



A CHOICE TO ENRICH A LIFE

GiveLight Foundation: A Choice to Invest In A Life” by Dian Alyan, President/Founder

It's been almost two years after the tsunami hit. I still carry with me the pain of losing so many people and witnessing my birth place torn into pieces. Looking back however, I feel deeply grateful to Allah SWT for guiding me to make a choice that has not only healed my own wounds but has helped the lives of hundreds of orphans.

We created GiveLight Foundation 2 weeks after the tsunami. The vision is to become a world recognized crisis relief organization that seeks to create durable orphanages in response to natural disasters. Our first orphanage in Aceh,

Indonesia has been in operation since December 2005. Nestled in the midst of lush pine trees, by a beautiful lake, it is providing a place to call home, a sanctuary for 50 orphans. I spent a few weeks this past summer with them and it was extremely rewarding to see how they are able to smile again. Our goal is not just to provide life's basic needs, but rather to help these children grow into young adults who will have the advantage necessary to lead a successful and blessed life. The kids go to public schools and we provide supplementary education in three areas: Arabic/Quranic studies, English and

computer skills. When I was there, we held competitions in Quranic memorization, English skills and social studies. The winners, Rahmat Miko, 13 and Nursamawi, 16, each won an MP3 Player. We want to instill in our kids a healthy sense of competition and that excellence in education will be rewarded.

By the grace Allah SWT, we are now sponsoring 200 orphans in Aceh. While this number is substantial, there are still thousands of orphans whose future are uncertain. Because of my roots in Aceh, Alhamdulillah we are able to find people whom we can trust. For example, the head of the Aceh orphanage has 30 years



of experience and he won a lifetime award as the best head of orphanage in the country. The children loves him and he adores them. He donated his land and his home was torn down in order for us to build a new, bigger one for our children. Because of him and the caring people we have working on the ground, we are able to reach the neediest orphans and have the peace of mind that Allah helps us execute our plans. Aceh is just a starting point for us. Our intention to expand is becoming a reality as we are building our second orphanage in Rawalpindi for the orphans affected by the earthquake. We are pursuing this in partnership with an NPO based in Southern California, with a strong connection to Pakistan. The completion is targeted in the fall of 2007, with the goal of providing not only a home but also a school for 50 girls.

We are very fortunate to have been granted employee matching donations by major companies such as Oracle, Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, EBay, and Cisco. Through Cisco alone, we are able to sponsor 50 orphans in Pakistan. As we are approaching Eid-ul Adha, we urge you to consider supporting this noble cause. Sponsoring a child costs as little as \$1 a day. Therefore, at \$30 a month, one child can be sponsored for a whole year for a mere \$360. Similarly, the dollar can be stretched quite a bit when donating for things such as a computer lab, a library or even a room.

What really sets GiveLight apart from other humanitarian relief organizations is that when you support GiveLight, you know your dollar is going the furthest because GiveLight is a 100% volunteer-

based organization. Our marketing team, financial accountants, database managers, tech support and legal advisers all work on a volunteer basis from their own homes, saving the Foundation any unnecessary overhead costs and salary expenses. Very few nonprofit

organizations can say that virtually 100% of your donation is going to the people you want to support, but GiveLight can.

How else can you help? Volunteer your time and talent. Help us find more ways to increase awareness of this project. We made many presentations in small and big gatherings. If you know of any group who might be interested in supporting the cause, we are willing to come and speak. I even spoke at a rock concert once, in front of 1500 non Muslims and they ended up donating \$4000. This experience further reinforces the belief that there are many people out there with good hearts and resources. We just need to reach them. An excellent example is a gentleman from Germany, a non Muslim who donated 2000 brand

new books complete with 10 custom-made book cases



for our library in Aceh. We name the library after him- Roland Heatlan. We live in Silicon Valley, the center of technology, innovation and money. Let's use our network to influence others to give for those who are living in unspeakable sufferings. This work, alhamdulillah, has been also a very effective way of showing the true teaching and beauty of our religion by sharing a concrete example of how Allah SWT commands us to care for orphans.

Anything good I said here that moves your heart comes from Allah. The flaws are all mine and I pray that He accepts our imperfect actions. In closing, I ask Allah SWT purify our hearts from all impurities and give us the honor of joining our beloved prophet SAW in Jannah through this noble cause. Amin.

For more information visit www.GiveLight.org. If you have any questions about our Foundation or how you can make a difference, feel free to contact me at dian@givelight.org or 408.702.7545. ■





Volunteer's Experience

Last summer, a young couple from Chicago, Amina and Ahmed spent 5 weeks at our Aceh Orphanage.

Ahmed, who's hafiz Quran taught the children tajweed and quranic memorization. Amina, taught them English. That experience has impacted both of them so much. At the end of their visit, they told me they did not want to leave. Here's a quote from Amina:

"This past summer I had the rare opportunity to spend five weeks with some of the most beautiful and inspiring children in the world. These are children who have experienced so much sorrow and have gone through trials and tribulations that one could only have nightmares about, and yet they are nothing short of amazing. These are the orphans of Yayasan Noordeen.

When I first heard from my husband that there was an orphanage in Aceh, Indonesia housing tsunami victims that was in need of teachers, I jumped at the opportunity right away. I did not know much about the orphanage, where I was going, or what it would be like. All I knew was that this is something I had to do. Alhamdulillah, God has blessed me with such a privileged life, with no hardships or suffering. I felt that it was my duty to give back whatever little I could, and this was my chance.

When I thought of an orphanage a picture formed in my mind of a dreary and lonesome place. Yayasan

Noordeen, however, was the complete opposite of that picture. This home was resplendent with noor and overflowing with barakah.

Living with these children was a life changing experience.

Teaching and learning from them helped me develop as a person, and I can only pray that they took something away from my time with them. Despite all they had been through, they were always respectful, always helpful, and always pleasant. I was amazed by their ability to be so positive and happy. I learned how to be grateful from them.

They taught me to always thank Allah swt for whatever I have in life, for I know that I have earned none of the favors He has bestowed upon me. Especially this greatest gift of 35 new brothers and sisters. May Allah swt help us continue improving the lives of these wonderful children who have so much to give to the world.

Pleas visit www.givelight.org to read the complete story.

This goes to show that no matter how much we choose to give, in the final analysis, we are the ones who will always receive more.

We thank Allah SWT for giving us the opportunity to do something good. We thank all of our volunteers for their selfless dedication and effort. We thank our supporters for trusting us and helping us achieve a higher purpose. ■

Comfortable Living

Most of us live in a comfortable home surrounded by our loved ones. The children of Aceh have lost everything and each of them will grow up without ever again feeling a touch of a mother or a warm embrace of a father. Your contribution will allow us to build an orphanage for at least 50 children , sponsoring up to 200 children and providing them with a loving and caring home. Through this effort we hope to inspire their generation to the point where they can integrate well into the fabric of their society and find their places in the world.

Reminders

" THEY WILL ASK thee as to what they should spend on others. Say: "Whatever of your wealth you spend shall [first] be for your parents, and for the near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer; and whatever good you do, verily, God has full knowledge thereof."

Al-Baqara 2:215

AND WORSHIP God [alone], and do not ascribe divinity, in any way, to aught beside Him. And do good unto your parents, and near of kin, and unto orphans, and the needy, and the neighbour from among your own people, and the neighbour who is a stranger, and the friend by your side, and the wayfarer, and those whom you rightfully possess. Verily, God does not love any of those who, full of self-conceit, act in a boastful manner;

An-Nisa 4:36

Blessed is the wealth of a Muslim from which he gives to the poor, the orphans and to needy travelers"

Bukhari