

A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, sitting closely together against a rough stone wall. The boy is in the foreground, wearing a light-colored shirt, and the girl is behind him, wearing a purple shirt. Both are smiling warmly at the camera. The background shows a textured stone wall and some outdoor steps.

Celebrating 25 Years of Serving God & Egypt's Children



Coptic Orphans

2014 Annual Report

Dear Friends and Supporters of Coptic Orphans,

All that we've worked for during these last 25 years, serving God and the children of Egypt, brought us to a beautiful and pivotal 2014.

I say *beautiful* because I never expected we would be blessed to meet not once, but twice, with His Holiness Pope Tawadros II. By appearing at our 25th Anniversary Gala in Canada, and by convening a special meeting with our Serve to Learn volunteers, he gifted us with a warm affirmation of the Church's love and leadership for the fatherless and their families.

And as for *pivotal* — 2014's events showed that we reached our 25th anniversary vibrant and ready to tackle even greater challenges. Our *Not Alone*, Valuable Girl, B'edaya, and Tamkeen projects all prospered and grew stronger, involving more families than ever before. More children than ever secured loving relationships with sponsors, thanks to the unprecedented flood of sponsorships at our 25th Anniversary Galas in Canada, the U.S., and Australia. And for the second year running, more of our children won Egypt's top scholarships, confirming the success of our education-centered programs.

This report describes all the milestones we reached, all the doors that swung open, and all the people and organizations who blessed us with partnership and support.

One of the stories included in these pages is that of Michael. Reading about Michael, whom I've met many times, I am struck by the incredible blessing that we share within the Body of Christ.

Michael is one of "our" kids — someone who flourished as a child in our programs, made it through his education against great odds, and now has a good job. His happiness makes it all worthwhile.

But what really moves me is the fact that Michael is now "giving back." He's gone from being one of our kids, to being a volunteer himself and working to improve the lives of other fatherless children.

Michael's story is extraordinary, but it's far from unique, and it really helps me understand why we do this work. It's about more than helping kids survive. It's about encouraging them to be transformed — by education, by love, by faith — and to become people who love giving back to our community.

That's the future, I believe. That's why I share this report, and Michael's story, with you.

For all that we've received from God, for the guidance and support of His Holiness, Their Graces the Bishops, and the Reverend Fathers, and for our partnership with you, we are grateful beyond words.

It has been a privilege and an honor to walk with the beautiful children of Egypt, their brave mothers, and our Church-based volunteers. Thank you to them, and to everyone who has helped us touch the lives of over 30,000 children in these past 25 years.

One body in Christ
Nermien Riad
Founder and Executive Director

About Coptic Orphans

When most people think of "orphans," they think of children in orphanages who have no family members at all. In fact, many orphanages in Egypt are filled with children who have living family members, only because their widowed mothers cannot afford to feed them. This is an injustice.

Coptic Orphans is an award-winning international Christian development organization that works through a grassroots volunteer network to unlock the God-given potential of fatherless children and other vulnerable children in their own homes and families. We equip them to break the cycle of poverty and become change-makers in their communities. Since 1988, Coptic Orphans has touched the lives of over 30,000 children in underserved villages and urban areas throughout Egypt, from Alexandria to Aswan.

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- 1

His Holiness Pope Tawadros II blesses Coptic Orphans by coming to our Sept. 28 gala in Toronto, Canada to accept our Leading by Example Award, where he tells us, "Bravo for your service!"
- 2

The number of sponsor visits to their kids in Egypt soars by 70%, while the number of letters written by sponsors to their children jumps by 20%.
- 3

Serve to Learn reaches a high point on July 12, when His Holiness Pope Tawadros II holds a special meeting at St. Mark's Cathedral with the program's team of 21 volunteers from the U.S., Australia, and Canada.
- 4

Five *Not Alone* participants beat enormous odds to win prestigious LOTUS scholarships to attend some of Egypt's finest private universities, such as the British University.
- 5

A comparison of new data confirms that children enrolled in Coptic Orphans programs are more than *three times* more likely to complete their secondary school education than their average Egyptian peers.
- 6

Our Reps use workshops and persuasion to convince *Not Alone* widows of the dangers of forcing their daughters to become child brides, while young women in our Tamkeen project mount a similar community education campaign against early marriage.
- 7

Twenty-nine widows with children in our *Not Alone* program complete Round II of the B'edaya microfinance initiative, achieving a 98.3% repayment rate on loans used to advance their entrepreneurial ideas and generate income.
- 8

Students at St. Mary and St. Mina's Coptic Orthodox College in Sydney donate the funds raised at their book fair to Coptic Orphans, and another top-notch Australian supporter raises over AU\$2,000 for the kids by inviting 30 women — 27 of whom had never heard of Coptic Orphans before — to a fabulous dinner.
- 9

Responding to an awareness-raising campaign organized by young women participating in our Tamkeen project, local leaders in Minya agree to implement several measures aimed at countering sexual harassment.
- 10

To bear witness for our brothers and sisters in Christ, Coptic Orphans speaks in Washington, D.C. at the Sept. 9-11 inaugural summit of In Defense of Christians, emphasizing the need to strengthen and spotlight the positive work done by Christian schools, hospitals, and aid organizations in the Middle East.



