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The SHARE Institute Newsletter- Spring 2001  
(Social, Health, Assessment, Research, & Education)

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A quarterly newsletter written for The SHARE Institute Community.

Feel free to share this newsletter by forwarding it to those who may be interested in learning about making a positive difference in people's lives. We are proud to include you as part of our community and plan on incorporating you in future SHARE Institute mailings. We respect the privacy of your email address and do not share such information with any other organizations. If you wish to be taken off the mailing list, contact [sstolba@theshareinstitute.org](mailto:sstolba@theshareinstitute.org).

Visit our updated website at <http://www.theshareinstitute.org>.

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Greetings From The SHARE Institute President

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Welcome to the second issue of the SHARE Institute's electronic newsletter. After the first newsletter was sent out last December, we were fortunate to hear from many friends and supporters- part of our global community of over 110 international and domestic NGOs who share similar missions and individuals who share similar interests. The Institute feels privileged to have you be a part of this community. Together with a cadre of highly skilled associates and volunteers, the SHARE Institute has progressed to launch initiatives, write electronic newsletters, compose several proposals, start a gift-donation program, allot mini-grants, award domestic scholarships, inaugurate an internship program, and facilitate international workshops. Please read on about the recent and upcoming activities of the Institute. If you have comments, suggestions, or would like to share your talents, feel free to contact me at [sstolba@theshareinstitute.org](mailto:sstolba@theshareinstitute.org) or (916) 966-7482.

Soheir Stolba  
President, The SHARE Institute

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The Battle Against Female Genital Mutilation

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Dr. Soheir Stolba has been fighting against the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) for numerous years. In addition to authoring a training module (accessible at [www.pitaconsultants.com](http://www.pitaconsultants.com)), Dr. Stolba has spent time analyzing current trends in FGM. With funding from the MacArthur Foundation and in collaboration with the Pacific Institute for Women's Health, Dr. Stolba launched a study to learn more about the practice of FGM in the Republic of Yemen. As a result of the two-year study, a Girls' Health Workshop was held in Sana'a on January 9 and 10, 2001. The workshop was a pioneering effort to focus public

attention on the negative health consequences of FGM on girls' and women's health in Yemen. The Ministry of Public Health issued a law that would forbid licensed health practitioners from performing FGM. The law is symbolic of the government's support and is a crucial step in the fight to end FGM.

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### Institute Activities- Training

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The SHARE Institute believes in collaborating with other organizations to meet the health and education needs of people both domestically and internationally. Recently, the staff and associates of SHARE have conducted workshops in India, participated in a workshop in Yemen, and wrote proposals seeking funding for future workshops.

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### Reproductive Health Counseling Skills Workshop for Hospital Outreach Workers (India)

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On January 5 and 6, the SHARE Institute sponsored two workshops on reproductive health counseling skills for hospital outreach workers. The workshops took place in the Sumangali Seva Ashram (SSA) in Bangalore, India. Over 60 hospital outreach workers and 10 doctors attended the workshops, which were very well received. The hospital outreach workers are women who live in the slum areas and serve as the link between their community and the hospitals. The outreach workers educate men, women, and children about health issues, serve as social support, and assist people in seeking health care. The outreach workers are not paid for their services. Each workshop was a way to honor the outreach workers for serving their community, update them on reproductive health issues, and build new skills. The talented trainers of the workshops were Dr. Anuradha and Dr. Komala. Both trainers creatively presented material and involved participants. Susheelamma, of SSA, made sure that all participants were well-fed, had appropriate training supplies, and received a nice certificate of completion. Shaku Shankar, co-founder of the SHARE Institute, and Anita Shankar, associate of the Institute, coordinated the workshop and wish to thank all of the generous donors who made the workshops possible. The workshop was funded by members of the East Indian community in the US.

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### Mini-Grants Reports

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The SHARE Institute has seen successes from previous mini-grants and sees potential in recent awardees. Please read on for updates of the mini-grant program. Numerous other organizations from across the world have contacted the Institute to request funds for worthwhile projects. SHARE continues to award mini-grants through generous private donations and is in the process of writing proposals to supplement funds. We would love to fund all proposals; however, our funds are limited. There are many mini-grants pending and we hope to fund more groups in the future. We are preparing a report to the Board in hopes of securing more funding for mini-grants.

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### Women's Economic Empowerment Action (WEEMA)

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WEEMA is an organization based in Lagos, Nigeria that provides micro-credit loans to women in order for them to increase their business profits and become more self-sufficient. In August of 2000 the SHARE Institute awarded a mini-grant to the WEEMA to help with their ongoing efforts in micro-credit for women. This money was distributed to five women who used the loans to purchase provisions, expand businesses, and increase their purchasing power for petty trading businesses. All of the women reported that the loans helped them to reduce their overhead costs and increase their profits. Loans were repaid and a revolving fund was established.

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Women's Aid Collective (WACOL)

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The Women's Aid Collective in Enugu, Nigeria used the mini-grant to publish the quarterly newsletter "Voice of Adolescents." Adolescents are actively involved in the production of the newsletter.

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The Tabitha Infirmary Foundation (TTI)

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The Tabitha Infirmary Foundation in Enugu, Nigeria was funded to implement a drama about HIV/AIDS. Young adolescents perform in the drama, which has had a promising beginning.

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Pakistan/Afghan Educational Opportunities

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The Afghan Feminist Association was funded to provide educational initiatives for Afghani girls and women.

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Women's Economic Empowerment Association (WEEA)

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The Women's Economic Empowerment Association (WEEA) in Yemen encourages women to save money to gain economic independence. The mini-grant was used to form a micro-credit scheme and to partially fund the establishment of an office in Aden.

