



Wherever the Need

Livelihoods: Offering the skills and opportunity to achieve a sustainable income

## Why Livelihoods?

Wherever the Need (WTN) is committed to alleviating poverty in two basic ways. To make a living people need a job, but to hold down employment they need to be healthy. There is little point in providing work if the participants are regularly sick from the scourges of the developing world: poor sanitation and polluted water. We help communities towards good health by providing sanitation and water, then we work on creating local jobs. We know that people want the opportunity to work their own way out of poverty and the ability to take responsibility for their own lives without needing further intervention or handouts.

Our other leaflets on sanitation and water explain how these give the basis for good health, but in this leaflet our focus is on livelihoods.



Carpentry workshop, Sierra Leone

We involve local people in choosing their own livelihood project, with a strong emphasis on local sustainability. Once a WTN project is finalized, they will run it independently without outside help. Most people are happy to work hard to improve the lives of their families and their communities, and our commitment is for people to become independent not dependent. We constantly monitor progress and give advice as appropriate, but we do not support projects that rely on regular bail-out payments. Our supporters like to know that they are investing in people rather than donating to them. The communities we work with want to earn a living without having to depend on outsiders.

## Generally led by Women

Our work tends to centre around women, since our experience has shown that they have a huge motivation to see their children thrive. Once they and their families have sanitation and drinking water, and no longer constantly fall ill, they have the time, energy and inclination to work. They are keen to earn enough to feed, clothe and educate their children and to create a better future for themselves.

WTN aims to create village economies that enable the inhabitants to provide for themselves. Once successful, this has a simple ripple effect on other nearby villages. As we move from one village to the next, so micro-economies are created. The communities once again become sustainable, and people do not feel the need to migrate to the cities to find work.

Many of our projects are supported with micro-finance initiatives. Micro-finance, as started by Grameen Bank, is a system whereby a group of individuals borrows a sum of money and commits collectively to its repayment. If one individual defaults, everyone else remains responsible for the loan. The repayment rate is extremely high, at over 98 per cent.

Micro-finance tends to be more successful in India, where it is a useful method of mobilizing communities to set up their own businesses. Our experience tells us that Africa responds better to direct aid projects.

The cost of a livelihood project is variable, but as an example, a beekeeping project in Sierra Leone, involving around 600 people in a village of 1,500, costs in the region of \$35 per person, whilst a similar project in India costs about \$30 per person. A micro-finance scheme can be run from \$2,000 upwards, and this level of donation will make an impact on the lives of around 40 people. Of course, as the money is paid back, the micro-finance investment is recycled, funding another group of people.

Wherever the Need is committed to using your donation effectively and will find the most appropriate way for you to invest in the livelihood option that best suits you – and most positively impacts on the people you want to help.

Please donate today.



Women's Group meeting



Self Help Group, paying in book



Improved agricultural output

### United States of America

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**Wherever the Need**

Eco-Sanitation • Water • Livelihoods • Environment • Empowerment