His Holiness Pope Tawadros II addresses guests at the Coptic Orphans 25th Anniversary Gala in Toronto, Canada on Sept. 28, 2014.



Sponsors and donors are the heart of Coptic Orphans. Everything we've accomplished together in these 25 years has been because of God's grace and through your prayers, love, support, and visits to the children!

The theme of celebration resounded throughout 2014, and for good reason: Coptic Orphans was marking 25 years of joyful service to God. In those years, by His grace, we educated and empowered 30,000 Egyptian children.

Of course, neither that work, nor those celebrations, would have been possible without your partnership. For that reason, Coptic Orphans held galas in Canada, Australia, and the United States. At each, our staff recognized the contributions of everyone who made those 25 years a success.

All three galas expressed our deep gratitude to the Church-based volunteers and community leaders who are Coptic Orphans' backbone in Egypt, and to the Bishops and Reverend Fathers who welcome and work with us, and to all the sponsors and donors who have improved the lives of thousands of children.

More than 1,000 guests came to the galas and sponsored 150 new children. This was an enormous leap forward, all in the span of just seven weeks. It's as if we were able to enroll over 20 kids each day — something unheard of for Coptic Orphans!

This flood of new sponsorships was one of the galas' most important successes. Each sponsored child now has a personal connection to a caring,

supportive adult. This powerful bond adds to the benefits enjoyed by all our program participants: access to higher education commensurate with their skills and ambitions, better healthcare and housing, and other vitally needed resources. In short, these 150 children will have years of care and support, plus their sponsor's unique love and encouragement.

But surely the most incredible blessing of all was the presence of His Holiness Pope Tawadros II.

His Holiness appeared in person at the Sept. 28 gala in Toronto, Canada to accept the Coptic Orphans Leading by Example Award. The award honors pioneers whose character and achievements make them role models in Egypt and around the world.

His Holiness was our clear choice to receive the award because of his noble and constant efforts to realize his vision of an Egypt of tolerance and prosperity, where Christians and Muslims live alongside one another in peace. Furthermore, His Holiness has been an incredible advocate for the children as far back as 1999, while he was a general bishop.

His Holiness told the audience in Canada: "I served indirectly with Coptic Orphans in the areas where I was general bishop alongside HG Bishop Bachomious. During this time, I watched Coptic Orphans and their very effective service in three locations: the border city of Marsa Matrouh; King Mariout, a desert city; and El Beihira, which is an agricultural governorate. I watched them impact all three of these areas."

As always, His Holiness directed everyone's thoughts towards the right place — in this case, the joy that comes with serving the children and their families as part of One Body in Christ. As he said: "Bravo for your service! And I'm not sure who's happier, you or the children you serve — you are all happier!"

Indeed, it has been a blessing beyond words for all of us to have served for these 25 years, and for the privilege of working with our partners in development: the courageous, faithful, and unstoppable children of Egypt!

With His Holiness' words in mind, and with gratitude, we set forth for our next 25 years of service.

Leading by Example Award Recipients

The Board of Directors of Coptic Orphans is proud to present the Leading by Example Award to those individuals who have truly embodied values treasured by Coptic Orphans, including a spirit of volunteerism, a love of children and education, a commitment to giving back to the community, and a deep and enduring devotion to an Egypt of tolerance, prosperity, and peace for all people.

- His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, 118th Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark, accepted the Leading by Example Award in person at the Coptic Orphans 25th Anniversary Gala in the greater Toronto area on Sept. 28, 2014.
- Renowned former NASA scientist Dr. Farouk El-Baz, who is currently a member of the Advisory Council of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, accepted the Leading by Example Award in person at the Coptic Orphans 25th Anniversary Gala in the greater Washington, DC area on Oct. 11, 2014.
- Nick Kaldas, APM, Deputy Commissioner of the New South Wales Police Force, accepted the Leading by Example Award in person at the Coptic Orphans 25th Anniversary Gala in the greater Sydney area on Nov. 9, 2014.
- Ola Ghabbour, recipient of the Leading by Example Award in 2008, was honored posthumously at the U.S. gala for her incredible and tireless dedication to improving the lives of the children of Egypt.



His Holiness Pope Tawadros II and Coptic Orphans staff at the 25th Anniversary Gala in Toronto, Canada, Sept. 28, 2014.

Honored Guests

Canada

- The Honourable Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Minister of the Status of Women
- His Excellency Amin Meleika, Consul General of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Montreal

United States

- Mr. Ayman Aldesouky Youssef, Consul General of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Washington, D.C.

Australia

- His Excellency Mahmoud Zayed, Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to New Zealand
- Mr. Youssef Hassan Shawki, Consul General of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Sydney
- Mr. Ahmed Farid Morsy, Vice Consul of the Arab Republic of Egypt in Sydney
- The Honorable Greg Donnelly MLC
- The Honorable Reverend Fred Nile MLC

As we celebrate Coptic Orphans’ first 25 years, it’s clear that the fruit of our flagship program, *Not Alone*, isn’t limited to the success and happiness of the children we serve.

This may sound surprising, since that happiness and success are central to everything Coptic Orphans does. In fact, in partnership with you, we’ve spent these 25 years striving constantly for each child’s education, well-being, and joy.

