



COPTIC ORPHANS

2007 ANNUAL REPORT



www.copticorphans.org

Together we can break the cycle of poverty



Dear Friends,

It's been nearly 20 years now since I started gathering friends and family together to help a small orphanage just outside of Cairo. Looking back, I am amazed at how much momentum we gathered. We got friends (and friends of friends) involved until we soon had a dedicated network of volunteer Reps so large we found ourselves reaching out to children as far as the most remote villages of Egypt.

Meanwhile, our relationships catapulted us into another role as international development professionals. No longer an orphanage, we launched professional programs that address root causes of poverty. And as we've reached out both locally and globally to make a positive impact in Egypt, we have met some interesting and inspiring people along the way.

This year, I stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Egyptian celebrity and UNDP Goodwill Ambassador Youssa. We marched side-by-side with the Egyptian National Council for Childhood and Motherhood as we advocated for girls. We sat side-by-side with representatives from UNICEF as we issued a call-to-action in the face of the continuing atrocity of FGM/C.

We have reached out extensively in this past year, and not only among the new friends I have just mentioned. Through our programs we have reached out to change Egypt directly by equipping children who are destined to be the future change-makers of their communities. We have reached out among the Egyptian NGO community in Egypt to leverage new partnerships all across Egypt. We have also reached out internationally between Egypt and the West to bring Egypt to the world and to bring the world to Egypt. You will read about all of this in the annual report that you now hold in your hands.

2007 has born the fruit of 20 years, and yet everything we have accomplished this year is only building new momentum: a momentum that will propel us exponentially higher than we could have imagined. In 2008, we will officially reach our two-decade mark. I hope that you will celebrate with me at our 20th anniversary gala in New York on October 18th.

Reaching Out Together,

Nermien Riad
Nermien Riad
Executive Director



COPTIC ORPHANS is an award-winning international development organization that equips children in Egypt with tools to break the cycle of poverty and transform their local communities.

We exist to improve the lives of orphans and other vulnerable children in Egypt by providing basic needs, education, and mentoring so that they may realize their potential to become productive members of society.

In addition, we seek to raise awareness about poverty in Egypt and promote cultural understanding.

Our vision is to see every vulnerable child of Egypt confidently face the future with a renewed sense of hope and a life enriched with education, health and equality.

*"Learn to do good; seek justice,
correct oppression; bring justice to the
fatherless, plead the widow's cause."
- Isaiah 1:17, ESV*

REACHING OUT IN THE COMMUNITY WITH



How Our Programs Reach Out

GRASSROOTS PARTNER INITIATIVES

Holistic Tools through NGO partnerships for marginalized children such as disabled, orphaned children, and girls

NOT ALONE PROGRAM

Partnering with Egyptian churches for children and families who have lost a father

SERVE TO LEARN

Volunteers Bridging International Borders to teach English to children in *Not Alone* and other disadvantaged children.

THE VALUABLE GIRL PROJECT

Girls' self-esteem building for academic retention and access to rights through mentoring.

The *Not Alone* program is the foundation of trust on which we build our other programs to reach the community at large.

We are members of indigenous communities in Egyptian villages and urban centers. We are international development professionals who work together across oceans and continents. We are members of a community both local and global reaching out for the greater good of Egypt.

Our feet are firmly rooted in indigenous institutions: dioceses, schools, organizations. Our central partnership in Egypt is with the Coptic Orthodox Church, the grassroots cultural center for many villages and urban areas. This central partnership in Egypt powers our flagship program *Not Alone* and with the manpower of hundreds of volunteers and professionals, we leverage our unique strength in our other programs to improve life for all disadvantaged children in Egypt.

With the connections we have already, Egyptian institutions and NGOs become further partners for the *Valuable Girl Project* and our *Partner Initiatives*. Then, we partner with international professionals and institutions from around the world who become *Valuable Girl Project* supporters, sponsors in the *Not Alone* program, and *Serve to Learn* volunteers.

From the grassroots to the world, and from the world to the grassroots, we are reaching out for the children of Egypt.

