

Mission EAST

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corners of the world


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Before, the people from the remotest villages of the Takhar province were isolated from the outside world. Now, they have constructed a road together with Mission East, which gives them a wealth of new opportunities.

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Now Lacchu who is blind, fetches water and reaches the toilet on her own.



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What we achieved together in 2012

Children who have been found. Access to a better health, water and organizational development. Read a selection of what Mission East has achieved in 2012, in collaboration with supporters, partners and local communities.

11 Short news – Y's Men's Clubs support children's corners

Mission East has established children's corners for parents and children with disabilities in Tajikistan. Now the Danish Y's Men's Clubs help by giving the children's corners a brush up.

Front page photo:
The road from the Tajik capital of Dushanbe to the district headquarters of Panjakent. The road is often inaccessible in winter due to avalanches.

Mission East is a Danish international aid organisation. We exist to deliver relief and development assistance to vulnerable communities with a primary focus on Eastern Europe and Asia. Based on Christian values, Mission East aims to support the most vulnerable, making no racial, political or religious distinction between those in need.

Mission East currently operates directly or through local partners in Afghanistan, Armenia, Nepal, North Korea, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Romania and Bulgaria.

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CO2-NEUTRALISERET TRYKSAG FRA ROSENDALHS
Klimapartnerskab ved fremstilling af denne tryksag
er neutraliseret ved at støtte klimainitiativer i udviklings-
landene, der resulterer i en tilsvarende CO2-reduktion

Access to a better life



Since the founding of Mission East, I have been driven by a passion to reach people whom nobody else reaches.

These are people, who have been born under totally different circumstances than myself and through no fault of their own suffer from poverty in remote parts of the world.

It is very characteristic for much of Mission East's work, that we are present where very few or no other relief organizations work. I have a deep conviction that every human being has a unique value, and that is why we

reach out to the forgotten. To the children with disabilities, who are tucked away at home, and to the villages that are many days walk away. To the families who are cut off for several months during winter, and to countries that many barely know the existence of. To people who are hard to access and to those who

lack the knowledge of how to help themselves. Some of these people's poverty is linked to the fact that they live so remotely. Therefore, it is important to build roads, so that they can get to the doctor or the market. It is also important to provide clean water and sanitation in these areas, because it helps to improve living conditions and makes it possible for people to build a better life for themselves.

With this edition of the Mission East magazine, we would like give you a sense of how inaccessible many of the people we help really are. The articles are about people, who are far away in a variety of ways. But none are so far away that we cannot reach them and show them that they are not forgotten.

Thank you for helping us reach these people.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Hartzner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Kim Hartzner,
Managing Director

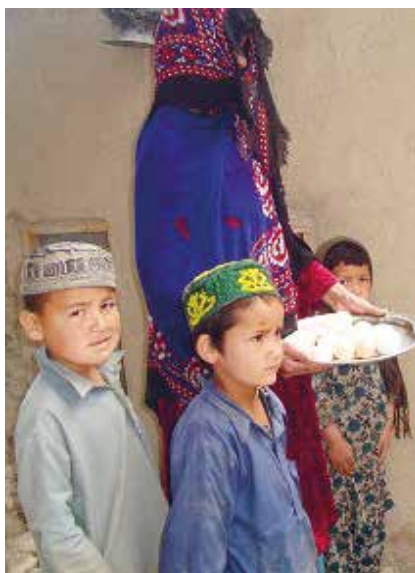


Villagers are now able to purchase seeds, medicines for their animals, fertilizer and other agricultural necessities far more easily than before. This enhances the ability to produce agricultural products, and thus increase food supplies. Farmers can now get to the market easily, and sell their vegetables, thereby increasing their incomes.



The road to prosperity

In the Takhar province in Afghanistan, Mission East has constructed 110 km of gravel road, connecting villages in two of the area's most inaccessible districts, with the province's capital, Taloqan. The villagers used to be hampered by their isolation but now they have gained access to new opportunities.



Access to health facilities:

Before, pregnant women who experienced problems during childbirth had to be taken by horse cart through hostile terrain. When this little boy was born he could not breathe properly, and he was quickly brought to the nearest health centre by car. "He was lucky to get there in time", says his Grandmother, Bibi Sherin, sitting with her new born grandson outside the house.

