

Dear Colleagues and friends:

The last quarter has been a very busy time for all the staff of the SHARE Institute. We have been working hard to prepare several new reports and proposals, adding new computers in the office, and producing CD presentations to be used in a variety of speaking engagements in the community.

For those of you who have written me supportive e-mails and called, I am humbled and appreciative of your kind thoughts. This spirit of togetherness and love is what drives us today to carry on with our tasks despite our heavy hearts. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

I hope you find this edition useful and interesting for your programs. Most of the sections of the Newsletter are written by our associates, volunteers and friends of the Institute. Both Liz Torrano, an associate of the SHARE Institute, and Heela Rasool, a volunteer in the Women Leadership Program, took on the job of writing sections of the Newsletter. I appreciate their work very much.

To all of you Happy Women International Day. If you have comments, suggestions, or would like to share your talents, feel free to contact me at [sstolba@theshareinstitute.org](mailto:ssolba@theshareinstitute.org) or (916) 966-7482.

Soheir Stolba
President, The SHARE Institute

Hearing from Carly Schenck, a Former Intern of the SHARE Institute

Here at the SHARE Institute, we are always excited to hear from former interns and volunteers. We recently heard from former intern, Carly Schenck, who worked with Dr. Stolba on a Pharmacy Survey on Emergency Contraception in California. As a graduate from the University of California at Berkeley, Carly left California to join the University of Sydney to work on a master's degree in Public Health. She is currently conducting research on the family planning KAP (knowledge, attitudes and practices) of the Micronesian Islander immigrant population in Guam for her masters degree.

Carly has designed, and carried out a survey in Guam. Also, she has completed extensive research studies on the cultural, political, historical and health backgrounds of this population.

Furthermore, she is examining the methodologies of setting up a family planning survey in less developed and culturally distinct settings. Carly hopes that the findings from her research would help future international and local consultants provide quality family planning technical assistance. Carly will be completing her masters program in July of 2002 and she will continue her work on topics relevant to women's health and reproductive health issues. Good luck, Carly!

**Mini-Grant Funding: Sense International
NGO Supporting the Deaf and Blind in (India)**

Sense International in India, a non-profit organization working with deaf-blind people in India, used the mini grant awarded to them by The SHARE Institute towards a Family Fun Day on December 15, 2001 in Delhi's Nehru Park. During the day, many activities took place to display strong parent-teacher relationship vital to the progress and happiness of the children in this program. This social function stressed the importance of the community's role in the lives of deaf-blind children.

The main purpose of this day was for the deaf-blind children to get together with their parents, teachers, siblings and other family members to enjoy a day in an open park with lots of foods and games. As the children played with their friends and siblings, parents and teachers provided many opportunities for multi-sensory learning experiences. The day was enjoyed by all and provided a sense of solidarity and a comfortable environment for the deaf-blind children.

Sponsoring Project Management Training in Jordan

On January 5, 2002, The SHARE Institute sponsored a Project Management Seminar in Amman, Jordan. The facilitator of the event was the author of "The Project Managers Primer", Mr. Leonard Bidwell Stolba, PMP. Mr. Stolba teaches Management, Project Management at the University of Phoenix, California.. Mr. Stolba is certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Sacramento Valley chapter of the Project Management Institute.

The training was sponsored by ACT, a Jordanian consulting firm. The seminar was attended by 20 persons. The training was entitled "Project Management Basics - A Refresher." The interactive training event consisted of sessions designed to assist project managers' plan their projects. Each participant received a copy of the book, the trainer's graphics and a workbook. The training sessions focused on practical exercises, with each participant preparing an outline plan for a project with which they were involved. Some of the projects included a plan for marketing a new medical device, a plan for a non-governmental organization, and a plan to encourage women to run for Parliament. All attendees participated in the brainstorming of risks, prioritizing and mitigation planning on the topic "How to get more women elected in Parliament."

Participating in a Pioneering Yemeni FGM Project

The female genital mutilation (FGM) Project started in Yemen in 1999 with a grant funded by the MacArthur Foundation to the Pacific Institute for Women's Health. Dr. Stolba of the SHARE Institute worked as a consultant for PIWH on this project. The first stage of the project

focused on the design and implementation of a research study. During the second phase of the project, a National Conference was held. The conference led to a new regulation issued by the Ministry of Health and Population to forbid the practice of FGM by any licensed medical practitioner. The third phase of this pioneering project was involved four Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Hodiedah, Yemen to disseminate information about the legislation.

The results of the FGM project of PIWH have been terrific. The NGO's funded by PIWH in Hodeidah, Yemen used drama, songs, poetry and many other creative strategies to propagate information regarding the hazards of FGM. Preliminary findings indicate a definite change of attitude among women concerning FGM. The NGO's mobilized one rural community and worked with leaders and helped them plan to train others. The SHARE Institute supported the involvement of local midwives in this training. The statistical analysis of the pre/post intervention work will be completed in the Spring 2002.

One of the major outcomes of this project was that the issue of FGM was brought to the attention of the Yemeni people who had previously never discussed the subject in public. Tens of articles were written in Arabic newspapers regarding FGM, and an Arabic book and brochure on the study conducted in Yemen were published (the first 1000 copies have been distributed and there continues to be a demand). Many Yemeni organizations are now requesting these very popular brochures that discuss FGM; one from a medical point of view and the other from the social and Islamic perspectives.

