



Global Health Ministries Newsletter

Because all people should have access to a healthy life.
Photo taken in Madagascar of Dr. Len Akland as a young medical missionary.

SIDE-BY-SIDE



Sitting side-by-side in a rural village, sharing challenges and finding solutions together in prayer and faithful service...this is the pattern Global Health Ministries has worked to faithfully fulfill for over thirty years. Today we work within a rapidly changing context where the coronavirus is claiming

too many lives even while it disrupts economies, livelihoods, and food security across the globe.

Since the start of the pandemic, **Madagascar** has received GHM shipments as well as grants to buy and distribute PPE to all 50 Lutheran health centers, even the most remote. It has been more difficult to ship to **South Sudan**. Yet grants for PPE have still been sent and small air-freight shipments have carried N95 masks and PPE items into the country. Even as I write this we are packing highly rated medical cloth (sterilization wrap H600) that local seamstresses trained at the Luther-

~ continued page 2

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Yes ... we need your prayers, we need your support spiritually, mentally, and we need advice in how to face the future.

Dr. Sahondra, Madagascar

I highly welcome the idea of talking directly with experienced individuals ... Hope we can set some time as quickly as possible to discuss some of these issues.

Dr. Sibley, Liberia

~ continued from page 1



Food and hygiene kits distributed in Loma, El Salvador

an Center for Reconciliation can use to create masks. These medical masks are not N95 grade but are significantly better than homemade cloth masks, and offer a new, creative solution to the dwindling availability of N95 masks. We hope to replicate this effort in many countries.

In **El Salvador** we support community health workers (CHWs) who have already delivered hygiene kits to 1,400 families and shared ways to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. Educating communities through CHWs may be one of the best things we can do to slow the spread of COVID-19. Together we're supporting efforts like this in Nicaragua, Nigeria, Madagascar, Tanzania, and ultimately all our partner countries.

While PPE and community health workers have been GHM's priorities for support so far, this response may ultimately be only a first phase. The evolving challenges will demand that GHM remain nimble in helping our partners find creative solutions over the next year or more.



Phebe Hospital, Liberia

In **Liberia**, for example, Phebe Hospital is facing a crisis. The national government is counting on Phebe as the isolation center for the region, but the hospital doesn't have adequate isolation units. Dr. Sibley, Phebe's Medical Director, recently reached out to GHM for technical advice on how COVID-19 isolation units might differ from already-built Ebola units. In partnership with the ELCA, GHM hopes to help empower Phebe for an effective expansion of their isolation capacity.

This pandemic may be the greatest single challenge we or our partners have faced to date. GHM's Board of Directors is responding with a challenge to raise \$500,000 in order to help our partners globally in their fight against COVID-19. We cannot meet this challenge without you.

To help us launch toward this goal, Dr. Len Akland has chosen to match all gifts to GHM in support of our COVID-19 response, up to \$30,000! Decades of memories of faithful service by the GHM community led Len to dedicate this match "in honor of the GHM Shipping Team, our global partners and all the GHM volunteers." Len hopes to inspire you to give at any level you can to help. Together we can make a greater impact than we can alone. Please consider responding now, so that your donation will be matched, doubling your support, doubling your impact! Please return the enclosed envelope, marked COVID to be matched, or give online at ghm.org.

Side-by-side we have faced many challenges over the decades and God is still working in these partnerships today. As funds and new tools (vaccines, treatment options, education) become available, GHM will be there, side-by-side with our partners. Thank you for making this possible.

Rev. Doug Cox, Executive Director

COVID-19 RESPONSE DONATIONS ARE BEING MATCHED UP TO \$30K!

YOUR GIFT WILL GO FURTHER!

DOUBLE YOUR SUPPORT, AND DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!