But the story doesn’t end there. What we’ve come to realize is that the children’s lives are only the *branches* of Coptic Orphans’ work. The *fruit* is what they give back to others in the form of love, leadership, and volunteerism.

The story of a young *Not Alone* participant named Michael shows how the program can, by God’s grace, bear this fruit. His story begins, as all *Not Alone* stories do, with our staff and volunteers working to restore the protection, provision, and confidence that a child loses after a father’s death or abandonment.

As Michael told us: “My dad passed away in 1996. I was six years old. The financial burden was on the eldest brother, who was 12 years old. He dropped out of school so he could support us. I’ll always remember this quote: ‘You’re a smart kid, but your family can’t afford school ... therefore, we advise you not to continue your education.’ It was very depressing to hear these words. I was concerned for my family, which was trying to make ends meet. I was in 9th grade when I had to decide whether to stay in school or to drop out due to my family’s situation.”

As a dropout, Michael’s future could have been that of many Egyptians: exhausting manual labor, illiteracy, poverty, and poor

health leading to death. But for Michael, something changed: He was located by a Coptic Orphans “Rep,” who enrolled him in *Not Alone*.

From then on, Michael’s Rep, George, nurtured his desire to learn and his eagerness to “give back.” In this, George was like any of *Not Alone*’s more than 400 Church-based Reps. After being nominated by their local bishop, the Reps work with each of the nearly 10,000 fatherless kids in *Not Alone*, in some of the most impoverished communities all across Egypt. Day after day, often for years, each Rep builds a long-term relationship with each of the 15-20 children they serve, bonding with them through regular home visits, life-skills workshops, and community activities. As they encourage the child’s talents and nurture a well-rounded character, they arrange for whatever support is needed — tutoring, tuition, transport —to improve their education.

In short, *Not Alone* addresses both immediate and long-term needs so that children develop academically, socially, and emotionally for success. The changes in Michael’s life show how, in *Not Alone*, all of this support aims to reach the goals of improving the child’s well-being and education, while nurturing a well-rounded character.

“God sent Coptic Orphans my way at the right time,” Michael said. “They told me, ‘We’ll take care of your educational costs and we’ll stay the course until the end.’ Thank God, during my senior year I scored 93.5% on the national exams. Then I enrolled in a mechanical engineering program in college.”

Today, Michael has a good job working for a mechanical company. By itself, this would qualify as a success. But if *Not*

“The most wonderful thing about *Not Alone* is its confidentiality and the dignity of each participant.”
— Mina, *Not Alone* participant, 2014



Through workshops, tutoring, and other encouragement to stay in school, *Not Alone* improves the education and well-being of the child and their family.

Here are the highlights of *Not Alone*’s impact in 2014:

560 participants exited the program along educational routes: 430 graduated from high school, 39 completed their studies at secondary school, and 91 graduated from university.

125 children overcame their educational shortcomings to become literate through *Not Alone*’s Rosetta six-month remedial reading initiative.

29 participants passed an exacting screening process, and 15 successfully renewed, to be awarded iNPower scholarships, our “in-house” grants aimed at allowing *Not Alone*’s highest academic achievers to attend higher-tier universities including Ain Shams, Cairo University, and Alexandria University.

6 other *Not Alone* participants earned ACCESS scholarships, which, by supporting intensive English tutoring, help them qualify for external scholarships to Egypt’s most prestigious institutions of higher education, such as the British University.

5 *Not Alone* participants were selected to receive the acclaimed LOTUS scholarship awarded by the U.S. Government to only 50 students in all of Egypt each year.

Alone supported children with only education and a job in mind, Michael’s story would have ended before it bore fruit.

Fortunately, *Not Alone* aims higher. Reps like George encourage each child to have a well-rounded personality, thinking of others first, valuing volunteerism, and behaving as leaders in their community.

The results of this mentoring are visible in Michael’s life. “I’m paying it forward,” he told us. “I want to bring joy and happiness to another family in *Not Alone*. Currently, I make regular visits to a mother with two kids, Beshoy and Dalia. I fell in love with these kids when I first met them. They’re full of ambition and joy despite their difficult circumstances.”

That’s the story of *Not Alone*, and the story of Michael. And, we hope, it will someday be the story of Egypt. For, as Michael said, Coptic Orphans “has started a historic change in Egypt. The simple people and poor people have the ability to do great things for Egypt.”

This is the promise of *Not Alone* — one we aim to fulfill, with you as our partner, in Coptic Orphans’ next 25 years.

*Names and images in this report have been changed to protect the privacy and dignity of the children.

Illiteracy, truancy, trauma, poverty, early marriage — our Church-based volunteers spent 2014 tackling challenges like these on a daily basis. For 25 years, these heroes have been the backbone of Coptic Orphans’ work in Egypt, spending their time and resources by mentoring and advocating for orphans.



Reps build a personal relationship of love and respect with each child entrusted into their care.

Each “Rep,” as the volunteers are called, comes to Coptic Orphans recommended by their bishop on the basis of their character. Their main duty, in coordination with our field staff, is to develop a personal relationship with each child in the *Not Alone* program in order to make a difference in the child’s life. There are over 400 Reps, and each handles, on average, about 20 such relationships.