Now that the city is within reach it is more likely that these children will get an education beyond the village school.



Facts

Takhar province covers an area of 12,376 km², which is a little larger than the islands of Funen, Zealand and Lolland-Falster put together.

Mountains cover 58 percent of the province. It is in this area that Mission East operates, and which is now connected with Takhar provincial capital, Taloqan.



Access to new employment opportunities: 27-year-old Abdul Ghiyas comes from a poor family, completely dependent on agriculture. After the road was built, he has become a driver, and with this new job he can now support his family.

Access to markets: It used to take four hours on foot, or three hours by donkey to reach the town. Now, it only takes 40 minutes by car.



What the villager and Mission East have achieved

Travel time has been reduced by 80%. This time can now be used for more productive purposes.

The road connects 140 isolated villages to the provincial capital.

92,000 people may use the road.

The road has been built in close cooperation with local authorities, and villagers from vulnerable households were hired for the construction work.



Access to customers: Many small shops have flourished now that there is increased accessibility local markets. Sarwar Khan, a 45-year-old unskilled worker, saw the need for a shop: "My former job was insecure and seasonal, and often I came home empty handed. With this shop I can support my family," he says. In addition, small shops like this give villagers better access to food supplies.

Self-help groups consist of about 20 women, who save up together and then borrow money from the common fund. This photo is from another self-help group than Sayeed's.



Now, Sayeed bakes 50 loaves of bread a day

When Sayeed's husband died of malaria, it became difficult for her to feed herself and her six children as women's access to the world outside of their homes is extremely limited in rural Afghanistan.

Sayeed's husband died of malaria some years ago. The disease could have been treated, but the family didn't have enough money for treatment. Since Afghan women living in the countryside have very little freedom of movement, Sayeed had to try to get work near her home. The fact that she did not have any formal education made it even harder. So in the beginning, the family had to survive from the little money she was able to make, doing housekeeping for families in her village.

Access to credit

Due to her situation, Sayeed was invited to participate when Mission East, in co-operation with local village councils, organized training for kitchen gardening.

"I learned a lot about farming, sales and a healthy diet for children," Sayeed says.

Later, Mission East received permission to help the women in the village to start self-help groups. The group members learn how to save up money together, and take loans from the money collected. The poor rarely have access to loans from a bank, because they cannot provide security. Furthermore because there are no banks in the villages.

Sayeed made a plan

After yet another training, this time in keeping chickens, Sayeed was able to earn some money by selling eggs. It gave her the courage to invest in a business that would get her, and her children, out of poverty. She borrowed 300 afghani, (approximately 6 USD) to buy flour and other baking materials, and started to bake bread, which her son then sold at the market. With the profits from selling bread, Sayeed could repay the loan. Now, she has borrowed twice the amount, and invested in more materials.

"Now, I bake every day, and send my son to the market with 50 loaves of bread. I

earn 300 Afghani a day, and it's enough to cover our needs, and to repay the loan. My life has changed. Now, I no longer need to worry about how to make money to feed my children, and I can also buy school supplies for them. We lead a good life," says Sayeed.

Self-help groups in Afghanistan

Together with local Afghan women, Mission East has initiated 54 self-help groups. Each group consists of about 20 women and each woman typically saves up to 40 afghani a month, the equivalent of 0,90 USD. After a couple of years when the group has become more mature and the common savings have grown to a reasonable size, many of the women take loans for small businesses.

Achievements in 2012

Afghanistan

- 43 new water systems were built, 3 more repaired and 8 schools provided with water reservoirs.
- 1,847 household latrines have been completed, 52 community public-access latrines were built in mosques and schools.
- About 19,250 individuals were educated in good hygiene practices.
- 1,380 households were provided with training and inputs in kitchen gardening and food storage and processing (including vegetable utilisation).
- Trainings in better nutrition, diets and child feeding practices were provided to 1,300 households.
- Bee hives and training in honey production was provided to 170 new households.



