



GLOBAL NUTRITION & EMPOWERMENT

IMPROVE HEALTH AND NUTRITION WORLDWIDE

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GNE in the Era of COVID

GNE forges ahead, coping with the changes that COVID has wrought. Here is the May update on our 2020 activities so far.

Trips were planned to Nepal, Indonesia and Guatemala to take place in March. As COVID began to rear its head in January, the trips were scaled back. We still went to Nepal. The trip to Indonesia was cancelled. The Guatemala team returned just before the country closed its borders. Reports of those 2 trips are in this newsletter.

Work on our education apps continues. New apps on diabetes and hypertension will be joining those already in use on *General Nutrition*, *Nutrition in Pregnancy*, and *Smart Kids Eat Healthy*.

One of our volunteers has written a remembrance of his recent experience in Guatemala that reaffirmed his belief in the GNE mission.

Our mission is to improve health and nutrition worldwide. Fundraising events have been curtailed, but our work goes on. We continue to rely on the generosity of our supporters. We hope that you enjoy this newsletter and will consider making a donation to GNE.

Why I support GNE

In March, 2020, I went to Guatemala as a medical volunteer and was reminded once again of why I support GNE.

I went as part of a Faith in Practice team based in Chicago. At the last minute they found themselves in need of a physician to oversee a "wheelchair clinic." I answered the call and was off on another adventure for which I was little qualified, but well-suited in attitude. As a nine-member team, it was our goal to assess mobility challenges and provide advice, equipment and referrals to improve quality of life by improving mobility. Over 4 days we accomplished our goal in part by distributing 96 wheelchairs, 22 walkers and 26 canes.

The range of cases spanned everything from congenital problems to polio, tuberculosis, infirmity and terminal illness. Some of the clients literally arrived being carried by a family member and left all smiles in their new wheelchair. Most touching were the children and their devoted families. While not diagnosing problems, I recognized conditions we would call cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus and spina bifida. How many of these were related to malnutrition during pregnancy? How many could have been prevented if only the people had known about the importance of proper nutrition for good health?

GNE recognizes that people are at risk for malnutrition worldwide. While we can't feed the world, we can educate them about the important role of nutrition in their health and help them make better choices. This is GNE's mission and I am fully committed to it.

Peter K MD



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NEPAL Captain Dam in his new position as “governor” invited GNE to return to the Myagdi District to assess the Nepali need for support of education.

A GNE team visited 7 villages and performed surveys of nutrition knowledge and food security, meeting with 20-30 villagers daily. Topics of discussion included basic nutrition, health, agriculture, and animal husbandry. There were questions about new cash crops, plant and animal diseases. GNE shared our digital tablets and electronic apps.

The views along the Annapurna trek were spectacular, the trails challenging, the hospitality exquisite, the accommodations at times spartan and the friendship heartwarming. Captain Dam has invited GNE to develop a new nutrition program that encompasses health education for women, diabetes, hypertension, gardening, and cash crop development to improve their villager’s health and economic wellbeing. This is an exciting invitation, and has potential for considerable impact.



GUATEMALA GNE accompanied Faith in Practice to Jalapa, Guatemala in early March, 2020, taking with them digital tablets loaded with education apps on nutrition in Spanish. FIP served 640 people the first day. GNE offered those clients the opportunity to view the apps, especially young mothers and those with chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes.

As the perils of the COVID pandemic became better recognized, FIP decided to pull its volunteers out of Guatemala early. Guatemala closed its borders to entry that weekend.

While statistics in Guatemala are hard to come by, COVID infection apparently has not been a terrible problem. However, people that rely on tourism for income have been idled. Food insecurity is now a bigger problem than ever.

APP DEVELOPMENT Work continues on nutrition education apps. The first 3 apps completed are: *General Nutrition*, *Nutrition in Pregnancy*, and *Smart Kids Eat Healthy*. These are available in English, Spanish, and Bahasa (Indonesia). The diabetes apps are nearing completion. There are 4 diabetes modules because of the complexity of the subject. Other apps in the pipeline are hypertension, women’s health, face masks, and an interactive game for children.

Interest in the apps continues to be high. Networking at global conferences will continue. We are supporting a colleague at the WHO to promote policies on neural tube defect prevention with folic acid supplementation.

Making the apps is labor intensive and involves many people. We have been able to make improvements in art and animation due to your ongoing support. We hope to have samples of the apps available on the GNE Website and YouTube by this summer.