PROGRAMS OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

NOT ALONE PROGRAM

Our flagship program, *Not Alone*, has been providing basic needs, eradicating illiteracy, and developing social skills and talents since 1988. The *Not Alone* program gives a child back the protection, provision, and confidence that he or she lost after a father's death or abandonment.

Not Alone children gain the resources to break the cycle of poverty and the courage to become change-makers in their communities: all according to each individual child's need. We address both immediate and long-term needs so that *Not Alone* children develop academically, socially, and emotionally for success. They become literate and develop skills that help them achieve in school. Then, they develop their God-given talents so that they can not only overcome their own circumstances, but transform future generations. The key to the success of the *Not Alone* program is our grassroots network of now over 250 volunteer "Reps," who meet each child's literacy, housing, nutritional, health, and advocacy needs.

"In the Not Alone Program I learned how to learn and also how to teach others new things... because of my Rep's support, I earned 96% this year in school instead of 75% last year"
— Isis from Cairo

"My family never used to ask my opinion on anything. Now, if they are thinking of purchasing land, they come to me to ask if it's worth it..."
— Mariam, a "Big Sister" from the Valuable Girl Project

VALUABLE GIRL PROJECT

The Valuable Girl Project is an innovative development program that builds self-esteem through interactive activities and one-on-one mentoring for girls and young women at risk of dropping out of school.

Research has shown that education for girls is the most effective way to end the cycle of poverty, because it is the education of the mother that determines the poverty of the child. The program focuses on high poverty areas of Egypt where girls of all ages face a high risk of dropping out of school.

In the program, girls in high school and college are trained to be role models and academic mentors to girls in primary school. Through practical self-esteem building, the Valuable Girl Project encourages academic retention, access to civil and social rights, and a renewed hope for the future.

SERVE TO LEARN

Serve to Learn is a dynamic program that brings volunteers to Egypt from all over the English-speaking world. By day, volunteers inspire vulnerable children by teaching English in a fun and engaging way. In the evening, they experience firsthand the injustice of child poverty faced there by visiting children in their homes.

Serve to Learn was born because we wanted to share the need that Coptic Orphans addresses in Egypt. We saw that young second-generation members of the Egyptian Diaspora, or worldwide immigrant community, wanted to re-connect with their heritage in Egypt. It was the perfect opportunity to invite people to experience our work for themselves, while becoming part of the lives of children in Egypt.

Today, Serve to Learn welcomes youth and non-youth, members of the Egyptian Diaspora as well as those from the West who want to make a difference in the Middle East. Serve to Learn is about bridging international borders to share our resources of love and courage.

"...One thing that really sticks out is the chance we were given to spend with young girls ... when classes began, many of them were scared to speak in class. They did not want to sit next to boys. They were hesitant to do class activities with the boys... After our three weeks... the girls began to open up in class." — Miranda, volunteer in Qus, Serve to Learn

Through the *Not Alone* program, we truly reach out everywhere in Egypt: from the bustling metropolises along the Mediterranean coast and Nile delta to the rugged villages deep in the heart of Egypt.

But as wide as our reach is through the *Not Alone* program, it is tailored to each child's need. After all, each child has a unique potential to change his or her community for the better. Every child gains self-confidence, the ability to set goals and solve problems, and the skills to accomplish his or her goals. But no two children are alike, so *Not Alone* looks different for every child who participates.

Here are a few stories that show just how each child is being equipped in the *Not Alone* program.



"I am proud to be part of Not Alone"

— Sara

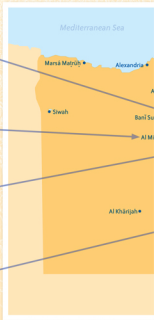
"Not Alone means that I am part of a family" — Mabrous

HODA, a mother of three participants realized the importance of literacy from the home visits of their Coptic Orphans Rep. She decided to become literate so that she can help her children with their school. She has started reading books herself and reading with her children.

MICHAEL, a 3-year old participant, had speech and hearing impairment. We coordinated a free surgery. Now, Michael has started talking and can live normally.