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Association for Educating the Deaf

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The Association for Educating the Deaf in Dhamar, Yemen has done wonders for deaf children in the small Yemeni town. SHARE funded a summer camp for deaf children to practice for a show to which the public was invited. The event was the first time for the community to see groups of deaf children perform and receive recognition. The SHARE Institute awarded another mini-grant to purchase hearing aids for two children.

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Sumangali Seva Ashram (SSA)

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One of the activities of the Sumangali Seva Ashram (SSA) is a pre-school for poor children. Although the children come from loving families, their physical, mental, and social needs often go unmet. SSA meets the needs of the local children by providing a warm, supportive environment in which to learn and nutritious meals throughout the school day. During recess, the children had few toys to play with. Through a mini-grant from the SHARE Institute, SSA

purchased durable play equipment. The slide, swing, and teeter-totter are spaced throughout the playground to encourage many children to use them. The children were delighted with the new equipment.

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Ariana Women Training Center

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The SHARE Institute recently awarded a mini-grant to the Ariana Women Training Center in Kabul, Afghanistan. The vocational training center used the mini-grant to buy supplies for all of its programs.

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Bibi Maryam High School

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The SHARE Institute recently awarded a mini-grant to the Bibi Maryam High School in Islamabad, Pakistan. This high school provides education for poor students in Pakistan. The mini-grant will allow them to cover the tuition costs for children who would not otherwise be able to attend school. It will also allow them to pay for further training of the teachers, in order to improve the quality of the education received.

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Website

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Please take a look at the new additions to our website [www.theshareinstitute.org](http://www.theshareinstitute.org). As our organization grows, the website is a useful tool to keep up-to-date on the people and projects of the SHARE Institute. Let Richard Severino know what you think of the website.

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Internships

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The SHARE Institute has received numerous inquiries about internships and is proud to welcome the following interns to the Northern California office.

**Laura Rader** is a student of anthropology at Sacramento State University. Laura helps the Institute with a multitude of tasks including word processing, filing, and proposal writing. Laura is a hard working and pleasant person to be around.

**Carly Schenck** recently graduated from Berkeley with a degree in geography, and a special research focus on public health in Southeast Asia. Carly is particularly interested in international public health, especially reproductive health. She speaks French and Indonesian, and has many years experience in reproductive health education and advocacy, as well as international health advocacy. She will be driving up to Sacramento once a week from the Bay Area to work with the SHARE Institute, and hopes to be particularly active with reproductive health projects and young women's leadership projects.

Internships are open to students, professionals, or the general public and will be developed depending on the Intern's interests, skills, time commitment, and the Institute's current projects and activities. Interns can be based in the Northern California office, Southern California office, or, occasionally, internationally. Please contact Soheir Stolba for more information about internships.

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### Scholarship Fund

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The SHARE Institute awarded two scholarships during the year 2000. The scholarships were awarded to college students who demonstrated commitment to the Institute's principles and financial need. The scholarships were used to purchase books.

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### Technical Initiatives

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#### Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Initiative

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Associate Kausar Ahmad continues to head the Initiative concentrated on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Children. Kausar is currently writing proposals and making ties with funders. Contact Kausar for more information.

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#### Young Women: Health and Environment Leadership Program

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Associate Liz Torrano has taken the lead on the Young Women: Health and Environment Leadership Program. The program is an opportunity for young women to be actively involved in health and leadership issues. Liz has written proposals to seek funding for the whole project which will eventually include college-age women mentoring young adolescents. In the mean time, YW:HELP is starting a club at American River Community College to identify interested individuals. Liz is assisted by other associates and young women leaders. Let Liz know if you would like to be involved.

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### Fundraising

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Thank you to all the friends of the Institute who donated money to the India workshops or sent a donation through a gift card. The SHARE Institute is thankful to have such dedicated and generous friends and associates. The Institute is currently writing proposals to supplement private funds. Please let us know if you hear of any funding opportunities.

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### Gift Donation Cards

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Many friends of the Institute sent holiday gift donation cards to family and friends. Gift donation cards are a great way to celebrate a holiday, accomplishment, or special occasion by giving to those who are less fortunate. By giving a tax-deductible gift donation, the "gift recipient" will receive a beautiful card acknowledging the donation in her/his name, and health

and well-being projects around the world will receive the funds that they so desperately need. Gift donations can be earmarked for a certain project, or be used for the projects that most need funds.

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Other ways to help:

\*\*Donate money to the mini-grant program. Tax-deductible donations of any amount will help local people further improve their lives. Contributors may suggest types of projects for the Institute to launch.

\*\*Spread the word. Let others know about the SHARE Institute and how they can help.

\*\*Get involved. We would love to have you make a difference in international and domestic issues. Let us know your interests and how you can share your skills.

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The SHARE Institute

WEBSITE: [www.theshareinstitute.org](http://www.theshareinstitute.org)

Northern California Office

8370 Sunset Avenue

Fair Oaks, CA 95628

TEL: (916) 966-7482

FAX: (916) 863-0665

EMAIL: [stolba@theshareinstitute.org](mailto:stolba@theshareinstitute.org)

[sshankar@theshareinstitute.org](mailto:sshankar@theshareinstitute.org)

Southern California Office

7717 Canyon Point Lane

San Diego, CA 92126-2049

TEL: (858) 693-7585

FAX: (858) 693-7586

EMAIL: [jfullerton@theshareinstitute.org](mailto:jfullerton@theshareinstitute.org)