



## Finding Freedom through Friendship and Presbyterian Women

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### ***Unite to Inspire, Transform and Sustain Lives of Poor Widows***

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Today, FFF is thrilled to announce the award of \$44,000 from the *Creative Ministries Offering Committee of Presbyterian Women*. The funds will be used to provide nutrition, education, healthcare & health education, clothing, spiritual growth, lodging enhancement and microbusiness for a minimum of 4 and up to approximately 10 widows in Egypt depending on the level of provisions essential for each family.

*Finding Freedom through Friendship (FFF)*, a non-profit organization established in 2009, empowers widows and their children in endemic deprivation to reverse the yoke of poverty through provision of shelter, health, nutrition, education and economic skills for long-term sustainability for the individual and the community.

Poverty is one of the horrific challenges facing the world today. The impact of poverty propagates into other areas such as illiteracy, unemployment, violence, malnutrition and health diseases. Women, especially widows are most vulnerable because of prevailing patriarchal culture depriving them from equal opportunities, security and safety. *Finding Freedom through Friendship (FFF)* recognizes empowerment is necessary to reduce destitution and decrease the gap of gender and social inequality.

In August of 2017, FFF expanded into Egypt. Of the 4 women enrolled in August, one especially touched our heart – Eman Mahrous. We refer to Eman as our “bridal suite” mom. Eman is a member of the local church and lives in the slums of Cairo, Egypt. Eman was struggling with inadequate nutrition, poor health and no education for her and her two young sons. Her small 3-room lodging had a non-working hole for a toilet and a bucket for cold showers. The family was at risk for pathogenic illnesses, exacerbated by the intense interior heat of the apartment. A third child was past due on the day we visited as no hospital would perform a C-section due to lack of *funds*.

On the spot FFF paid for the safe delivery of baby Batul – our first Egyptian baby girl in the program! In the supplies provided, FFF delivers monthly food, tutors the children, pays for medical care and has refurbished the apartment. Eman named her “new” home the “bridal suite” and thus Eman as our “bridal suite” mom. We are currently establishing a microbusiness for her to sell grains for chickens and other small animals. She will graduate from the program in 2019 with the ability to sustain her living standard. Moreover, Eman has gained freedom, confidence and dignity.

Eman’s story is typical of widows in Egypt, Guatemala and other developing countries. The absence of a male intensifies the poverty, lack of education, health care, food, discrimination and lack of security. Yet, with the provision of basic needs, widows *and their children can reverse the yoke of poverty*. Currently FFF supports 34 mothers and 139 youth. As to date, we have built or renovated 27 homes! In 2017, we had two graduates, a nurse and a lawyer. As of March 25<sup>th</sup>, FFF enrolled 8 additional Egyptian widows.

The award from the Presbyterian Women will begin a journey of hope for several more women and their children. In Christ, we will walk together to ***Inspire, Empower and Sustain*** these families.

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