MARIAM earned high scores in high school and became the first in her large family to graduate. She has now enrolled in technical school.

When **MARY** took a book on geography to school one day, her teacher was amazed that Mary was so curious about the world and got such a book, when books are rare in many areas of rural Egypt. Mary proudly explained that because she participates in the *Not Alone* Program she has access to many books.



FUTURE CHANGEMAKERS OF EGYPT



TERESA not only graduated, but is studying oncology and is now practicing as a nurse. She is helping her younger siblings succeed in school, as well.

155 children discovered their cultural roots in a great civilization on various trips to the Pharonic Village and a few ancient monasteries. They realize that they can help make the future of Egypt as glorious as the past.

When **SAMIRAS** family tried to marry her at the young age of 14, we advocated with local church authorities to stop it. Now, her family has agreed to wait until she is an adult.

In Aswan, a group of children came together to publish a regular newsletter to encourage one another towards achievement. Not only will their project encourage one another forward, it shows their tremendous initiative and will develop skills that will help them later in life.

CHILDREN GAINING TOOLS FOR POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH WORKSHOPS

In 2007 we hosted more workshops than ever before for participating children. Why workshops? Because when children reach their own potential, they draw out the potential of others around them. Here is a sampling of how a few workshops impacted the lives of individuals and communities:

\$10 Club Workshop

Studies indicate that early childhood programs directly contribute to social mobility. Much early childhood learning takes place within the home when families nurture a love for learning. Yet books are a luxury in most Egyptian households. The \$10 Club, a group of hundreds of donors in the USA who pool their financial resources to support poverty-alleviations in the developing world, donated books for 500 children all throughout Egypt, who picked out books that interested them at workshops geared to cultivate a love for learning. Many children decided to start their own libraries and pursue new interests sparked by browsing books at the workshops.

FGM/C

After a workshop focusing on the long-term effects and dangers of female genital mutilation/curtling, a common but harmful traditional practice in Egypt, Hala, the mother of girls participating in the *Not Alone* program, not only said she would not subject her daughters to the procedure, but started educating other women in her village.

Gender Mainstreaming

After one workshop that discussed the status of girls in Egyptian communities, *Not Alone* participant Maged decided to start a Karate class for girls in his local village because, "I want to raise the status of women in our community."

"Ask....You are *Not Alone*"

Workshop for Adolescent Girls

In Egypt, many topics associated with coming of age as a girl are taboo. We organized a workshop for 94 girls aged 12 to 20. Two psychologists addressed some of the challenges of adolescence and the characteristics of real love. The girls said afterwards that it was very helpful to discuss these topics.

Parenting Workshops

A Psychiatrist shared her expertise with mothers from Alexandria by talking about techniques for great parenting. The mothers were so thrilled by the workshop they decided on their own to hold other workshops regularly.

Back to School

The back to school season drew hundreds of children to local workshops throughout Egypt to choose school supplies and learn about good study habits and the importance of education. Magdi, a 6th grader who attended one of the workshops, took the lessons to heart and scheduled time for studying and leisure each day. His mother said that his attitude drastically changed after the workshop.

"Teaching Thinking"

Taking responsibility in every day decisions means taking responsibility for success in life. One hundred and seventy children applied "Teaching Thinking" Workshops designed to teach critical thinking in Cairo to everyday life. Peter, one of the participants, now makes tables of pros and cons for everyday decisions.

High Achiever Awards

Individual gifts are often key to creative change and entrepreneurship in communities. Seven hundred Reps, church leaders, and community members celebrated the talents of 100 *Not Alone* Program participants at ceremonies throughout Egypt between September and October. Children received awards for exceptional achievement in school and life and showcased their talents. A highlight came when a very talented student performed a stirring piece on the Oud, an Egyptian string instrument.

Workshop Topics in 2007:

FOR CHILDREN:

- Talents and Creativity
- Child Rights
- Literacy and Love for Learning
- Critical Thinking and Independence

FOR MOTHERS:

- Parenting
- Nutrition
- Dangers of FGM/C

TO CHANGE EGYPT



Coptic Orphans marches for the end of FGM/C

WHAT IS FGM/C?

