



Giving Thanks



October, 2018

Why does the NEO Fund exist? To transform the lives of the poorest of the poor in slum communities everywhere we work. It is happening every day. **YOU** make it possible; and this letter is to tell you some of the things you have accomplished this year and to describe where NEO is heading next. ***We give thanks for your partnership!*** Together, we have accomplished so much!

Rou

In India

In Prabu Nagar, a slum community in an urban cemetery in India, desperately poor – but laughing! – kids never used to go to school. They were perpetually malnourished, and did not have



adequate clothing or shoes. Their parents – who live in cardboard shanties – had to make impossible decisions, like whether to buy food or medicine. And they had no hope of escaping their plight.

But **THANKS TO YOU**, this year we've started a **Pop-up School** where kids get a nutritious lunch and clean water to drink. We've collected clean, modest clothing to give the children, and we are on the verge of launching a micro-lending program that

Our partner in India has begun operating Pop-up Schools in open places at area slums.

can help lift these families out of extreme poverty.

Our **health center** in Padapatnum continues to reach more than 800 patients a month. Community outreach has expanded to workforce training in computer technology to prepare young adults for paying work in the IT sector.

Thanks to several very generous partners, we have also raised money for our pilot lending program in India. We are working with an expert consultant, experienced in Andhra Pradesh, and by year-end our first Mutually Aided Credit and Thrift (MACT) cooperative will be in operation! ■

Nicaragua



Micro-loan borrower Blanca Rosa makes tortillas with her daughter as field officer Gridian shares a moment of laughter. Her average daily income has increased from \$1.90 to \$10 because of this program.

This year has been a challenge for Nicaragua as a country and for its people. Close to 1,000 peaceful protesters have been killed since April. The economy



Child-feeding is the number one way to stem childhood malnutrition. We are continuing existing programs and starting new ones in both India and Nicaragua.

has plummeted in light of the instability, periodic roadblocks, and international pressure for a democratic resolution. The majority of micro-lending institutions have ceased operations there during this time, yet we have continued with unexpected success. While our risk is a little greater now in the current climate, our wonderful team is coaching clients through tough times and providing crucial loans to conscientious borrowers who are grateful for the opportunity **your support** is giving them. Truly, **your** generosity is giving a hand-up to the people who need it most at one of the most difficult times in their country's recent history. ■

With all we have accomplished together this year, we have exciting projects on the horizon.

Nutrition. The unrest in Nicaragua has – predictably – hit the poor the hardest, making their lives more difficult than ever. NEO is responding by growing our **child-feeding program** in cooperation with trusted partners on the ground. In several neighborhoods, around the city, in partnership with churches and other nonprofits, both in **Nicaragua** and **India** we imagine feeding more kids than ever before to help eliminate child malnutrition.

We're also designing a new outreach, multi-use **Safe Spaces**, where children can gather, play, and receive nutritious meals. Creating a simple neighborhood playground is an excellent way to accomplish these objectives, and we expect to test the idea soon in both Nicaragua and India.

Just this year our India partner has started four innovative **Pop-up Schools** where two teachers each facilitate two schools per day, six days a week. While the pilot program is not fully funded, we plan to make it a focus over the coming months. ■



Safe Spaces will greatly expand neighborhood outreach with caring places for children to gather and play.

USA

This year has brought exciting growth at home as well. Joining as Director of Program Development is board member Shoshon Tama-Sweet. He brings decades of nonprofit experience and expertise to help The NEO Fund grow. He'll be introducing himself personally over the next few weeks.



Stay tuned over the coming weeks as we share more in-depth stories and updates on these programs via Facebook and email.

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