

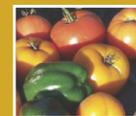


GLOBAL FOOD INITIATIVE

E-news of the Global Food Initiative

www.brethren.org/gfi

Fall 2022



Honduras Visit

Frequent hurricanes, political instability, high crime rates, and deforestation are just a few of the challenges to successful development work in Honduras. The GFI is supporting an urban chicken project with a local church partner, Viviendo en Amor y Fe (VAF—Living in Love and Faith).

In September, GFI manager Jeff Boshart visited the project in Tegucigalpa. Inflation has increased food insecurity for the Honduran people, and project holders shared their struggles during home visits. Of the nine families in the project, four demonstrated progress after one year of the project. Their chickens were providing enough eggs to feed their family, and through the sale of excess eggs they were able to continue to purchase feed for the laying hens. They are entering the second year of the project which includes raising chicks to both increase their flocks and to pass to other families. Four other families reported that the increased price of basic needs for the family has made it difficult to continue with the project and they have had to reduce the number of chickens they are raising. One family returned all its chickens to be distributed to the rest of the group, citing the high cost of raising chickens.

Boshart met with VAF leaders to discuss some adjustments to the project, such as purchasing feed in bulk or purchasing ingredients to produce their own feed, along with specialization within the project with some participants focusing on chick raising, others on marketing, and some on compost production to take advantage of the poultry manure.

Several Brethren agencies currently have complementary programs in the country. The Global Mission office is working at making connections between the VAF congregation and Brethren leaders across Latin America through the exchange of pastor visits. Brethren Disaster Ministries is providing support to long-time partner Proyecto Aldea Global (Project Global Village) for a major home construction and repair program responding to hurricanes that caused great destruction in 2020.



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Jeff Boshart,
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Review Panel Changes

Volunteers are vitally important in the work of the GFI. Pastors and lay leaders, along with agricultural agents who often receive small stipends, are crucial in carrying out agricultural development programs supported by GFI grants across the globe. Before these projects can begin, potential recipients of GFI funding must submit an application to be reviewed by GFI's review panel. This panel consists of five volunteers plus the GFI manager, who meet approximately every three months to scrutinize new proposals. Panel members bring a variety of experiences to the group and come from across the Church of the Brethren.



Andrew Lefever

After many years serving on the review panel, Dale Minnich of Mound Ridge, Kan., has decided to step down. Minnich's vast experience in the life of the denomination will be missed greatly. He provided the panel with invaluable historical knowledge of Brethren mission practice spanning more than 50 years as well as firsthand experiences from his days as an agricultural development worker in Ecuador in the 1960s and 70s.

Replacing Minnich on the panel will be Andrew Lefever. Lefever grew up in Lancaster County, Pa., and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Sciences from Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. Lefever went on to work for four years as an agronomist in Pennsylvania advising crop producers on pest management and soil fertility related issues and is currently pursuing a master's degree in the Agricultural and Environmental Plant Science program at Penn State University. He is a member of Lancaster (Pa.) Church of the Brethren and is interested in learning how the GFI's objectives relate and overlap with other Brethren mission programs, and understanding how Brethren across the denomination can work together to maximize their impact to help others in need both at home and abroad. Lefever will join Patricia Krabacher (New Carlisle, Ohio), Linda Dows-Byers (Lancaster, Pa.), James Schmidt (Polo, Ill.), and Jeffrey Graybill (Manheim, Pa.) in rounding out the review panel.



Dale Minnich in Ecuador with Alfredo Merino

New Grants

The GFI review panel recently approved funds for three agricultural development projects totaling \$34,600. The three countries receiving support are the Democratic Republic of Congo (\$7,500), Rwanda (\$15,100), and Venezuela (\$12,000). Each project will be administered by local Church of the Brethren leadership.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the funds will support deacon-led ministries providing agricultural and small business development support to local communities for mini-projects such as basket weaving, food preparation, and a pharmacy. Agricultural production projects will raise cassava, beans, corn, and vegetables.



Roger Moreno

Venezuela

The Rwandan grant will allow for the purchase of a roller and huller machine, along with electrical installation and the construction of a building to house the machine. Brethren leadership in Rwanda will use the mill in its farming outreach to the Twa people, along with grinding feed for its ongoing pig-raising projects.

The Venezuelan grant will aid in the establishment of eight agricultural mini projects producing poultry, maize, beans, cassava, rice, and carrots, and will serve 600 people in 15 communities across the country, including indigenous people groups.



Ron Lubungo

Democratic Republic of Congo

