

Hannah's Heartbeat

touching hearts, instilling hope



Giving Hope to Somalis

“If all females are automatically condemned to hell anyway, I can’t see the point in praying,” the Somali girl said in response to the local religious teacher’s declaration.

It was a turning point for the girl (her name withheld for her protection), who began seeking spiritual truth and eventually accepted Christ and married a Christian man. Hoping to encourage many more girls and women to ask those kinds of questions and find eternal answers, Project Hannah in the summer of 2012 began building a team that will translate and record *Women of Hope* for broadcast to Somalis living in neighboring countries but also in the homeland.

Although statistics are difficult to pin down, 40 percent or more of the world’s roughly 16 million ethnic Somalis live outside Somalia, which has faced political turmoil for decades and recently suffered a disastrous drought. The number of refugees fleeing the country topped the 1 million mark in 2012, and substantial Somali communities can be found in South Africa, Europe and the U.S.

The political, economic and food crises in combination with the constraints of the dominant religion and local tradition make life especially hard for women. Girls are used as rewards for suicide bombers. Female genital mutilation is practiced, and women who venture outside the home unaccompanied by male relatives have been beaten. Rape is reportedly “endemic” in some refugee camps.

Ruth Mbennah, Africa coordinator for Project Hannah, told the story one mother wrote in a letter.

“So she was going to look for food, and she left her girls in the tent. And she went to look for food a long time, many hours, and she came back with very little. When she was coming back, she found her daughters had been raped by soldiers. So those are the shocking stories we hear from all over Africa, especially the ones that have war like Somalia.”

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The biggest tragedy of all, however, is that far more than 95 percent of Somalis are facing this often unfriendly and dangerous world without the saving knowledge of Jesus in their lives. The fledgling *Women of Hope* team of refugee women is determined to change that fact by broadcasting the gospel to East Africa from a 250-kilowatt shortwave transmitter.

Early in the training process, division and suspicion were evident among team members because public profession of faith in Christ can be risky, even life-threatening, in Somalia. Through prayer and the sharing of testimonies, a spirit of unity and joy developed, allowing for the successful

production of the first programs.

“We want to minister to our people by radio. We are ready!” the team members told the Project Hannah trainers.

The team is overjoyed that funding has been provided to start the ministry. They will be counting on the support of Project Hannah prayer intercessors around the world as they speak hope to the millions of Somalis in refugee camps and communities across East Africa, far away in European and U.S. cities, and on the soil of Somalia.

Read much more at projecthannah.org/leastafrica about how God is moving across East Africa through Project Hannah.

LISTENERS RESPOND

“We thank you for visiting our prayer group and for bringing the topics to pray through [monthly prayer calendars]. We thank you also for the [*Women of Hope*] program on CD to listen to anytime.”

– An Ethiopian prayer group member

“*Women of Hope* producers, thank you for encouraging us spiritually and physically through your radio program. We are listening to the word of God in our language, Oromo, at our home with our families. We benefit from your teachings on health issues and other topics. Thank you very much.”

– A listener in Ethiopia

“Dear *Women of Hope* Amharic producers, I live very far from you. But I listen to your program. It is just like a local church for me. I don’t want to miss that time. I can’t have fellowship with Christians. So the only way to keep my life with Christ is your radio program. Please pray for me to be strong in faith.”

– A listener in Ethiopia

Global PRAYER MOVEMENT

Each month, Project Hannah focuses on lifting up oppressed women by praying for those who have had abortions or who live as refugees; against cultural practices like child marriage; or over regions like West Africa or South Asia. Join more than 40,000 intercessors praying the same requests in 70 languages and more than 120 countries. Invite your friends, Sunday-school class and Bible-study group to join as well.

Sign up for the monthly prayer calendar (by email or mail):
projecthannah.org/eprayer

View or download resources for each month or a day:
projecthannah.org/monthlyprayercalendar
projecthannah.org/prayeroftheday

Follow our Facebook and Twitter pages to read daily requests:
projecthannah.org/facebook projecthannah.org/twitter



Reaching Farsi Listeners Inside, Outside Iran



She's a doctor in a country where the female literacy rate falls below the world average, but despite her prominent position, the odds still seemed stacked against this Iranian woman.

Happening upon a TWR radio program in Farsi, which is also known as Persian and is the national language of Iran, the doctor began listening regularly and found hope for what she called the hardest time of her life. Her husband had divorced her and wouldn't let their son live with her when she had to move to another city.