Female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C) refers to the intentional removal of or damage to the external female genitalia. It is believed in Egypt and other parts of Africa and the Middle East to preserve a girl's honor, but has lifelong consequences.



"Not Alone" Program Training Session... FGM Until When?"



A local Priest discusses on the issue with *Not Alone* program participants, mothers, and Reps.

REACHING OUT TO ABANDON A HARMFUL PRACTICE

While it has not been an official part of any of our programs, one area of outreach in 2007 has been our involvement in the critical Egyptian social movement to abandon FGM/C.

"We have talked a lot about this practice, but marching for it has left a great impact on us. We must get this message to the whole world." — A Valuable Girl Project Participant on marching against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM/C) in Egypt

In June of 2007, a tragedy struck in Egypt that roused the nation. Thirteen year-old Bedour Shaker died while undergoing a procedure variously known as female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C), and while misleading, sometimes as female circumcision. In July, The National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM), an office of the Egyptian government, invited Coptic Orphans to march with groups such as the National Red Crescent Society and the Coptic Orphans partner Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development. Participants, including twenty girls from the Valuable Girl Project, carried signs often featuring Bedour Shaker's picture and messages such as "No to FGM," "We don't want FGM for our Girls," and "Give Us a Law to Protect Us."

Throughout the rest of 2007, we reached out to families in our programs to get the word out about this harmful procedure through workshops and informal instruction. Bishop Demetrios, who helped host the workshops, expressed his pleasure that the *Not Alone* program is addressing such a vital issue. Meanwhile, we continued to address this issue among the global Diaspora throughout 2007 by getting the word out through newsletters and hosting a panel discussion featuring expert panelists from UNICEF, Tostan, Global Woman Magazine, and others.

One year ago, we were commissioned by a generous anonymous donor to step more deeply into a role that we have grown into over the years: a mentor for other organizations in Egypt working towards our common mission.

Coptic Orphans has always worked from the grassroots. We work through relationships on the ground so that our impact can multiply. So it was a logical step to reach out to local organizations to address the diverse needs of each local community.

At the end of 2007, the results are in on our Grassroots Partnership Initiatives. And the results are stunning for our first year.

Here are the things we accomplished:

- Early childhood education including literacy, vocational training, and the holistic development of children. In places this also focused upon equipping special needs children with vocational and life skills.
- Development for children in orphanages including after-school tutoring, literacy, educational, psycho-social development, and computer training, with a special focus on girls.
- Screening and treatment for common health problems such as anemia and parasitic infections and providing nutritional education for mothers and children to prevent and resolve health problems, especially anemia.

An Estimated 45% of children in Egypt suffer from iron-deficient anemia. Our project with the Mother of Perpetual Help Foundation cured 220 children of anemia and parasitic infection in 2007.



2007 PROJECTS

- **Housing orphaned girls 2 years and up.**
The Holy Virgin Mary Orphanage, al-Qalubiya
- **Promoting school readiness through Head Start.**
Egyptian Karma Association, Beni Suef
- **Developing vocational skills and social integration for children with special needs.**
Coptic Catholic Diocese, Minia
- **Educating orphaned and illiterate children.**
Coptic Renaissance Association, Beni Suef
- **Computer skills for orphaned children.**
The Egyptian Foundation for Development, Sohag
- **Raising public awareness of child rights.**
Coptic Association of Dewayna, Assiut
- **Educating children and mothers on nutrition.**
Mother of Perpetual Help Foundation, Cairo
- **Vocational skills development for children with special needs.**
Saint Luke the Physician Association, Cairo
- **Treating malnourished and anemic children.**
BLESS, al-Qalubiya
- **Vocational rehabilitation and training for youth with special needs.**
Saint Mark Center for People with Special Needs
- **Improving health and educational conditions of children.**
Coptic Association of Radeseya
- **Providing comprehensive care for children with visual impairments.**
Saint Youanes Coptic Charity Association Cairo

Quick Stats:

GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES

- 12 partners
- 8 governorates
- 2,147 children
- 685 households

CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS



In Egypt, children with special needs are often misunderstood and socially marginalized. One of our projects in partnership with St. Luke the Physician Association focused on equipping these children with skills to unlock their potential while helping their entire family learn techniques for dealing supportively and positively with the issues that arise when there are special needs in the family.