Here’s how it works: Through regular visits with the child and his or her family, the Rep learns the challenges facing the child, as well as his or her talents and strengths. Using this knowledge, the Rep creates a specific plan for the child’s development.

For example, if a lack of basic necessities such as food is impeding the child’s progress in school, the Rep makes sure those necessities reach the family. If a child’s basic needs are met, but there are shortcomings with their education, the Rep connects the child with tutors and other resources. Moreover, the Rep strives to include the family in decision-making about how money is spent to meet their needs, and to equip mothers with skills in managing their finances. The Reps also

train the mothers in communication and positive reinforcement to increase family unity and happiness.

In short, each child is different, and the Reps address their specific needs with that in mind. In that process, Coptic Orphans works toward the independence of the child and family. While it is a privilege and a blessing to stand with them as they overcome their challenges, the absolute best thing for them and for us is the day when, through God’s grace, they no longer need us.

To ensure that the Reps are well-prepared for this work, we provide them with both an orientation and quarterly workshops in vital skills. The 2014 focus of *Not Alone* as a whole was on building a well-balanced character, which, along with improving education and promoting a sense of volunteerism, is an overarching program goal.

To better achieve this aim of nurturing the child’s well-rounded character, two of 2014’s quarterly trainings focused on mastering “the art of the home visit.” One of these covered active listening during the home visit — that is, skills to enhance the Reps’ ability to better understand the children and thereby gain their trust and respect. The other developed the topic of “languages” by which to express love while visiting, through offering helping hands, gifts, quality time, and encouraging words.

The Reps are volunteers, but their commitment goes far beyond that. In the darkest days of the church burnings, they showed their heroism, looking after their children despite threats and mobs. That bravery continued in 2014, despite the threats of violence still afflicting Egyptian society. We depend on the Reps, our backbone, who are rooted in the Church’s millennia-old tradition of service and sacrifice.



When a boy loses a father, *Not Alone* Reps provide a strong role model and a steady source of love and encouragement.

In 2014, five young men and women in our *Not Alone* program won prestigious LOTUS scholarships to attend some of Egypt’s finest private universities. This means that for two years in a row, Coptic Orphans participants — a tiny fraction of a huge number of students — beat enormous odds to win 10% of the entire year’s worth of LOTUS scholarships awarded in all of Egypt.

What lies behind this achievement, which is all the more meaningful in the year of our 25th anniversary? Naturally, the winners’ own intelligence and determination play a decisive role. But an equally important factor in determining their success is Coptic Orphans’ core strategy of using education to break the cycle of poverty.

Why have we chosen education as our focus for ending poverty? The best research available, which is the foundation of our work, shows a strong link between educational attainment and financial independence. In a study carried out by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, high poverty rates and low education had a significant correlation in Egypt. In fact, a college education reduced the chances of poverty by almost 30%.

This fundamental link between education and success is what drives Coptic Orphans’ core strategy, which in practical terms means coordinating all of our efforts to ensure our participants’ high academic achievement. This means that, while we champion success in school above all, we do so in a comprehensive way that encompasses all other aspects of our children’s lives. Housing, health, and basic life skills are essential to academic success, and cannot be neglected. We ensure that the basic needs of our children are met so that they’re in the best position possible to succeed in school, and then in life.

99% of our children graduate from their current class and continue their education

This is what makes Coptic Orphans different. Our goal is not to perpetuate the cycle of poverty by fostering dependence on handouts, but rather to equip our children with the education they need to take advantage of every opportunity. Thank you for being our partner in education. Here is a summary of what we achieved, working together, in 2014:

- High-quality education is key to our strategy, and because of that, we expanded our in-house scholarship, iNPower, to a total of 45 recipients in the academic year 2014-2015. iNPower scholarships are awarded to academically excellent *Not Alone* participants, enabling them to better afford attending Egypt’s upper-tier public universities. Unlike Egypt’s free university system, these more expensive universities offer smaller class sizes, distinguished professors, and higher post-graduation job placement rates. We are able to align the efforts of our *Not Alone*

program with the criteria for obtaining an iNPower scholarship. In doing so, we create a pipeline for our participants that takes them from primary school all the way to opportunities for a successful career.

- For the second year in a row, five of our participants were selected to receive the very prestigious LOTUS scholarship awarded by the U.S. Government. The LOTUS scholarship covers tuition and board for 50 youth selected from all over Egypt to attend some of the country’s best private universities. LOTUS winners are chosen primarily for their academic success and demonstrated leadership abilities. The fact that 10% of LOTUS recipients are *Not Alone* participants reflects our constant efforts to empower our children through workshops, tutoring, encouragement to take leadership roles, and consistent mentoring.
- A total of 430 *Not Alone* participants graduated from high school or vocational school, 39 graduated with an associate degree, and 91 graduated from university. These achievements in 2014 rested, as always, on the strength of our trustworthy team of volunteer Representatives, or “Reps.” To understand the importance of the role of the Rep for their kids, it is important to understand the cultural and social challenges that our *Not Alone* Program participants often face. While the Egyptian public school system extends to the rural villages and towns, the teachers are often underpaid and cannot support themselves without offering expensive private lessons. Often these teachers will refuse to teach the full extent of the material during assigned class time in order to force students to sign up for these lessons. This system then leaves it up to the families to decide whether the expensive private lessons — which have now become the only means to academic success in Egypt — are worth the investment. *Not Alone* participants come from families where the main breadwinner, the father, is not present. The rest is easy to guess — long-term investment in education is in danger of being trumped by the immediate needs of the family. Boys from these families drop out to find work to support the family and the girls are married off to ease the burden of having to support them. This is where Coptic Orphans and our Reps come in. Our Reps assess the needs of the families and ensure that basic needs are met, they arrange and pay for the private lessons, and most importantly, they constantly stress the importance of staying and succeeding in school.