Romania

- 1,330 vulnerable and marginalized people assisted with distributions of medicine, clothing and food.
- Free medical consultations, medicines and supplies provided for 300 people, without medical insurance.
- 800 Christmas boxes delivered to families in need, those in hospital and the elderly.



Armenia

Armenia

- Over 500 children with a disability were assessed and received rehabilitative care.
- Over 1,500 children with disabilities and special needs attended inclusive project schools.
- Advocacy led to changes in the mainstream education law by including inclusive education.
- 11,756 people received voluntary counseling on HIV/AIDS.
- 464,693 youth participated in information trainings on HIV/AIDS.



Tajikistan

- 185 children with disabilities received rehabilitation therapy.
- 6 parent support corners (children's corners) were opened.
- 9,000 households reached through campaigns on gender equality.
- 100 religious local leaders and government official trained on equal opportunities for girls and women.
- 50-60 women trained in basic business skills and government regulations.
- 180 household latrines have been built in five villages.
- 21 villages had preparation work for water systems done.
- Six latrine blocks have been built for six schools.
- Internships at day care centres for children with disabilities have become mandatory in the curriculum of social therapists due to advocacy.



Nepal

Nepal

- 1,500 adults and children from 37 Water Users Committees and 35 Child Clubs received training on water system maintenance, and hygiene.
- 500 members of Community Forest User Groups trained on forest management.
- 400 vulnerable women and women with disabilities are being provided with basic literacy and advocacy training.
- District authorities and civil society organisations capacitated in disaster and climate change preparedness.



North Korea

- Almost 20,000 young children and 2,000 pregnant women/new mothers had improved nutrition during the spring/summer 'lean period'.
- Approximately 750 exceptionally vulnerable orphan children were provided with food assistance, winter clothing, blankets, toys and educational materials.
- 511 families that were left homeless after summer floods were provided with construction materials to help rebuild their homes.



North-Korea

Experiences from a closed country

BY KENDRAH JESPERSEN, DESK OFFICER FOR NORTH KOREA



On my first trip, I was met at the airport, as we always are, by my North Korean guide. This man would be my host for the next 14 days. In North Korea we are not free to move about the country on our own, and must be accompanied by our guide, who is also our translator.

It can be exhausting and frustrating at times needing permissions for all of our daily plans, and having to explain all of our reasons for carrying out certain checks or asking certain questions. At other times, we are told we cannot visit certain places and do not receive clear explanations why.

It can also be frustrating not to know for sure whether the areas where we work are really where the greatest needs are, as we cannot freely access other areas. All we can do is to confirm that there is indeed a great need in the parts of the country where we work.

Rice or food

It is not easy, when all communications take place through a translator. As an example, one day I found out that every time I asked if a family had any “food”, it was translated with “rice” or “corn”. If I wanted to know, if they had any other types of food, I had to ask about it specifically. Over time, I have gained considerable experience, which has given me an invaluable insight into this otherwise almost hermetically sealed society.

Mission East cares

I have been in North Korea four times as a representative of Mission East and I find that the level of trust and ease of working with our local counterparts has increased with each visit – both government officials and those working directly on the projects we run.

“We are very thankful for your support, because Mission East always keeps its promises and cares about our children”, a local government official said during one of my recent visits.

At the orphanages we work with, we found that on each subsequent visit the staff was more at ease with us; allowing us to weigh and measure more of the children and allowing us to photograph more freely.

Newly acquired treasures

In the beginning many of the children at the orphanages were very apathetic. It is a very sad experience when you meet children that do not react to anything. Fortunately, we are able to see great progress, which is very encouraging and makes all the efforts worthwhile.

In November 2012 I watched the distribution of toys and drawing supplies, provided by Mission East. It was great to see, how special it was for the children to get their own crayons and drawing books. I especially remember one boy, 7-8 years old, who was completely preoccupied with drawing a picture. The drawing looked like one made by a 3-years-old, but he had the biggest smile on his face.

It was obvious that some of the children did not know what to do with the crayons and drawing books and that is a clear indication of the continuous need for assistance that can assure their psychological development in the future.