SHIPPING NEWS

For 30+ years GHM has been shipping PPE to partners overseas. Mission hospitals and clinics rarely have enough gloves or surgical masks, there aren't enough hospital gowns, few have face shields, many don't even have adequate supplies of soap. Doctors and nurses work under these conditions every day in partner countries, but it isn't safe and during a pandemic the stakes are even higher. So GHM's Shipping Ministry is doing our best to get critical supplies to our partners overseas despite challenging shipping conditions. After reporting our full inventory of PPE to the State

of Minnesota and releasing a portion to help here in Minnesota, we were able to quickly resume shipping to international partners. By early May, GHM partners in eight countries had received N95 masks through a combination of containers that miraculously arrived as the pandemic hit, or by air freight (small test shipments paving the way for larger air shipments as the pandemic develops). We celebrate the arrival of *every box*, gratefully received within days instead of months. Since May we've sent pallets of PPE by air freight to partners in Madagascar, Cameroon and the CAR. Two more



pallets will have left by air for South Sudan and Nigeria before you read this. GHM's regular shipping program continues with containers currently being prepared for Liberia, Tanzania and South Sudan, even as vital PPE supplies continue to be shipped in small and urgent packages.

Scott Lien, Dir. of Operations



FRONTLINERS

In late June Dr. Sibley wrote this from Phebe Hospital in Liberia: "As we struggle together to overcome the global pandemic, it is obvious that some of our frontliners may fall victim but we continue to have each other in our daily prayers." Days earlier, seven emergency room staff at Phebe had tested positive for COVID-19 and gone into isolation after two patients died of the virus in the ER. Sibley himself recently recovered from his own life-threatening battle with COVID. In late July, COVID-19 claimed the life of Dr. Franck, a leading surgeon at the Lutheran hospital in Madagascar's capital city. News of his death came shortly after we learned the President of the Malagasy Lutheran Church had died of COVID. All over the world, we struggle. Let us continue to keep each other in our daily prayers.

Kim Dickey, Dir. of Communications



ON SHAKY GROUND

Many of us have experienced a "ground has shifted" feeling in the last few months. Charles Richter developed a scale for measuring earthquakes that is "logarithmic," meaning each one-point increase represents a 10-fold increase in magnitude. The scale of financial distress for our partner hospitals is a level of magnitude beyond what most of us have experienced in the US healthcare system. Selian Hospital in Tanzania, pictured above, is such a hospital. A bright spot for Selian is an extensive renovation of their medical wards, completed recently with the help of a significant grant from GHM. The result has been a newly expanded medical ward, replacing open wards with patient rooms for 1-4 beds, each with bathroom and shower, new doors, windows, floors, plumbing and electrical systems, a consultation area, and

an upgraded nursing station. These improvements should attract more patients, and the revenue that accompanies them. But this is only a start - much more is needed. A GHAP team is partnering with Selian and the Lutheran healthcare system in Tanzania to help Selian find its financial footing (thank you, Ron Ommen and Magdelaine Aagard!).

In the U.S. the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided \$175 billion relief funding to hospitals, or about \$20K - \$40K per bed, depending on the hospital. Selian cannot expect a relief package from their government. But we can have an impact. I believe we - you and GHM together - are here to support those with the greatest magnitude of need.

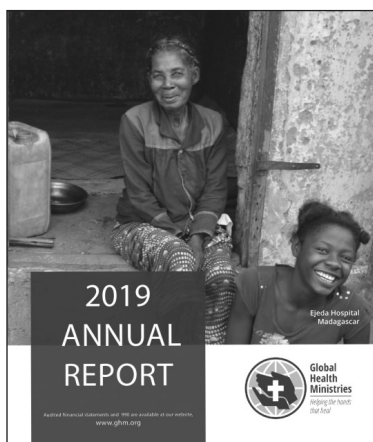
Rob Thames, FACHE, FHFMA, Dir. of GHAP



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Inside this issue: GHM's 2019 Annual Report

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Save the Date GHM'S FIRST VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE!

WEEK OF OCTOBER 12TH 2020

Hear from international partners and global health leaders as we learn from our shared experience, explore innovations, and look ahead to what this means for GHM in the future.

Multiple sessions.
More info soon at ghm.org!