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*Coptic Orphans is a Pioneer Among Nonprofits in Rapid Response to Crisis*

FAIRFAX, Virginia -- Coptic Orphans, a nonprofit dedicated to helping fatherless children in Egypt, has jumped out well ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virus has devastated the world on multiple fronts, hurting both the physical wellbeing and financial security of wide swaths of humanity. The children served by Coptic Orphans are especially vulnerable, as their departed fathers were the sole breadwinners for the family.

To continue serving these vulnerable children, the organization has altered its operation, utilizing innovative methods to stay in contact with the children they serve while protecting the health of everyone involved.

The Egypt field office remains in constant communication with a grassroots network of community-based volunteers who visit local children. The organization has scaled back house visits, though In-person advances in financial aid are made available to families in case of a lock-down of the local area. Most of the visits, however, are now conducted via telephone and communication apps, with volunteers focused on disseminating health and hygiene information provided by the Egyptian government.

While the children wait out the virus in their homes, Coptic Orphans has made plans to ensure they will be able to continue their education. Egyptian schools have been shuttered for the rest of the academic year, and students are expected to complete research projects from home in lieu of taking year-end exams. This places tremendous strain on poorer children who lack the resources to continue their studies in-house.

The organization has invested in purchasing internet service for households for remote learning, and trained volunteers have organized online tutoring sessions so that disadvantaged children are not left behind this school year.

“A good charity must always be able to adapt to conditions on the ground,” said Coptic Orphans Executive Director Nermien Riad. “We recognized that COVID-19 posed a threat to our operations in Egypt, and we knew we had to act quickly and think outside the box in order to ensure the children continue to receive the type of care they’ve come to expect from Coptic Orphans. I would say that 95 percent of our operations in Egypt are continuing unaffected because we were so quick to adapt.”

The organization has offices in four countries – Egypt, Australia, Canada and the USA – and was able to move each office to remote operation well in advance of any local lock-down ordinances.

*Coptic Orphans is an award-winning international Christian development organization that has transformed the lives of over 55,000 children in Egypt since 1988. We believe that through long-term programs that focus on education, we can affect the vicious cycle of poverty. To learn more, visit <http://www.copticorphans.org>.*