

Granny Bulletin

December 21, 2006

Good afternoon!

We are happy to send you the latest Granny Bulletin! We have had so many encouraging inquiries from grannies across the country after CBC aired "*Stephen Lewis: The Man Who Couldn't Sleep*" on *The Nature of Things with David Suzuki*, on December 6th. Accordingly, we have connected many of those grannies to established and thriving granny groups in their communities, and we thank you for welcoming them to the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign!

This Granny Bulletin contains more detailed information on some of the projects supporting grandmothers in Africa and the kinds of assistance to them which your efforts make possible. We wanted to give you some concrete examples of just how far your donations go toward helping to ease the pain of HIV/AIDS in Africa. The projects included in this bulletin represent only a small sample of the many incredible projects (amongst them many who support grandmothers and the orphans in their care) supported by the Foundation across sub-Saharan Africa.

The first section of this bulletin contains more general summaries of a few of the different projects, while the second section of the bulletin provides further details of the amount of funding going to specific projects. All of the projects included here support grandmothers.

We are also pleased to share the latest issue of our Grassroots Newsletter, which contains stories and pictures from the Grandmothers Gathering in August, as well as up-to-date information about specific projects benefiting from your continued and unwavering support and resourcefulness! If you have not yet received a copy of the Grassroots Newsletter and would like one, please send an email to campaign@stephenlewisfoundation.org. The newsletter is also available on our website at www.stephenlewisfoundation.org.

We are now, as always, incredibly encouraged by your commitment to grandmothers in Africa. We know that our gratitude and theirs cannot be expressed adequately. We continue to meet the trust you have placed in us, and each of us at the Foundation is honoured to stand with you as part of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign.

Best regards,
Julie

PS. If you missed the broadcast of "*Stephen Lewis: The Man Who Couldn't Sleep*" on December 6th, CBC will re-broadcast it on December 29th (8pm EST), December 30th (6am EST), and December 31st (7pm EST).

A message from Ilana...

Dear grandmothers,

We know that many of you are receiving this as the information-dissemination person within your group. We know you will ensure that all of the grandmothers in your group will receive this and other bulletins. If you would like us to send the bulletins directly to the others in your group, please send their contact information to Julie, and we'll happily take this on for you. We are anxious for all of the grandmothers involved to receive the latest Grassroots Newsletter, since it contains quite a bit on the Gathering! Thank you for playing a coordinating role in all of this, it is deeply appreciated.

Warmly, Ilana

Community Asset Building Development Programme (CABDA)
Country: Kenya
Community: Kakamega
Project: Support to HIV/AIDS Orphans and Guardians

The project seeks to support 180 orphans that have been left behind by parents who have died of HIV/AIDS; and women guardians that are looking after these orphans in the Kaptech Sub Location of East Tiriki. The main objective of this project is to provide food and school uniforms for the orphans and to train guardians in business management. It is expected that the profits from the small businesses set up by the women guardians will be used to meet the needs of those under their care.

With help from the Stephen Lewis Foundation CABDA seeks to target two areas of need including: 1) Orphan and 2) Guardian support.

1. Orphan Support

Those children whose parents have died of HIV/AIDS and who are living with guardians are provided with food i.e. maize and beans. At the end of every month, guardians and those under their care meet as group. Here each guardian gives a report on the progress of the orphans they are taking care of in their homes. As well, they have counseling sessions and receive advice from relevant government ministries, NGO's and pastors in the area. At the beginning of the year, the orphans are given a school uniform from the project. Once the guardians' businesses become viable they use the profits to meet the basic need of the orphans.

2. Support to Guardians

60 female guardians (3 groups of 20) are supported by this project. The women are trained in business management and given a small loan. Each woman that has received a loan is required to save a small amount of the profit once the business starts. After 12 months the loan is then repaid back to CABDA with a small interest. This money is then used to establish a revolving loan so CABDA can continue to provide loans to other guardians or provide a second loan to guardians who may need it.

