



GLOBAL IMPACT

CHARITABLE VENTURES FOR GREATER GIVING



Our Valuable Time by Compassion International

It all started when a group of teenagers in rural Bangladesh began to get fed up with all their spare time. Since the pandemic had shuttered their schools, life had become all play and no studies. Suddenly, their days were free and empty, but their futures felt uncertain. They had to watch with anxiety as their parents struggled to bring food home. When the teenagers had enough of play, they knew deep in their hearts that they could contribute to their family's needs in some way.

All the children were receiving their food supplies from a Compassion International center, which kept them from going hungry. The teenagers would occasionally visit the center in a small group to speak with Bivash, the project manager, about how they could have a stable food supply at home. "The children were concerned for their future food supplies, so they had to take action. The spark in them was fanned when they began receiving food supplies," said Bivash. Their solution was simple: plant their own crops. However, they quickly had a problem. Their families only had enough land to plant their rice crop, which provided their livelihood. There wasn't the space to plant extra vegetables. Bivash helped the teens come up with a solution. Compassion International's partner provided the teens with a portion of the center's land to use to plant potatoes. Once they had permission, the teenagers immediately got to work. "The pandemic gave us enough time to realize that we have to make the best use of our time," said 15-year-old Shuborna.

By saving a portion of their potatoes from the food supplies the center provided, along with some additional vegetable seeds, they were able to plant their first vegetable crop. "During the pandemic, planting potatoes was the proudest thing that I did with my free time," said Poritosh. The teenagers are already looking forward to their first harvest and know their first bite of the vegetables will taste even more delicious because they grew from their hard work. Earlier in the pandemic, Bangladesh's Prime Minister said, "I urge all citizens to make use of every inch of spare land." With Compassion International's support, these young people have lived up to the request and invested in their families' future at the same time.



Batey 106: A Transformation Story by Feed My Starving Children

Bateyes are small communities of mostly Haitian immigrants working in the sugarcane fields of the Dominican Republic. They have been referred to by some as labor encampments, shantytowns and sugar plantations. And Batey 106 was known as one of the worst. With a reputation for poverty and the issues to prove it, the people living in this batey saw themselves in that light.

However, since Feed My Starving Children's (FMSC) Project Based Food Assistance (PBFA) program began in 2015, community leaders in Batey 106 see themselves differently – as a village. "We don't want our community to be associated with a batey anymore [because bateyes are looked down upon and viewed as hopeless places]," committee member Estella said. "We're changing the name from Batey 106 to Village 106."

Each PBFA program FMSC initiates is unique. That's because the community leaders come together as a committee to identify their community's specific needs. Then, they work with FMSC toward a solution. Individuals and communities also receive a consistent supply of FMSC food to empower them to rise out of poverty and become self-reliant. "The project uses FMSC food as a platform to get the people from A to B," FMSC Regional Program Manager for the Caribbean, Junior Obrand, said. "When we say 'Food is hope,' that's not just a slogan. We're using the food to get the people to rise up."

Just ask anyone in Batey 106 and you will hear something similar. Hunger doesn't exist here anymore. I never thought I would have dreams. "In my 24 years in the batey, I've seen nothing like what has happened during the project," one community member said.

In Batey 106, the self-identified need was educating young people in practical skills so they can become independent and pursue better paying jobs. FMSC provided young people with both cooking and English classes and saw real results. The PBFA is closing soon, and 68% of community members saw an increase in their monthly earnings. And FMSC food packs cut child malnourishment in half. "They went from batey to village," VP of International Programs and Supply Chain, Matt Muraski, said. "They went from underpaid workers to a community. It's a story of transformation."



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Empowerment in Africa

The Salvation Army World Service Office (SAWSO)

In Kenya's male-dominated culture, a woman's husband is often her sole source of financial support. If she loses her husband – or he loses his ability to provide – the entire family can spiral hopelessly into poverty.

That's when the Salvation Army, a Global Impact charity partner, steps in. The Salvation Army's WORTH program – a microfinance banking and skills training program aimed at rural women in rural communities – seeks to address this financial gender imbalance. Women not only gain access to a system of savings and loans that empower them to become entrepreneurs and leaders in their communities, but also learn the skills they need to take advantage of those resources and succeed.

In groups of about 25, WORTH's women make small deposits each week into a shared fund, kept in a strongbox with three different locks and keys, each held by one of three leaders elected by the group itself. When the fund grows large enough, group participants can take out loans to purchase livestock, supplies and materials to start their own small businesses and pursue financial independence. WORTH also provides a curriculum for participants to teach each other basic literacy, and mathematics, and bookkeeping. The women meet regularly to make their deposits, learn valuable new skills and support each other emotionally and spiritually. During a monthly meeting, these women talk about their journeys escaping instability, poverty, homelessness, sickness, abuse, and neglect.

Many use their newfound skills to become business leaders and employers in their communities, providing opportunities for their friends and neighbors, while strengthening their own local economies. Some even form partnerships and start new ventures together.

And success breeds more success – members are asked to commit a portion of their income earnings to the group savings account, which in turn offers loans to other participants to start their own businesses. The interest earned is then given back to the women in the group. Other countries with similar empowerment programs include Haiti, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo and Nepal.