is the local church where these two lived for some time. A pastor heard about Paul and Rachel’s story and invited them to live at the church where they stayed until coming to the Silver Lining Family Village eight months ago! One day after school Rachel started complaining about stomach pain. When our staff took her to the hospital the doctors discovered that she had a hole in her stomach. They told us this condition is common in individuals who have previously dealt with starvation and malnutrition. Thankfully hospital staff were able to conduct a successful surgery to fix the hole the very same day! Now Rachel is fully healthy, going to school, playing with friends, and no longer has to worry about going hungry. These siblings can be children once more and their smiles prove just how strong they are.



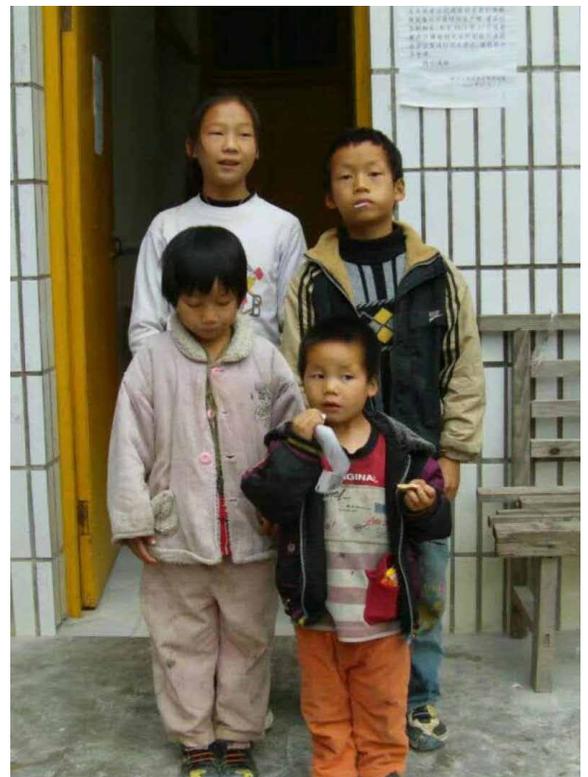
Stories from the Field - Silver Lining Orphanage

by Joshua Yeung,
International worker with Silver Lining



Xiao Yu

My name is Xiao Yu and in 2011, when I was 12 years old, I arrived at the orphanage in Da Hua, China. I come from a very small village where I lived with my three younger siblings, parents, and grandpa. Growing up we did not have electricity and our main source of income was acquired from selling vegetables. As a child I didn't know we were poor because we were a happy family. Everything changed when my dad suddenly passed away when I was 9. I didn't have much time to grieve because all the farm work had to be done by my brother and I. We would always cry while working and when my mom saw us, she would come hug us and then we would all cry together. I envied others who had a father because their farm work would be done much quicker. While other families were taking breaks with their work, my brother and I would still have half of the farm field left. My mom remarried shortly after and abandoned the four of us. I understand why she left. Our home was too poor and she had been through a rough time. I just hope she's happy and that her husband treats her well. Things got worse after that because I had to wake up much earlier than before to find wild vegetables and feed pigs before taking my siblings to school. My brother was 7, my sister was 3 and my youngest brother was only a couple months old. Before waking them up I would cry alone because I was so tired but I kept telling myself that as the oldest sister I should carry the burden alone. I think my hard work paid off because when I was 12, aunts and uncles from Silver Lining brought me to the orphanage in Da Hua. It was crazy how technologically advanced city-life was and life at Silver Lining was so much better because the aunts would cook for me and even help me with my schoolwork. The hardest part for me though was being away from my siblings. I missed them so much and was so happy when they arrived at Silver Lining a year later! Fast-forward 6 years and I'm now a senior in high school preparing to be the first person from my family's history to attend a university. My dream is to go back to Silver Lining in the future so that uncle and aunty Yeung can go to other places to help children in need.



Stories from the Field - Santidougou Widows Center

by Esther Shaeffer,
International worker in Burkina Faso



A Missed Opportunity

We first met this deaf young woman while she was still attending school. She connected with us right away and would often come by the house to visit, bring friends, drink a coke, and use paper to communicate with me. But our conversations never went real far.

After she finished sixth grade, there was no further possibility for her to attend school. She didn't seem to have any direction for her life. She helped out some at the deaf school with the younger children, would meet with other deaf young people, but couldn't quite find her place. Her visits to us became less frequent. Sometimes I would stop by a shop in town where deaf young people would hang out and drink tea, but she was rarely there. When I would ask about her, others would give me the "she's ok" sign.

After a few years had gone by, I was visiting at the deaf school one day and the director said to me that she was there. I found her talking with others in the school cookhouse and saw that she was obviously pregnant. A few months later, she brought her baby for me to see. I asked her what her plans were for herself and her baby and she just shrugged her shoulders.



I then went back to the director and we talked at length about the risk that these young women have for being used and often abused by others because of their lack of practical skills that would enable them to have direction and a way to earn money. We began to look into some possibilities and thought that sewing would be a good option for older girls that had finished their sixth grade education.

It seems too late for the young girl that we befriended years ago, who now has two children and no prospects of work or marriage. But for other deaf young women, we are determined to give them an opportunity to be learning a practical skill that will give their life some direction.

As believers we have an obligation to the society where we are living. To give young women skills so that they can find jobs, benefits the young women and also the society. We have found this to be crucial in the deaf community.

Stories from the Field - Santidougou Widows Center

by Esther Shaeffer,
International worker in Burkina Faso



Making a difference for widows' children

Being the youngest of four children, there wasn't much hope that Hawa would be able to continue in school. After her father died, Hawa and her mother worked hard selling food on the side of the road to support the family. But the older siblings would have the priority for school.

When Hawa was in 7th grade, her mother was able to pay the first down payment of her school fees. Hawa enrolled and began to attend classes with her friends. But when the next payment came due, her mother could not come up with the funds. The school threatened to kick Hawa out if the money wasn't paid. Her mother went to the school and begged for more time. But the next month she was only able to pay a small percentage. The school explained that they could not keep Hawa enrolled if the money wasn't paid. Hawa's mom knew that her daughter was a good student and would find it hard to sit at home while her friends went to school each day. And so Hawa's mom showed up at our house to ask if there was any way we could help to pay the rest of her daughter's schooling.



We listened to her words and prayed together. The next day, I made an appointment to visit the school and talked with the director. He assured me that Hawa was an excellent student but that the distraction of the unpaid bill made it hard for her to concentrate in class. We agreed to pay the rest of her fees. We also told Hawa that if she worked hard and had passing grades each trimester, we would sponsor her for the next year.

That was five years ago. At the end of each school year, Hawa and her mother come and show me her passing grades. It is a happy moment for all of us. And then we set a date for when we will go and enroll her for the following year. But this was the last year for me to do this for Hawa is now in her last year of high school and will soon sit for her final exams. We are so proud of this young woman who has stayed committed to Christ and committed to her studies.

The opportunity to have a high school education will make a huge difference for Hawa, but also for her family. It was one burden that was taken off her mother's shoulders. Hawa also will be able to secure a better job since she has a high school diploma. Staying in school and focusing on studies has kept Hawa from wandering into the temptations that are prevalent for young women in a large city. Succeeding in school increases Hawa's self-image and allows her to be an example to others.