“ Our education-focused programs open doors to scholarships. ”

Little Sisters learn from their Big Sisters, who befriend them and teach them new skills as part of the Valuable Girl Project.



Valuable Girl Project

It’s no small thing to break — or even bend — the cycles of violence and poverty that afflict families in Egypt. Imagine, then, a project that tackles those cycles by equipping young women with leadership skills and a better education. Now imagine that this project also effectively promotes tolerance among Christians and Muslims, and you’ve got the Valuable Girl Project.

In 2014, by God’s grace and with your partnership, the Valuable Girl Project marked 10 years of work to promote the academic retention, education, and literacy tutoring of girls and young women in high-poverty areas of Egypt. In these areas, young women are in constant danger of marrying early and dropping out of school.

The Valuable Girl Project uses one-on-one mentorship to support young women ages 7-22 in their efforts to stay in school and gain dignity at home, in the classroom, and in the community. Young women in secondary school are trained to be “Big Sisters” and role models for their “Little Sisters” in primary school. Local coordinators based in our community-level partner organizations oversee the project’s regular mentorship meetings and leadership skills-building activities.

The most innovative aspect of the Valuable Girl Project is that it serves both Christian and Muslim young women. The Big Sister-Little Sister relationships formed through the project build trust among people who might otherwise never cross community divides. “We’re one family,” one Big Sister said. “Last July, we celebrated the Apostles Feast together with our Muslim sisters,

who were fasting for Ramadan. We planned an iftar potluck, and everyone shared her favorite dish with her sisters.”

Why are these shared actions so important? In today’s world, Coptic Orphans has to do more than empower individual young women. Each girl’s individual success, and the progress of society as a whole, depends on raising the overall level of Christian-Muslim tolerance and understanding. The Valuable Girl Project, with its emphasis on education and bridge-building, is a step towards vitally important change.

Here are some of the 2014 highlights of the Valuable Girl Project:

- Muslim and Christian sisters at different sites exchanged home visits for the first time, particularly during religious holiday seasons.
- Several Big Sisters in Armant promised to visit their Little Sisters at home during exams to offer extra tutoring. They also committed to continuing their mentoring relationships beyond the project lifecycle, citing their pride in making a difference in another person’s life.
- Local coordinators for the Quos site overcame a great deal of initial reluctance on the part of parents to let their daughters take part. As a result of the spreading “word on the street” about the project’s positive impact, parents began coming to the site to ask if their daughters could join.
- In Sohag, the change in the Big Sisters and Little Sisters over the past year was so remarkable that their mothers asked if they could do anything to help perpetuate the project.



Working on shared projects brings Big Sisters and Little Sisters together in the Valuable Girl Project.

2014 Valuable Girl Project Sites

- Lower Egypt: El Amir Tadros Social Center, Port Said
- Upper Egypt: Al Masry for Development and Training, Armant
IDAM, Mattay
Association of Love and Peace for Development, Sohag
The Christian Peace Association, Quos

B’edaya

Every day in Egypt, smart women — aspiring entrepreneurs — face challenges that would shred most people like a dry leaf in a wood chipper. For starters, most women there contend with crushing sexism and soaring inflation.

But Egypt’s widows face even huger challenges. Traditions severely restrict them. Often, they can’t leave the house to work and put bread on the table. That’s even if their children are malnourished.

B’edaya is a microfinance initiative designed to handle exactly these hostile conditions. It tailors small loans for mothers of orphans in our *Not Alone* program, allowing them to start a business in anything from animal husbandry to selling groceries. The aim is to help them secure an income, more ability to feed their children, and more control of their lives.

Of the 30 mothers in Sohag, Minya, Alexandria, Monofiyya, and Cairo in B’edaya in 2014, only one was unable to make her loan repayments. In Egypt’s harsh climate, how is that possible?

First of all, in B’edaya, the widow herself must bring to the table positive qualities, such as creativity and perseverance. In turn, Coptic Orphans must provide coaching in everything from planning to budgeting.

This sets B’edaya apart from so many other charity and development approaches. Unquestionably, the loan and the income it generates are good things. But the loan is only a means for each mother to harness her inner drive and abilities, and in the process, be transformed.

This aimed-for transformation from helpless, house-bound widow to self-sufficient businesswoman is the opposite of traditional charity, which (even if well-intentioned) creates a dependency on handouts.

B’edaya’s results speak for themselves. All 29 mothers now run their own businesses, which range from a photo studio to a hair salon.

