

HGCA: New Countries, New Opportunities

December 2015 Newsletter

Lesotho follow up visit: Our trainers are training!

This past spring we had an opportunity to bring our grief resolution curriculum *"How to Love a Grieving Child"* to Lesotho Africa. This was our first opportunity to put into practice our new Train-the-Trainer approach designed to equip others to train caregivers in helping orphans. Our goal was to train leaders in orphan care organizations to personally deliver the training to the caregivers of orphaned children. We believe this new strategy could be a powerful way to greatly expand our reach. We can confidently say this strategy worked exceptionally well!

Our staff returned to Lesotho in October to reconnect with 15 of the original 29 leaders who were trained.

From the interviews with these trainers we documented that over 500 additional caregivers were impacted through their individual training sessions. We are happy to report that all 29 of them have utilized their training reaching orphans in a variety of ways. Some of the organizations whose staff were trained included: a learning center caring for 150 orphans on a daily basis; a sports ministry to street kids called Kick for Life; a Blue Cross Rehab center for teens with addictions; and leaders of the Baylor Children's Hospital of Lesotho caring for terminally ill and HIV+ children. The staff from Baylor even started support groups who regularly go into the community to work with caregivers and orphans.



Lerato's story:

Lerato is one of the original Train-the-Trainer participants. Lerato has implemented three workshops in which she has personally trained 89 caregivers. Her first training included 39 teachers. In her second workshop Lerato trained 20 widows. And the last workshop included 30 teachers from a different school in a three full day workshop. She shared many reports from trained caregivers on how positive behavior changes in orphans were observed by caregivers in the home. The orphans also were showing progress in school as well.

As we spoke to Lerato, it became evident that she was also grieving.

Lerato's husband abandoned her and she is a single mother of one.

However, as she shared her experiences, we could see a newfound sense of identity and purpose in Lerato.

"Working with these children before going through your workshop, it was very difficult to reason with these street kids. After learning what you taught it became very easy to identify problems and help these kids with what they are going through." - Lesotho training participant.

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He will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. Psalm 72:12

A participant shared with us the plight of a young boy who is a double orphan. He lives with the grandfather who is very poor. The young boy started acting out by breaking into shops and pick pocketing. This earned him a bad name in the community and the grandfather decided to commit him to a juvenile center.

When the boy was released from the center and returned home, the entire community rose up and said "if he ever sets foot into our community we shall kill him."

At 13 years old, rejected by his own people, he decided to go back to his old ways of stealing to survive. The participant vowed that she would start sensitizing people about grief and how people should be more loving and accept this young boy even with all his flaws. She stated: "We can help him now because we know what to do!"

HGCA brings our orphan grief support training to Malawi

In November our staff was invited by e3 Partners to bring our training to Malawi. **e3 Partners** is a community transformation ministry which seeks to empower churches and community leaders to address critical social, economic, and public health issues. At their request, HGCA traveled to Chitipa, Malawi and trained 40 participants in the *"How to Love a Grieving Child"* curriculum.

This was a highly successful training that set the stage for a future Train-the-Trainer session. The training was attended by variety of community leaders such as pastors, social service workers, individual caregivers and even a few village chiefs. All were impacted and inspired to help orphans. One man even shared that because of this training, for the first time, he was helped to break the silence about his own HIV positive condition. He says he was grieving unknowingly and vows to tell other about the ills of AIDS.



A Night of Great Stories: HGCA's 6th Annual Wine Tasting Benefit

HGCA friends, staff and board members gathered for a wonderful evening at our annual ministry benefit. This year's event was held at the Oak Park Country Club. We were blessed again to have our African Coordinators, Cyrus and Prisca Mfula present. Along with our other staff, we shared stories celebrating the accomplishments of 2015 in the exciting opportunities and to develop a program for 2016. It was an inspiring evening and very successful! HGCA was able to fund our Malawi training and set the stage for expanding our impact in these Zambia, Lesotho, Malawi and beyond.