For example, Samy, a boy with Down's Syndrome, learned how to make prized hand-woven rugs. He was proud to see his crafts then sold at a Church bazaar. Meanwhile, Samy's entire family got involved in a workshop focused on how to adapt and thrive with disabilities in the family. Many participating children like Samy showed dramatic behavioral improvement and now make crafts to sell.

Sara was another child who participated in one of our projects. Sara lives in an orphanage after her parents passed away. We furnished a computer room in Sara's orphanage and provided computer training. We also obtained Sara's school curriculum on the computer so that she can succeed in school.

THE VALUABLE GIRL PROJECT

Just as we partner with local organizations in our Grassroots Partnership Initiatives, the Valuable Girl Project (VGP) also runs on partnerships within each community.

We partner with the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services, AUEED, and other local institutions and organizations that bear the mission of the VGP to their own communities.

Partnering organizations and the networks of local young women make the VGP grassroots. It's no surprise then that girls make the program their own, because it really is. For instance, a group of girls at a site in upper Egypt wanted to purchase a computer to further enhance their experience. After budgeting the money well they purchased the computer and had money left over. Then, they added their personal funds to purchase a second computer.

When young women like these girls gain self-esteem by taking ownership and learning what they can accomplish as a team, there's no limit to what they can do.



"I can't imagine my life without the Valuable Girl Project" — Mervat, a graduating big sister

REACHING OUT BETWEEN



A new sponsor is introduced to his child.



Serve to Learn volunteers in Cairo anxious to head to their sites throughout Egypt.



Egyptian celebrity Youssa visits children in Cairo

Part of our mission at Coptic Orphans is to bring our common cause in Egypt to the hearts of others all throughout the western world.

It's been a spectacular year for reaching out in the West, just like it was in Egypt. Coptic Orphans brought Egypt to the World, and brought the world to Egypt.

BRINGING THE WORLD TO EGYPT

The Memory Project

Coptic Orphans brought the world to Egypt when we partnered with The Memory Project to bring the talents of hundreds of high school students around the United States to Egypt. High school art students painted portraits of participating *Not Alone* program children, and Ben Schumaker of the Memory Project personally delivered the portraits to proud children all throughout Egypt. For the *Not Alone* children who received them, he hopes that the portraits will be "a special memory of their youth and honor their heritage and identity."

Chantel Concert at the Pyramids

Another boost of self-confidence for *Not Alone* program children came when international pop singer Chantel Chamandy invited thirty children on stage during a landmark concert at the pyramids of Egypt. "I never thought that I would have the confidence to stand in front of such a huge audience," said one girl. In addition to inviting thirty children on stage with her as she sang her songs "pray" and "faith," she also gave Coptic Orphans 500 tickets for disadvantaged children and their families to attend. The entire event made the children feel important and special, and gave the hundreds of other *Not Alone* children who attended the concert a memory they will not soon forget.

Serve to Learn

At George Washington University we literally had a forum on "Bringing the World to Egypt," geared at getting the word out about Serve to Learn. And we did just that. We reached out across the globe and brought more Serve to Learn volunteers to Egypt than ever before. While volunteers came from Australia, the US, and Europe, Canadian volunteers especially formed a small army this year, deploying into the farthest reaches of Egypt to touch the lives of children everywhere and returning forever changed.

EGYPT AND THE WEST

BRINGING EGYPT TO THE WORLD

Youusra at An International Passport to Change Gala

Coptic Orphans also brought Egypt to the world as celebrities leveraged their influence on behalf of the children in Egypt. During our 2007 Gala, Coptic Orphans brought Egyptian actress and UNDP goodwill ambassador Youusra to Washington, D.C. to receive our Leading By Example award and to share what our work means to her. The event was covered by international media. The event gathered over \$69,000 for orphaned and disadvantaged children in Egypt. Youusra raised \$10,000 for our children in Egypt by donating some of her personal jewelry for a silent auction at the event.