"I don't have so much hope that the court will accept my request," she wrote by text message. "I and my son cannot be together because we live in a country where there is no justice and rights for women, and the law doesn't support a person like me. . . . I lost everything in my life, but through you I got faith in Christ, and I ask him to help me and save me from this hard life."

The Iranian doctor had been listening to an earlier program broadcast by TWR to the nation of 78 million people. But TWR Europe, which oversees the media organization's outreach to the Middle East, had for years been seeking a more comprehensive ministry like *Women of Hope* for Iran. In September 2012, Project Hannah's flagship program began airing to the country, where Islam is the official religion, all broadcasting is state run and satellite dishes are illegal.

And the potential audience for *Women of Hope* in Farsi is growing beyond the borders as more than a third of Iran's young people express an interest in emigrating. Iran's economic prospects continue to be clouded as a result of unsuccessful financial reforms and an international trade embargo placed on the country.

As Project Hannah praises God for the rapid provision of funding and personnel in the 2012 launch of Farsi broadcasts, it redoubles prayer efforts on behalf of Iranians dealing with rising unemployment and poverty rates as well as with the social disruption evident in the prevalence of drug abuse and prostitution. Intercessors also are being asked to pray that this fresh outreach will grow in the homeland and make inroads via the Internet among expatriates living in the U.S. and Europe.

Learn more about TWR's ministry across the Middle East and North Africa at twreurope.org.





THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

by Marli Spieker
Project Hannah Founder and Global Ministry Director

In 1963, Edward Lorenz presented a theory that was greeted with nothing but laughter. Author Andy Andrews recounted Lorenz's seemingly ridiculous proposition that "a fragile butterfly can flap its wings and set molecules of air in motion, which move other molecules of air – eventually capable of starting a hurricane on the other side of the planet." Mocked by the scientific community, this so-called "butterfly effect" – the name of Andrews' book – took hold as a fascinating myth used in works of science fiction. To the amazement of some scientists 30 years later, physics professors concluded that the proposed theory was "authentic, accurate, and viable"! Dubbed the Law of Sensitive Dependence Upon Initial Conditions, according to Andrews, it's been proven that a small change or motion by any form of matter, including people, can cause a chain of events that leads to a large-scale phenomenon. Thus, an almost weightless butterfly can unleash great forces of nature like the hurricane. Unbelievable!

I thought of unbelievable people who started movements with one idea, one move with global impact, some affecting our lives to this day: Einstein, Mother Teresa, William Booth, Paul Freed and others, including a Jewish carpenter and his 12 uneducated friends! One idea, one move, one "flapping of wings" causing changes in people, communities, even countries!!

In 1997 a handful of women joined me in prayer about reports that the suicide rate among Chinese women is 500 per day. Their "wings" of earnest, simple prayer resulted in Project Hannah's massive prayer movement established today in 123 countries and 70 languages. It is a wave of prayer circling the globe 24/7 and causing a powerful hurricane of faith changing the eternal destiny of millions of women (and men) worldwide.

In 1998 another handful of women, TWR missionary wives on the island of Guam, flexed their "wings" by producing Project Hannah's first *Women of Hope* radio program in English. Today this signature program is piercing the "veil" of intellectual, social and spiritual darkness and covering women with Christ's liberating message of eternal life, light and truth in more than 60 languages. In addition to reaching women in their heart languages and in their homelands through high-powered radio, the programs are reaching isolated immigrants. As the world comes to our doorsteps, *Women of Hope* is a tool being used to change women's lives whether through phone lines set up in Germany, MP3 players handed out in Sweden or the Internet wherever it can be accessed.

We in Project Hannah are grateful to each one who has prayed or given during 15 years of blessed ministry. I pray for more "butterflies" ready to fly with strength and grace so that Project Hannah can continue to expand its outreach to women. Only Jesus can heal their aching hearts and their needy lands. Oh, I pray you will passionately "flex your wings" in prayer and giving, causing a "hurricane" of God's saving hope to sweep all around the world – including in your own homes and neighborhoods!



MISSION STATEMENT

Project Hannah's purpose is:

- to raise awareness of and empathy for the plight of women worldwide.
- to pray for women who are being abused emotionally, physically or spiritually.
- to broadcast the gospel of Jesus Christ to women around the world, encouraging them to:
 - experience God's love, freedom and power as they face life's daily challenges.
 - embrace their God-given destiny and glorious inheritance in Christ Jesus, whatever their cultural, social or economic situation.
 - pass on to their children a legacy of faith, wisdom and godly character.

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