Having said that, there are still a lot of children who are much too small for their age, and I hope that we will also be able to continue to supplement their diet, for as long as there is a need for this.

North Korea is a country where few people have access. Tourists are rare and even less aid organizations. Mission East obtained the opportunity to work in North Korea in 2011, through a partner already active in the country. We are now the only Danish organization with permission to distribute food aid.





Y's Men and Y's Menettes fundraise for Mission East

The Y's Men's Clubs in Denmark have decided to raise money for Tajik children with disabilities. The children already receive rehabilitation and stimulation in local children's centers, but there is an urgent need for renovation. Hence, the Y's Men have decided to make "Children's Corners in Tajikistan" their tax deduction project in 2013. In addition, The Y's Menettes in Denmark have made "To bring hope to the children of North Korea" their regional project until the middle of 2014.

See more on www.ysmen.dk/projekter (in Danish) and www.ysmenetter.ysmen.dk (in Danish)



Record Profit for Children at risk in Nepal

In late November, the Church Café at Saeby Church in Denmark arranged a Christmas fair, which gave a large surplus of 25,000 DKK. Among the many activities were lottery, homemade cakes, wreaths and decorations.

"We have been successful in organizing ourselves, and our wreaths have a high quality reputation," says Emmy Jakobsen from the Church Cafe. The money collected has gone to Mission East's work with children at risk in Nepal.

**Annual Meeting
May 5th**

Funds for the fight against HIV/AIDS in Armenia

Mission East has, as the only Danish development organization, received support from the international financial institution Global Fund. The funds will be used to fight HIV/AIDS in Armenia. In Eastern Europe the amount of infected individuals is raising rapidly, and the Armenian society needs help to turn this development around. "Our goal is to reduce the number of infected amongst the most affected groups to less than five percent," says Raffi Doudaklian, Mission East's longstanding Country Director.



Meet Mission East at Danish Church Days 2013

The event takes place on 9th to 12th of May in Aalborg Congress and Cultural Centre. Danish Church Days is the largest interdenominational event in Denmark and takes place every third year.

Read more on www.kirkedage.dk



15-year-old Ruzimoh with her mother Jamila, and her 6-year-old sister, Mohinur.

helped her three siblings, when they needed to draw something for their school assignments.

Ruzimoh won the prize

One day, Mission East organized a drawing contest in the village, and Ruzimoh won. Later on special children's corner for children with disabilities was established in the village, with a few toys and books. It did not take long before Ruzimoh had read everything and filled all the drawing books.

Currently, Ruzimoh teaches other girls to weave special garments for bridal outfits.

Ruzimoh's mother, Jamila Boboeva, says: "My daughter is able to teach other children, and when their mothers see it, they are surprised. But she needs more materials, such as books on how to learn different crafts."

Access to a children's corner has made Ruzimoh's talent flourish. Both her parents, and other parents in the community, have realized that she is a young girl with prospects.

Ruzimoh got her chance to flourish

Despite her disability, Ruzimoh is a very fast learner. Her parents realized that when a children's corner was established in their village.

When Ruzimoh was born, her mother quickly discovered that she was not like other children, since Ruzimoh didn't respond when her mother spoke to her. When Ruzimoh grew up, she could not speak, and her mother tried to hide her from the neighbours in the

village in the province of Panjakent.

In Tajikistan, many parents are ashamed of having a child with disabilities. The traditional view is that a person with a disability has no value, and is unable to contribute to society. However, only little help was needed before Ruzimoh began to develop her creative talent.

Ruzimoh enjoys drawing, and has over the years,

Help for children in remote villages

Panjakent is one of Tajikistan's most remote areas. During the winter, avalanches often block the roads, making it difficult, dangerous and sometimes even impossible to drive to and from the area.

Before Mission East began to work in Panjakent in 2011, families of children with disabilities had no access to counselling, treatment or other forms of support locally. Everything was done in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe, and was thus out of reach for poor parents.

Access to local assistance

Now, Mission East has made support available locally. Scott Amis, Mission East local coordinator explains:

"Our mobile team is working in eight villages, and we have opened a health clinic in the provincial capital, where families of children with disabilities can get assistance. We have also established parents' groups in the villages, so parents can support each other. Their meeting places are local children's corners, typically a room in a school or a health clinic with a few toys, books and physiotherapy equipment."