Tamkeen

“We used to be shy girls who withdrew from participating in community activities and didn’t face our problems — in fact, we were never even aware of our own community’s problems.”

That’s a quote from one of the young women participating in Tamkeen, a Coptic Orphans project that nurtures female voices, especially in rural Egypt. Tamkeen’s former “shy girls” did some incredible things in 2014, tackling issues ranging from “child brides” to urban blight, from illiteracy to sexual harassment.

Tamkeen, which is funded by USAID, operates at three governorates in Minya, Sohag, and Assiut. Many parts of these governorates have staggering rates of poverty. At the same time, they have hard-working community development associations that have become our valued partners. Tamkeen helps them with capacity-building and makes small grants for activities that encourage young women to get involved in their communities.

Tamkeen’s current overall goals are to increase the civic engagement of female youth ages 6-23 and support community development associations and youth outreach activities. The program aims to include new, and often unheard, voices on local levels while

Moreover, this impact goes beyond material things. It encourages greater self-worth. A B’edaya participant whose daughter is enrolled in our *Not Alone* program told us,

“Being involved with Coptic Orphans has meant this to me: Now I’m proud of my daughter as never before, and it’s made my daughter proud of me.”

B’edaya succeeds for many reasons, especially the resilience of Egypt’s widows. But it also succeeds because it doesn’t focus on these women’s weaknesses — instead, it harnesses their strengths. That’s the key to success.



B’edaya participants gain the pride that comes with starting a successful business and achieving economic independence.

addressing the issues that impede their participation in civic life. Tamkeen also focuses on building participants’ leadership skills, enabling them to create broad-based civic education campaigns in their communities. A final key component of Tamkeen is building the institutional capacities of the community development associations with which we partner.

Now that the foundations have been laid for these young women to participate in public life, Coptic Orphans is looking forward to working even more closely with our partner organizations. As for the young women themselves, they are the real heroes — the “shy girls” who are speaking up for a better future for themselves, their communities, and Egypt!

Here are Tamkeen’s key 2014 accomplishments:

- 40 community development associations, all partners of Coptic Orphans, came together in Assiut to exchange experience and lessons learned during Tamkeen’s initial phase.
- Tamkeen coordinators and external capacity-building consultants trained the staff of these 40 partner associations, building their institutional capacity to engage nearly 3,000 young women in a series of civic education and women’s empowerment activities.

Old friends and new allies were key in 2014, the year Coptic Orphans stepped forward decisively into a widening network of relationships around the globe.

With the aim of better serving God and the children, we deepened our ties with the clergy, leaders in Christian development organizations, artists with Christian and Egyptian roots, thought leaders in academia, advocates for persecuted religious minorities, and officials in Egypt’s diplomatic community.

In 2014, as in all years, our staff spent weeks on the road, presenting at churches. So many clergymen blessed us with gracious hospitality that it was wonderful to be able to welcome them ourselves. Our headquarters near Washington, D.C. was honored to receive visits from H.G. Bishop Biemen, H.G. Bishop Benyamin, H.G. Bishop Dawoud, H.G. Bishop Marterious, Fr. Mauritius Anba Bishoy, Fr. Domadious Rizk, Fr. Athanasius Mahrous, Fr. Mark Aziz, Fr. Abraham Azmy, Fr. John Paul Abdelsayed, and Fr. Anthony Messeh.

“ 2014 was a year for deepening ties with other Christian organizations. ”

The company of these clergymen, and the wisdom they shared, added to the blessing of His Holiness’ presence at our 25th Anniversary Gala in Canada, as well as the attendance of other clergy there and at the galas in the U.S. and Australia. These encounters, coupled with countless meetings with priests and bishops throughout Egypt, reinforced our guidance by, and gratitude for, the leadership of the Church.

Another key relationship that grew deeper in 2014 was with leaders in the movement to protect religious minorities in the Middle East. To bear witness for our brothers and sisters in Christ, Coptic Orphans spoke in Washington, D.C. at the Sept. 9-11 inaugural summit of In Defense of Christians. The IDC is a non-profit, non-partisan organization whose mission is to heighten awareness among policymakers and the general public of the existence of persecuted minority communities in the Middle East, particularly Christians. At the summit, it was a blessing to share the stage with H.G. Bishop Angaelos, who delivered a powerful keynote address. Our presentation covered the need to strengthen and spotlight the positive work done by Christian schools, hospitals, and aid organizations.



Renowned scientist Dr. Farouk El-Baz receives the Leading by Example Award at the Coptic Orphans 25th Anniversary Gala in Reston, VA on Oct. 11, 2014.

2014 was also a year for deepening ties with other Christian organizations. Besides cooperating with Care 4 Needy Copts to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters in Egypt, Coptic Orphans responded to Compassion International’s invitation to take part in a conference in the United Kingdom. The conference marked the start of many productive relationships and allowed us to learn from Compassion’s decades of experience as a Christian child-sponsorship organization.