Consol Homes Orphan Care

Country: Malawi

Community: Namitet

Project: Social economic and academic support for orphans and grandmothers

“Our hearts bleed for a 10 year old Malawian girl in Lilongwe who was defiled by her father and infected her with the HIV virus. Sources say that the alleged man defiled the daughter and infected her with the deadly virus. It is further said the man has been on Anti- retroviral drugs as he deliberately defiled the girl. The man has since threatened the daughter with severe beatings, if she dare talk about her ordeal. He has also threatened to shoot dead anyone who goes to his house and make any enquiries on the matter. There is a silent misconception among some men that sleeping with young girls cures them of the dreaded HIV/AIDS” The orphans Newsletter: Consol homes Orphan care

Consol Homes was established to promote community participation in the care of orphans and other vulnerable children for their social economic and academic advancement. Consol Homes aims to provide holistic care and support and its unique activities include:

- Strengthening the orphan affairs unit by providing educational support (i.e. school fees and uniforms) for 40 orphans. It will also offer 40 communal gardens of 1 acre each. The OAU is a group of young orphans who provide care and support for one another as well as the community. They actively participate in the running of Consol Homes through fundraising activities to pay for community needs. They support elderly community members by doing housework and maintenance. Consol Homes targets 6 villages, each with its own OAU. Consol Homes strengthens the capacity of each OAU by providing them a self-help center to be created based on the specific needs of each community. Centers provide much needed services such as vocation training, IGA, etc.
- Providing support for Widows and Grannies. Funding for this group helps provide training sessions for income generating activities and the start up capital necessary to get projects off the ground. The project provides poultry livestock for 300 households and craft materials for nearly 20 clubs.
- Providing community home based care that is reliant on trained volunteers from the community. In order to support them the project provides a patient care-kit and a bicycle for transportation. The kit includes items such as soap, disposable gloves, cotton wool, painkillers and bandages.
- Initiating Community Based Child Care (CBCC), that provides a secure and stimulating environment for early childhood development. This project also provides food supplements for the children at the CBCCs, since many of the parents lack the resources sufficient to provide for their children.

Kukumbi- Organization for Rural Development

Country: Mozambique

Community: Kukumbi

Project: Journey of Life

A considerable number of children in the world and in Africa in general (Mozambique in particular) are growing without the care of their parents (mother and father), and important people to support their full growth. The eternal absence of parents and the lack of care and guidance has unforeseen consequences. Apart from material issues, the most important is the building and development of the child's personality. The community is also not effectively prepared to cope with this new situation of orphaned children in the context of HIV/AIDS and as a result the emotional and/or psychological support of children is unbalanced. It is important for people and organizations' involved in the work with OVC to better understand and take into account the aspects and needs for mental development of the child.

Kukumbi is a national rural development organization whose mission is to reduce absolute poverty and promote economic and social stability in the rural communities, through participation and support of impoverished groups in the rural areas facilitating their access to basic services such as health, education, environment and social reinsertion services.

With help from the SLF, Kukumbi is spearheading a project whose two main objectives include:

- Reducing the psychological and economic impact of HIV/AIDS and to improve the quality of life of orphans and vulnerable children, women household heads and people living with HIV/AIDS in Zabezia province, Mozambique. KUKUMBI will seek to strengthen the psychological level of OVCs and PLWAs to positively manage their current situation in the context of HIV/AIDS. Also the organization will diversify the resources of OVC, women household heads and PLWAs income to improve their conditions via micro-credit business loans
- Reducing the new infection rates of HIV/AIDS amongst orphan and vulnerable children, and women household heads by increasing the knowledge of children affected by HIV/AIDS and orphan children and other community children on prevention behaviour, attitudes and practices related to HIV/AIDS.

Catholic AIDS Action (CAA)

Country: Namibia

Community: Windhoek

“But what about the 30-40 per cent of African children who do not attend school? Thanks to the brilliant intervention of the World Bank and the International Monetary fund, the doors to primary school were slammed shut for millions of African children back in the 80s. That’s when these Big Boys of finance, during their Reignite phase of enforcing structural adjustment programs, insisted that African governments impose school tuition fees. The legacy of this stupidity is that now, when the hopeful and healing support of school is so important, the way is barred for soaring numbers of AIDS orphans (And then too, the teachers are sick, absent and dying. In Zambia for example, 1000 new teacher’s graduate every year – and 2,000 other teachers die.”

