

NEWS LETTER SUMMER 2014

"Self-help groups offer Kyrgyz elderly a lifeline"

With 40 years of experience raising rabbits, the 62-year-old bushy bearded Michel Demchenko seems a perfect fit as leader of the rabbit-breeding support group appropriately named Pushok (fluff). The head of the beekeeping group, Pchelka (bee), is the 56-year-old Sergey Podlesnyi, who has been working with bees since 1982.

Pushok and Pchelka are just two of the 30 self-help groups that Babushka Adoption supports in the Chui Province and Batken District of the Kyrgyz Republic. Babushka Adoption (BA) initiated self-help groups in 2006 to help the elderly generate income and improve their standard of living. Through charitable donations, BA provides funding for the groups to purchase supplies for their businesses and helps them plan and implement their various projects successfully. Ninety-two percent of seniors live below the poverty line in the Kyrgyz Republic. Without a support system to rely on in retirement, BA's self-help groups give seniors a way to earn a little extra income. And being part of a self-help group means receiving support, hands-on training, and business advice.



The elderly in the Kyrgyz Republic are often overlooked; especially since close to 68 percent of them live in rural areas. Through financial and social support, BA self-help groups promote social responsibility and advocate for the elderly on the local level. Plus, the groups offer retirees the opportunity to socialize and become integrated into their community.

"The attitude of Babushka Adoption is that they really want to help people and they treat them well," said Demchenko. "When someone is helped, they in turn want to help someone else."

We would like to ask you, our sponsors, if you could suggest or help us reach some newspapers/mass media abroad, where we could publish articles or stories about Babushka Adoption. Such publications will help us involve more sponsors. We would be happy to hear of any opportunities to be published in the foreign mass media. Thank you very much for your attention in advance!

Sincerely, Babushka Adoption team.