In the realm of academia, Coptic Orphans took part in The Global Diaspora Media Forum, which was co-sponsored by IdEA, The George Washington University School of Business, and AudioNow. Coptic Orphans’ contributions were to the Oct. 14 panel “Conversing with the Diaspora: Transnational Socio-Cultural Engagement through Media,” which was moderated by Dr. Jennifer Brinkerhoff. We were also proud to present our Leading by Example Award to renowned former NASA scientist Dr. Farouk El-Baz, a member of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi’s Advisory Council, who is strongly influential in academic and scientific circles.

To show our pride in our rich Christian and Egyptian cultural heritage, Coptic Orphans took an active role in the Ana Masry concert in Washington, D.C., and the Better Life concert series in New York City, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, and Toronto. All six concerts were wonderful reminders of how our community comes together around music, and we’re grateful that so many concert-goers decided to sponsor children.

Lastly, 2014 was a year of increasing connections between Coptic Orphans and Egypt’s diplomatic corps. The most heartening manifestation of that connection came at our galas. In Canada, we were honored to have a speech by His Excellency Amin Meleika, Egypt’s Consul General in Montreal. In the United States, we were similarly honored by Mr. Ayman Aldesouky Youssef, the Consul General in Washington, D.C. In Australia, the gala hosted no fewer than three diplomats: Mr. Youssef Hassan Shawki, Consul General in Sydney, Mr. Ahmed Farid Morsy, Vice Consul in Sydney, and His Excellency Mahmoud Zayed, Egypt’s Ambassador to New Zealand. We were also honored that His Excellency Mahmoud Zayed invited Coptic Orphans to visit New Zealand, where he offered insights on how to work together more closely to benefit the children of Egypt.

It’s been said before, and it bears repeating: Coptic Orphans does nothing on its own. Everything we accomplish takes place within a web of relationships. As we move forward, behind the leadership of the Church and with your generous support, we share the vision of an Egypt where children will thrive. The stronger friendships and



Executive Director Nermien Riad addresses the inaugural summit of In Defense of Christians in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 10, 2014.

alliances that we forged in 2014 are a sign that our next 25 years — God willing — will be a period of even greater service to Him and the children.

With that vision in mind, we look forward to celebrating our 50th anniversary with you, our valued partners!



H.G. Bishop Biemen of Naqada and Qous blesses Coptic Orphans’ staff by visiting the Washington, D.C.-area headquarters on Oct. 31, 2014.



Serve to Learn volunteers come to Egypt from all over the world to experience a shared love of God alongside the children — and to inspire the kids with their passion for learning!

Serve to Learn’s 2014 trip reminded us how, in the words of His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, “you won’t find anything more beautiful” than young people serving their brothers and sisters in Christ in Egypt.

This unique program, through which young Copts living abroad benefit Egypt’s communities by volunteering in the motherland, ties the youth more strongly to their Church and cultural heritage.

Over Serve to Learn’s 11 years of existence, nearly 190 volunteers have served by teaching English skills and providing character-building mentoring to more than 5,800 young Egyptians. Volunteers on the July 5-24, 2014 trip hailed from Canada, Australia, and the United States. Together, they taught almost 500 children.

In fact, 2014 was a year of firsts for Serve to Learn. One of the most exciting was that Abouna Dawood Lamey delivered a beautiful spiritual orientation for the volunteers. The biggest milestone, however, was that the volunteers were even blessed with a special meeting called by His Holiness.

“Pope Tawadros was incredibly warm and kind to us,” said Mirelle Botros, one of the volunteers who met with His

Holiness in St. Mark’s Cathedral on July 12. “It was exciting to hear him encourage us and other Copts around the world to visit Egypt and serve the children.”

His Holiness’ words were especially energizing because Serve to Learn was founded on the belief that a strong and vibrant spirit of volunteerism can connect all Copts, benefiting communities, families, and the Church in Egypt and all over the world.

The 2014 volunteers reported that the trip made them feel more connected to Egypt, stirred their spirit of service, and deepened their dedication to their cultural roots.

“I thought the trip covered many great aspects. It helped me appreciate my Coptic Church more than ever, even though I grew up in Egypt. It helped me feel the importance of service. I also felt extremely loved by the kids, and I also learned how to function with love with a group of other servants,” said John Eskandar, a 2014 volunteer who also took part in three previous Serve to Learn trips.

We are committed to connecting Copts living abroad to Egypt, and 2014 was further evidence that Serve to Learn offers life-changing experiences that build lasting relationships. In fact, using the success of the 2014 trip as a springboard, preparations are well under way for two Serve to Learn sessions in 2015!

Serve to Learn 2014 ‘In Our Own Words’

“Spending the summer with people in Egypt, I experienced hospitality like I never have before. I experienced generosity and love like I never have before. We were perfect strangers, and yet they treated us like the closest family. People there may not have much in material objects or money, but they have the love of Christ and it overflows.” — Mina Ebied