Catholic Aids Acton is Namibia's first church-based response to the country's HIV/AIDS crisis, which had already reached pandemic proportions. It has since grown to be the largest NGO responding to AIDS in Namibia, currently operating 14 offices in 9 of the 13 regions. Working closely with local parishes and faith communities, the work and mission of Catholic AIDS Action has four principal focuses: home-based family care and counseling, youth education and prevention, care and support to orphans and vulnerable children, and voluntary counseling and testing. Services are available to all, irrespective of religion, race or background with a preferential option for the very poorest affected by this pandemic.

Grants from the Stephen Lewis Foundation aid in several areas including Community Outreach, Counseling, Home based Care training and schooling fees. The following are details regarding the funding of caregivers:

- Providing training, motivation, supervision and support to 7 groups of volunteers comprising 130 persons. Part of the training that volunteers receive for the provision of psycho-social supports includes advocacy issues concerning children's rights (especially issues of child abuse, and school attendance at primary-grade level), normal and abnormal child development, the role of spirituality, and the importance of experiential learning: to have fun in ways that build resiliency and coping skills for the future.
- Directly assisting a minimum of 350 client families in their own homes through home based care and support, counseling and material support. The philosophy of the CAA is rooted in a client-centered approach that seeks to build on existing resources within the family and community at large. Currently CAA has 1500 active volunteers providing services for over 5,000 HIV + clients and their family members and support systems. Support often included counseling, practical assistance with household chores such as cooking and cleaning, and encouragement to "live positively" through good nutrition with locally available foods, talking openly about one's HIV status and preventing the infections further spread. Referrals for medical intervention are made in conjunction with local church and government health institutions. Volunteers also act to provide key information and awareness about the availability of voluntary counseling and testing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission and anti-retroviral treatment.
- Providing supervision and support for 1500 orphans and vulnerable children. The most important aspect of the work that the Catholic AIDS Action does with its registered orphans and vulnerable children is to provide psycho-social support.

Canadian Support of Rural African Initiatives (Mkuki)
Country: Tanzania
Community: Kilimanjaro
Project: Orphan Care and Capacity Building Initiative

One of the orphans who was schooling at Njia Panda primary school is HIV+. She was assisted with the school uniforms and she lives with her grandmother who is very old. She has been trying to study hard and eventually she passed her end of primary school level examination. She was selected to join Muungano secondary school. The secondary school has both day and boarding facilities and it is situated 3.5 kilometers from her home. She cannot walk all this distance as she is still weak and cannot afford bus fare. MKUKI is planning to consult the secondary school administration so that she can be given boarding facilities and stay at school. Plans are also underway to refer her for ARV's" annual report

Mkuki is a community based Tanzanian organization that was started in 1993 by a group of concerned volunteers who saw HIV/AIDS striking every aspect of their community. As a rural community they received minimal government support as limited government resources were directed to urban areas. Although MKUKI is based in Himo a rural town it is also on major transport rout which has caused an accelerated

spread of HIV in their region and a current esteemed incidence of infection of 16% of the adult population well above the national average of 8%.

With help from the Stephen Lewis Foundation MKUKI is pursuing the following tasks:

- Conducting HIV/AIDS prevention and education outreach activities that address specific needs based on gender and age in rural Tanzania. A participatory seminar is designed and delivered for women and youth on HIV/AIDS prevention and legal rights while another one addresses the specific needs of men;
- Supporting PLWHA through regular home visits and counseling and education. Mkuki conducts in house technical training in farming, mechanics, carpentry and sewing to provide orphans with marketable skills that will insure their self-sufficiency. Training also includes small business skills training;
- Providing educational support to orphans in order to ensure their self-sufficiency through extensive skill training programs and formal education. Mkuki provides 35 orphans with education support and 200 orphans with nutritional meals in school every year;
- Providing income generating training to caregivers of orphans. These guardians are often frail grandparents, widows who are HIV positive, as well as young teens who are left alone as head of households to their younger siblings. The farming program provides guardians with land seeds and training. The crops produce generates income and food for the guardians and their children with some crop income also returned to sustain MKUKI programming. From 20-50 family units benefit from this program annually.