As a result of the work done in Yemen, the Ministry of Health included FGM in all its training workshops for physicians, nurses and midwives. The topic of FGM was also introduced in the curricula of community midwives.

This project was successful because of the local Advisory Group, which consisted of powerful local women leaders, who believed in the cause and worked hard to mobilize their communities. It was sad to see an end to this small but great project. Many thanks to the Yemeni groups who supported this demanding and pioneering work, the funders and the staff of the Pacific Institute for Women's Health.

It should be noted that the successes of this project led to a grant from the Dutch government to support further work with NGO's in three different regions of Yemen. The implementing organization of the new project is International Health and Development Associates (IHDA), a sister organization to the SHARE Institute.

Speaking Engagements and SHARE's Staff

During the month of February, Dr. Stolba was busy with several speaking engagements. SHARE Associate, Liz Torrano, was also involved in helping to prepare and then presenting the work of SHARE at a local high school, Sacramento Waldorf High School. This month sets a pace that will be maintained for the next few months. The following are examples of the variety of places and topics.

February

- Comstock-Capital Discussion Group – “Women and Islam”
- American River College – “Afghani Women and Wars”
- Sacramento Waldorf High School – “The SHARE Institute and Adolescent Leadership”

March

- American River College – “Women and Spirituality”

April

- Stanford Medical School – “FGM In Yemen”
- Sacramento State University-“Integrating Afghani Women in the Social Science Curricula”
- Conference on Teaching and Learning About September 11th
- Stanislaus State University-“Afghani Women and Wars”

May

- The Rotary Club in Sacramento – “Women and War in Afghanistan”

Welcome to Our Leadership Program

The SHARE Institute would like to extend a warm welcome to Rachelle Tarifa and Maha Sweis as our newest young leaders.

Rachelle is a college sophomore majoring in digital media art and designs web pages. She brings with her computer experience and hopes to expand her knowledge in this area during the program. Rachelle hopes that she can actively help people around the world and learn more about how non-profit organizations work during her Leadership Program participation.

Maha, also a college sophomore, hopes to work in the marketing field. She plans to learn about how Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) function worldwide and develop better computer and communication skills. Maha wishes to contribute to global women’s issues through her experience as a SHARE Institute Young Leader.

Collaborating with Students: Fundraising for Afghani Women and Children

Early this year, the SHARE Institute was approached by a group of American River College students, headed by our own young leader Heela Rasool, who wished to raise money for Afghani women and children. Learning in their classes that during war the women and children of a country suffer the most, these students wanted to actively contribute to the well-being and education of Afghani women and children.

Through a process of several meetings, that Heela facilitated, the group decided to establish a goal and venue for their fundraiser. The students learned just how many details are necessary for the most “simple” fundraising event. Linking with the already existing Diversity Day on the American River College (ARC) campus gave the students a venue and time line for their fundraising efforts. The students will offer food, jewelry and goods for sale on April 4th from 12:00 -2:00 p.m. in the Rose Mark Pavilion on the ARC campus. In addition, the students will run a raffle and pre-sell (take orders beforehand) fresh and frozen Sambosas to be picked up during the event.

We are all looking forward to a wonderful Diversity Day fundraising event for Afghani women and children by this group of active young ARC students. We will let you know how it goes in the next news letter!

Adopt-a-Classroom

One of the wonderful things that comes from spreading news about the work of the SHARE Institute is the enthusiasm of the people in the audience of speaking engagements that The SHARE Institute’s Associates and staff give. An example of this is a California elementary school teacher, who has worked hard to develop a fundraising activity that her young students can implement to help Afghani children. In conjunction with the already established school March-a-thon, where students walk laps around a track to raise money for school projects, she will be selling popsicles to raise money for young children in Afghanistan. In addition, she is planning an “Art for Afghanistan,” student art sale for sometime in May.

Her examples of a “grass-roots” approach to fundraising show how sharing information about your organization can make a difference. Even better is this teacher’s idea to initiate an “Adopt-a-Classroom” program where her students can communicate with Afghan classrooms via e-mail. The media has presented that the educational outlook for children in Afghanistan is suddenly much better after the fall of the Taliban. The reality is that it is quite a different picture, and day-to-day classroom activities are still a struggle. Schools still exist without windows, books, and desks, with students still struggling to fulfill their dreams of gaining an education.

The SHARE Institute is interested in promoting the idea of Adopt-a-Classroom in this school and other U.S. schools so that our children can learn directly from Afghani students about their

experience and gain a better appreciation for what they have in their schools. Currently, many of the schools are being reestablished or are moving from Pakistan to Afghanistan, so communication is sporadic. Things are in transition and the continued hostilities in the area are unsettling. Looking toward the future, SHARE will work collaboratively to make a connection between U.S. and Afghani school children in the hopes that communication and education will increase awareness and well-being for all young people. The SHARE Institute is interested in promoting the idea of Adopt-a-Classroom in this school and other U.S. schools so that our children can learn directly from Afghani students about their experience and gain a better appreciation for what they have in their schools. Currently, many of the schools are being reestablished or are moving from Pakistan to Afghanistan, so communication is sporadic. Things are in transition and the continued hostilities in the area are unsettling. Looking toward the future, SHARE will work collaboratively to make a connection between U.S. and Afghani school children in the hopes that communication and education will increase awareness and well-being for all young people.