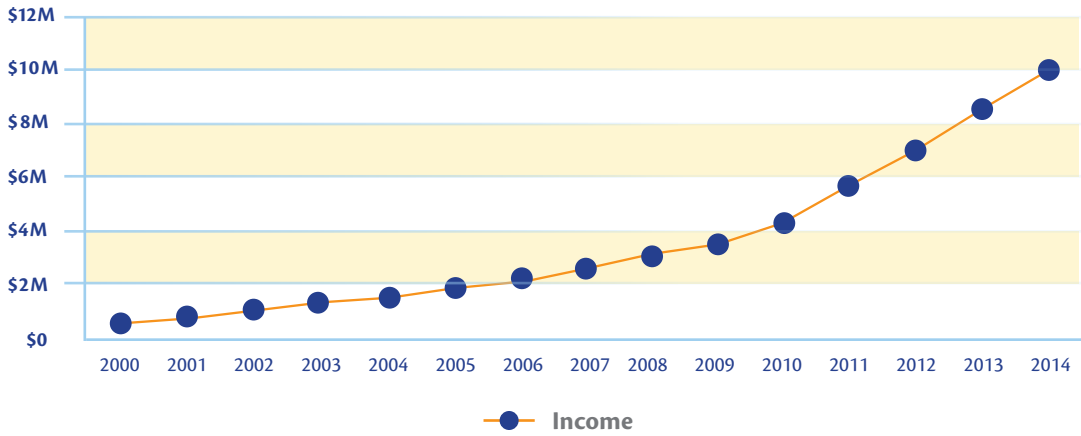
“One of my favorite stories is about Marina. After doing Serve to Learn for three years, and having her in my class from the very beginning, I saw a difference between her and her siblings in her attitude towards higher education. Her older sister dropped out and decided that she just wanted to get married, while Marina, who is a few years younger than her, decided that this life was not what she wanted. When I asked her why, she said: ‘You told me two years ago I’m really bright, and that I should go to college... I took that very seriously.’” — Veronika Tadross

Statements of Activities
Years Ended December 31, 2014 and 2013

Audit reports for 2013 and 2014 prepared by
SQUIRE, LEMKIN + COMPANY LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

	2014			2013		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted*	Total	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT						
Contributions	\$ 8,507,138	\$ 187,749	\$ 8,694,887	\$ 8,124,045	\$ 244,407	\$ 8,368,452
Grant income	\$ -	\$ 667,798	\$ 667,798			\$ -
Interest income and Investment income / Other income	\$ 555,462		\$ 555,462	\$ 101,276		\$ 101,276
Net assets released from restrictions	\$ 611,968	\$ (611,968)	\$ -	\$ 415,606	\$ (415,606)	\$ -
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	\$ 9,674,568	\$ 243,579	\$ 9,918,147	\$ 8,640,927	\$ (171,199)	\$ 8,469,728
EXPENSES:						
Program services:						
Child Development Program	\$ 5,583,066		\$ 5,583,066	\$ 4,460,223		\$ 4,460,223
Community development Program	\$ 756,832		\$ 756,832	\$ 663,348		\$ 663,348
Total Program Services	\$ 6,339,898		\$ 6,339,898	\$ 5,123,571	\$ -	\$ 5,123,571
Supporting services						
Management and general	\$ 270,077		\$ 270,077	\$ 379,753		\$ 379,753
Fundraising	\$ 652,097		\$ 652,097	\$ 408,628		\$ 408,628
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 7,262,072	\$ -	\$ 7,262,072	\$ 5,911,952	\$ -	\$ 5,911,952
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 2,412,496	\$ 243,579	\$ 2,656,075	\$ 2,728,975	\$ (171,199)	\$ 2,557,776
Change in currency valuation	\$ (241,083)		\$ (241,083)	\$ (325,272)		\$ (325,272)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 2,171,413	\$ 243,579	\$ 2,414,992	\$ 2,403,703	\$ (171,199)	\$ 2,232,504
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 8,931,302	\$ 826,110	\$ 9,757,412	\$ 6,527,599	\$ 997,309	\$ 7,524,908
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR ¹	\$ 11,102,715	\$ 1,069,689	\$ 12,172,404	\$ 8,931,302	\$ 826,110	\$ 9,757,412

Coptic Orphans Contribution Chart



Audited Financial Statements are public and available upon request.

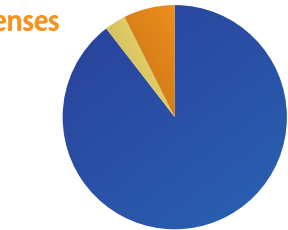
* Most of our “temporarily restricted assets” are related to a USAID grant to serve our children in Egypt.

¹ Because Coptic Orphans places the highest value on serving the children despite any crisis that might strike Egypt or the countries of the Coptic Diaspora, we maintain a 12-month reserve of operating expenses (listed under “Net Assets”). This ensures we will be there for the children no matter what.



This year, Charity Navigator – North America’s largest independent evaluator of nonprofit financial effectiveness and accountability – again gave Coptic Orphans its highest four-star rating for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

Expenses



- 90% Total Program Services
- 3% Management & General
- 7% Fundraising

Key Financial Information

- For every dollar you donate, we use only 7 cents for fundraising and 3 cents for management and administration. As part of our commitment to accountability, 90 cents goes directly to serving the children in Egypt.
- Unrestricted revenue increased by \$1,034,000, or 12% over FY 2013.
- Program-related expenses increased by \$1,216,327, or 23% over FY 2013.

Sponsor a Child Today

His Holiness Pope Tawadros II meets with the Serve to Learn team and Coptic Orphans staff at St. Mark's Cathedral, July 12, 2014.



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