Kitovu Mobile AIDS Home Care and Orphans Project (MAHCOP)

Country: Uganda

Community: Masaka, Rakai, Ssembabule Districts

Project: Grandmothers Project

The Grandmothers are living under absolute poverty and its associated problems plus lack of holistic care. They often experience trauma and distress, which affects social life, work performance and as a result they have lost hope and dignity. Despite the burden carried by these grandmothers, there is no direct support that is intended to relieve them. They always live under stress and isolation and nobody wants to share with them. They always live far apart with their peers and can hardly interact. This has not only affected them, but it also has a trickle down effect on the orphans that they live with. There is hardly any initiative directly focusing on the elderly in our operation areas. Care and support for grandmothers is one key avenue that needs to be focused on, on top of other activities that MAHCOP implements with a holistic approach.

Kitovu Mobile AIDS Home Care, Counseling and Orphans program (MAHCOP) is located on the outskirts of the town of Masaka in Masaka District in Uganda. The areas served by the Program lack quality water supplies, substantial housing, schools, etc. The program was established in 1987 caring for people living with HIV/AIDS within the confines of their homes and the community environment. There are now over 750 community volunteers working on the project. The program is currently involved in the following activities: home care for PLWHA; orphan/family support including Formal/Tertiary education plus training teenage

school dropouts in sustainable modern organic agriculture through the Mobile Farm Schools (MFS) and psychosocial support including counseling and training plus HIV/AIDS awareness and behaviour change.

Over the past three years, grants from the Stephen Lewis Foundation helps in many different areas including schooling fees for orphans, counseling and capacity building, treatment related aid, educational support, community outreach, and nutrition. MAHCOP's most current project focuses on providing 100 Grandmothers with the follow:

- Food supplements and other nutritional requirements (i.e. rice, powdered milk, soy flower etc.);
- Family visits by counselors help to assess socio-economic conditions, and provide additional help as needed;
- Repair and construction of at least 10 houses belonging to grandmothers;
- The construction of Pit Latrines;
- Medical Care through routine health examinations and medicines for the caregivers;
- Facilitation of four or more capacity building and life enriching workshops, by providing bereavement counseling and organizes social interactions for the grandmothers;
- Minimizing both short and long term psychological problems through individual, group and family counseling to the target group.

PASADA Grandmothers' initiative (US\$202,318.00 for 2 years starting August 2006)

*** Support to Grandmothers Caring for AIDS Orphans and Vulnerable Children**

- Provide bus fares to 50 vulnerable or disabled children for 240 days in order to allow grandmothers caring for them to send them to special schools.
- Provide bedding materials and mosquito nets to 120 "grandmother headed households".
- Provide access to health assistance to 200 grandmothers on an average need of 3 times per year/per head.
- Provide house rent and/or renovation to 100 grandmothers.
- Provide 6 "parenting skills" workshops to grandmothers, particularly those who are caring for OVC with particular problems i.e. psychological disturbances, risky behavior, drug abuse, and poor scholastic performance.

COTLANDS (US\$18,250.00 starting October 2006)

*** The Soweto Grannies Initiatives**

Cotlands will provide support to thirty (30) unemployed grandmothers and the children in their care. Few of these grandmothers use their state social grants to support their orphaned grandchildren while most of them solely depend on the good will of friends and neighbours for support. Cotlands will address these grandmothers' needs by providing them with nutritional support and addressing their housing needs in particular for one of the grandmothers whose house burnt down. The project will assist her in the reconstruction process.

Orphans educational support

This project will provide support to 65 school-going orphans of the 30 Soweto grandmothers. It will cover the provision of educational material such as books, pens, pencils, notebooks and provide 44 of these children with school uniforms.

ST NICHOLAS (US\$60,000.00 starting July 2006)

*** Support for Elderly Caregivers**

Grandmothers reaching out to Grandmothers

Within South Africa there are an estimated 1.1 million children orphaned as a result of parents dying of AIDS. Many more children are potential orphans, or are made vulnerable because of their parents' illness. With parents becoming ill and dying, the burden of care for orphaned children has fallen on the older family members, usually grandmothers or other older family or community members (GOGOs). St Nicholas is experiencing an increasing number of grandfathers left caring for orphaned children as well.