The children's corners have until now been extremely sparsely equipped, but in 2013, Mission East hopes to renovate and buy new materials with the help of the Y's Men in Denmark, so the corners can become places where parents can meet, share experiences and have their children treated as locally as possible.

Mission East has also established a health centre for children with disabilities in the provincial centre. It takes about one hour to go there from most of the villages: "It makes a big difference not having to travel all the way to the capital Dushanbe, but it is also important that we reach out even further. That is why we have our mobile teams and now also the children's corners," explains Scott Amis.

See more photos and read more about Tajikistan on photo.miseast.org/tajikistan

The children's corners are currently sparsely equipped.



The road from Panjakent in the north to the capital Dushanbe in the south is often inaccessible in the winter.



Both toilet and clean water are now within Lachhu's reach

It isn't easy to find your way if you are blind, especially when living in an inaccessible area like the mountains of Western Nepal. Simple things like going to the toilet or fetching clean water become an enormous challenge.

44-year-old Lachhu Tamata was born blind. When she had to fetch water 150 meters away from her home, she used to stumble many times on the way, especially in the rainy season, when the ground is muddy and slippery. In addition, Lachhu often hit the many domestic animals that walk around in the village. When she had to go to the toilet, she had to ask family members for assistance. Because of her disability, Lachhu was one of the persons that Mission East paid special attention to, when the organization established a new water

system and latrines in the village:

“When we establish water systems and latrines in an area, we always check where people with disabilities live. Afterwards, we make sure that systems and latrines are established in places that are easily accessible for these people. The ability to manage basic necessities on their own changes their everyday lives completely, as it makes them less dependent on others,” Peter Drummond Smith, Operations Director for Mission East, explains.



Now Lachhu is able to go to the tap stand on her own to do the dishes.



This approach made a big difference for Lachhu. She now has access to clean water only 20 meters away from her home, and a latrine has been built only 10 meters away. In addition, the way has been cleared to minimize hindrances as much as possible.

Lachhu smiles, when she tells about her new life:

“Before, it was difficult to get water, or find the way to the toilet. Now it is easy”.

This is how Mission East reaches Lachhu's village:

- From the capital Kathmandu, you can fly to Surkhet in Western Nepal, changing planes once. You can also go by car or public transport. In that case, the trip takes two full days.
- From Surkhet, you walk for three days to get to the areas where Mission East works.
- Mission East works in partnership with local organizations that have permanent staff in the area.

This is why Mission East works in these inaccessible areas:

- This is where the need is greatest.
- Mission East works to ensure clean water, sanitation, enhanced reading skills, awareness of rights and agricultural skills, in order to ensure that the poor and marginalized are able to take part in future development.
- A road is being built which will eventually go through the area and continue to China. It will provide access to the outside world, and hence development.

Do you know a **company**, that wants to create results for **a good cause?**



An increasing number of companies support Mission East through business or project partnerships. The four main reasons for doing so are to:

- Support a good cause
- Strengthen company reputation
- Attract and retain talented employees
- Strengthen results

The opportunities for support and cooperation can be tailored to suit the individual company. Examples of this are:

- Support through one-time donations
- Business partnership with regular support
- Partnership regarding particular projects or
- Image supporting activities

The elements that are included in the agreement in terms of company's visibility on the Mission East website, PR, partnership certificate, campaigns, events, talks etc. will be agreed upon in accordance with company wishes and the general guidelines of Mission East.

We need you to help others



Last year Mission East extended urgent relief and long-term development aid to more than 350,000 people in Eastern Europe and Asia. Our work is only possible through donations that we receive from private individuals and other donors. You can help us help those in need by making a donation via Mission East's website www.miseast.org. You can donate an amount of your choice online, using Visa or MasterCard. If you

live within Europe, you can also make a donation to us by bank transfer for free, as long as the donation is in Euros and you have some form of electronic banking.

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With your support, Mission East can continue to transform lives.

Thank you!



Mission East
- values in action