Moving the Message to the Market

Back at home base in Canada, another small army of volunteers invaded the Maxi grocery store to get the word out to everyone coming through the lanes. They bagged groceries and talked to people about Coptic Orphans, breaking the grocery store fund raising record. In Australia, we also brought Egypt to the world when Curves collected their Christmas charity drive for Coptic Orphans.

Church Presentations

Though we all come from different countries, all of us are connected because we are all members of the same body. That's the message that we took to churches in the West in 2007. We took the message to Coptic churches all over the east coast, but we also reached out in wider Christian circles on behalf of our community in Egypt. We started the year by presenting at two non-Coptic Eastern Orthodox parishes in Chicago to a warm reception and a generous response. Then, Coptic Orphans shared the plight of the children to the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We presented to several Evangelical congregations throughout the summer. The most touching response came when in the true spirit of Christian love and sacrifice, Iraqi Christians decided to sponsor children through Coptic Orphans and support the work in Egypt even though they were also distraught over the crisis in their home country.

An International Passport to Style Fashion Show

The Coptic Orphans Fashion Show in September brought the cause to a different audience. Hundreds from the fashion industry and the Washington, D.C. area community came together for a show featuring local up-and-coming Washington, D.C. designers, and to empower girls in Egypt through education. Many learned about the Valuable Girl Project for the very first time.

Christmas Concert

In December, Coptic Orphans hosted a Christmas concert and bazaar in Virginia. Hundreds enjoyed food, crafts, and Christmas music while contributing to children in Egypt.



"Of all the awards that I've received, this is the most touching." — Egyptian celebrity Youusra on receiving Coptic Orphans' Leading By Example Award.



An army of Canadian volunteers breaks the Maxi Grocery store fundraising record.

INCOME	2006	2007
Contributions	\$1,916,677	\$2,440,957
Interest		
& Investment Income	\$152,637	\$109,636
Grant Income	\$39,023	\$33,622
Total Income	\$2,108,337	\$2,584,215

EXPENSE	2006	2007
Program Services	\$1,343,808	\$2,083,698
Management and General	\$122,989	\$209,573
Fundraising	\$75,580	\$91,501
Total Expense	\$1,542,378	\$2,384,772

NET ASSETS	2006	2007
	\$2,906,782	\$3,155,147

SOME FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS OF 2007:

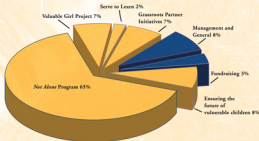
- Our income increased in 2007, enabling us to reach more children than ever before and invest in increasing the quality of our programs even more. We are finding what works and putting it to work to change children's lives and to equip them to be changemakers themselves.

- On average, we maintain a total overhead of less than 10% (including both "fundraising" and "management and general" categories). This year, we invested in facilities in Egypt that increase the extent of our reach for children while maintaining the highest levels of cost-efficiency.

"I wanted to increase my monthly gift to Amani when I saw that my 50 dollars was actually making a difference for the family. I was also pleased to find that Coptic Orphans makes a 'covenant' with the families to provide for the needs of the child but the family must do its part to allow the child to go to school." — Zara, Visiting Child Sponsor from Connecticut

PROGRAM EXPENSES

PROGRAM EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Not Alone Program	1,670,359
Valuable Girl	181,263
Serve to Learn	54,309
Partner Initiatives	177,267
Ensuring the future of vulnerable children	\$199,492



THE STEWARDS OF COPTIC ORPHANS

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Nermien Riad

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Chairperson of the Board
Nermien Riad
Christine Sedky, Secretary
Dr. Amira Roess
Dr. Ashraf Rofail
Emile Beshai

Advisory Council
Julie Meawad
Eddie Fam
Dr. Robie I. Samanta Roy

“False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the ‘rejects of life,’ to extend their trembling hands. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands — whether of individuals or entire peoples — need to be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, working, transform the world.” — Brazilian educator Paulo Freire





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