Impact on the grandmothers/fathers

Much has been written and discussed about protecting the rights of children and the rights of patients – however the question of protecting the rights of the elderly is seldom recognized. The challenge to government, faith-based organisations and NGOs is to support these elderly caregivers whilst also ensuring that their rights and the rights of the children they care for are protected. The old age pension, provided by government to help the elderly in their advancing age, is often used and stretched to feed, clothe and educate orphaned children. The health of the grandmothers (Gogos, grandfathers) may often suffer due to their advancing age, fatigue, poor nutrition as they try and support a number of children on their old –age pension, and depression because they experience grief at the loss of their own children and the stress of having to care for, often small, children which stretches their personal, physical, emotional and material resources. The status of women in poorer communities remains low and women often suffer from lack of self-esteem.

Community Resources to assist elderly caregivers

South Africans are fortunate in Africa to have access to some social support through government grants and pensions. Grandmothers living in more rural areas or in poverty, may not have the knowledge or information to apply for these grants /pensions, or may not have the finances to travel to the specified sites. Another phenomenon is that women appear much older than they are, due to circumstances, and in many instances do not qualify for the old-age pension. Although the percentage of older women who are HIV+ is low, it is increasing, and this adds to the burden of diseases of aging. Churches and NGOs are able to reach into most communities. In the Free State most people belong, if even nominally, to a Christian church and older women are particularly active in their church activities. A research study carried out by Joan Marston for Save the Children UK (2000) showed that prayer was the most important source of comfort to elderly caregivers.

South Africa is a country of contrasts – with the very poor living in close proximity to the cities and towns. There are many elderly people who remain willing and eager to use their skills and energy to provide help in the community, and who would like the opportunity to reach out and make a difference

to others. This also gives their lives meaning at a time when many people feel that they can no longer be useful members of society.

Training in building Resilience in children and caregivers

Traditional training on bereavement is usually suitable for those facing single losses. Within South African communities adults and children face multiple losses through death, and loss of many other parts of their lives such as homes, opportunity to receive education, self esteem and many others. Children and adults need to develop resilience to coping with loss. Whilst some of this is linked to internal and character factors, resilience can be prompted through using simple activities that can be integrated into normal daily life. Helping children develop resilience has a similar effect on caregivers, and gives them a feeling of control and achievement. Resilience empowers children and adults to cope with difficulties in life and to “rebound” after loss.

Resilience also requires and understanding of emotions related to loss and activities to enable good memories to be retained.

This project will provide:

- A short workshop on building resilience is presented with follow-up activities and supervision from Child caregivers and Family facilitators.

“Granny to Granny” / “Grandad to Grandad” Friendship and Care

- The Bloemfontein community will be approached through the media, who are very supportive of St Nicholas, and churches and other community groups.
- Grandmothers , grandfathers and other older men and women (grandparenting is a state of mind!) will be invited to link with grandmothers and grandfathers caring for children orphaned by HIV and AIDS in poorer communities, to provide emotional and spiritual support
- Meetings between the grandparents will be initiated firstly in groups and then individually
- Resilience training will be given to all involved from all communities - those grandparents with training ability will be empowered to become trainers in resilience building
- Activities will be identified for improving economic circumstances , whether by producing crafts, services and vegetables; or by working with money effectively and producing simple, inexpensive but nutritious meals; and accessing social pensions and grants
- Opportunities will be provided for understanding the different cultures within our communities
- Monthly meetings will be held with some form of simple training and a motivational speaker – and good refreshments
- Grandparents will be assisted to complete Memory Books that contain their family and life history to be given to their grandchildren
- Churches, schools and businesses within Bloemfontein and Botshabelo will be approached to support the project and the media will also be asked to provide ongoing coverage to encourage others to become involved
- The project will be launched with a special function sponsored by a local hotel who have offered to provide this
- St. Nicholas plans to set up 50 friendships in the first year
- Evaluation will be done through interviews and observation
- Grandchildren will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the project
- Building networks between communities will promote better understanding in the region and diminish fear of different cultures and communities

- A photographic record will be kept and written documentation will be ongoing

End

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