



Merry Christmas

Your commitment leads to self-reliance

After 3 epicenter communities in Ghana 2 epicenters in Malawi and 1 epicenter in Uganda have achieved their self-reliance targets this year, meaning that six clusters of rural communities have demonstrated the leadership, capacity and skills to act as agents of their own development. This is made possible through a methodology of Vision, Commitment and Action that transforms mindsets of dependency and resignation, and build people's confidence that they can cause positive change for their families and communities. These epicenter communities – reaching about 90'000 people - have achieved progress in areas such as women's empowerment, water and sanitation, education, health, food security, income land productivity and climate resilience. Some of the changes:

- 581% increase in the proportion of people using an improved sanitation facility at Akotekrom Epicenter (from just 7% in 2008 to about 50% in 2014)
- 107% increase in the percent of women who have accessed prenatal care coverage at Nsuta-Aweregya Epicenter (from 47.3% in 1998 to 98.3% in 2014)
- 98% increase in the proportion of children attending secondary school in the communities of Atuobikrom Epicenter (from 40.9% in 2008 to 81.1% in 2014)

But the journey does not end here. The community leaders who have declared their self-reliance are role models for the remaining 115 epicenters and new developing epicenters in Africa. Self-reliance is The Hunger Project's goal for all our partners, and we couldn't do it without your support, and the leadership, imagination and creativity of these communities. Thank you for your contribution!



Please meet our new member of the advisory committee: Igor Ustinov

We are very pleased and honored to tell you that Mr. Igor Ustinov, president of the Ustinov Foundation and renowned sculptor has been a member of our committee of honor since September 2016.

This summer, we met Igor at the art festival in Les Baux-de-Provence where he displayed his sculptures at various locations of the well-known village.

Igor Ustinov told us which issues in the work of the Hunger Project impress him most. "The commitment of



THE HUNGER PROJECT SWITZERLAND

Contact: The Hunger Project Switzerland, Alexandra Koch, Blumenweg 6B, CH-5300 Turgi
Telephone +41 44 586 68 34, mobile +41 78 870 40 75
alexandra.koch@hungerprojekt.ch, www.hungerprojekt.ch, www.thp.org

Domicil: The Hunger Project Switzerland, Avenue De-Luserna 30, CH-1203 Genève

Postal account: 12-25633-7, **Bank account:** Bank Coop SA, 4002 Basel, IBAN CH 88 0844 0360 1332 9009 1



the Hunger Project is impressive for more than one reason: The problem isn't just individual nourishment, we should consider hunger globally and in its entirety. The Hunger Project has to offer its partners adequate solutions for their needs, and it does that in an admirable way. For the world-wide problem of hunger, we must develop means and solutions for humanity today and tomorrow. We should give thought to production methods, for instance of meat, which lead to enormous costs and damage as far as the soils and the environment are concerned. Our economic system of food production is not beneficial for all mankind. The money we earn on one side may damage society on the other side. The Hunger Project collaborates with the people in the communities, and together they develop the vision that they themselves are the agents of change. It is this vision of THP that appeals to me most, the vision of an organization with great programs and a great international team.

Partner Story from Shapla Banu in Bangladesh

"One day I went to the study group of Youth Ending Hunger Project, Bangladesh. That day the group's topic was child marriage. Our ward member, Ms Rajia Sultana, was the guest lecturer. She explained the adverse effects and risks of child marriage. After the session, I promised myself that I would never get married before 18. Besides that, I want to go to University. I want to be a teacher.

One afternoon, when I came back from school, I was surprised to see so many people gathering at our house. I asked mother, what is going on? Why there are so many people in the house? She did not answer my question, but asked me to follow whatever instructions were given. My sister-in-law (neighbor) made me understand my roles to follow. Then I came to realize that all of this was for the preparation of my wedding. I was bewildered. I am only 13 years old. How could my parents think of my marriage!

I remembered our ward member, Ms. Rajia, and her lecture. I decided to call her for help. I borrowed my sister-in-law's mobile phone and secretly called her.



Within one hour, Ms. Rajia arrived at our house like an angel. She came directly to me without looking at anyone else. All I could say to her was that I am only 13, what would

you do if I were your own child? Ms. Rajia needed to hear no more than that and understood the situation. She immediately spoke with my parents and asked my father if he asked my consent for this marriage. After a while, my father admitted that, marrying a girl child is not right, but the proposal was too good to refuse. All of a sudden, my mother said that she has seen so many sad cases of child marriage victims, and that she will not do this to me. My father was shocked after hearing her reaction. My mother was never so vocal, but this time she stood up for me. Ms. Rajia also explained the laws and strict penalties for child marriage. My father promised that he will not marry me off before 18.

I thank the study group I went to that day. It freed me off from the curse of child marriage. Now I am glad to be an inspiration for others."



Thank you for your commitment and dedication to ending chronic, persistent hunger by 2030! Alexandra Koch, Managing Director THP Switzerland