

Granny Bulletin

February 22, 2007

*The **Granny Bulletin** is a bi-weekly update on the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, intended to keep grandmother's groups across Canada informed about, and connected to, the grandmothers and grassroots projects in Africa that are supported through their dedicated fundraising and awareness-raising efforts.*

*******PLEASE READ THE ALERT BELOW IN ILANA'S MESSAGE FOR URGENT INFORMATION ABOUT THE WOMEN'S FILM AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY*******

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1.

Good afternoon!

We are happy to send you the post-Valentine's Day edition of the electronic Granny Bulletin! Please share it with all of your members.

Our sincere appreciation to all of those groups that have helped us to compile a list of grandmothers' group members by sending in names and contact information! If you haven't yet had the opportunity, we would be very grateful if you could send them in! . We have several new pieces coming out – and we'd love to be able to send them directly – or at least send an email to each of you notifying you of what we're doing and making available. Additionally, Stephen, Mary Anna, Ilana and myself are often speaking with groups in Canada, and we'd like to be able to invite you when possible to meet with us. Not only does this help us to know exactly how many grandmothers are involved with the Campaign, but it also allows us to email the Granny Bulletin directly to those members who want to receive it from the SLF.

This edition of the Granny Bulletin contains information on upcoming resources available from the Foundation, including films and speaking notes, and exciting information about the enhancement of the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign section of the website. In addition, we are highlighting one more incredible project that supports grandmothers and the orphans in their care. In response to your wonderful feedback, we have chosen to highlight one project at a time so that we may give you more detail about each project.

We are also delighted to share that the number of grandmothers' groups has climbed from 40 groups at the time of the Gathering in August, to 120 groups in early December, to a staggering 140 groups today!

With warm appreciation,

Julie

2.

A LETTER FROM ILANA:

Dear friends,

We have been – happily – inundated with requests, information, suggestions, and reminders (!) from so many of you – it's absolutely marvelous how the grandmothers' movement has taken off! I just wanted to write this note to say that we are working hard, Julie, Mary Anna and I, to respond to the deluge of requests of all kinds in a timely fashion! If you haven't heard back from us, and have a question that needs answering, please do write again – some emails do go astray – and we usually answer everything within 10 days at the very latest!

We are deeply committed to supporting the groundswell you have created, and will continue to be accessible and to send you information regularly.

Finally, I am thrilled to let you all know that the Gathering Report is finalized and at the printer! We will be mailing it out the beginning of March to each group. At the moment, we are planning to mail 2 copies to each group – it is 96 pages long (with photographs, quotes and stories!) – we hope that this number will suffice and assume that you will share it with the group! We will also post a PDF version on the website for easy download, and hope that you will let us know if you would like more copies. We hope it will bring back wonderful memories and feed the imagination and desire to know more that those of you who were unable to attend have expressed!

URGENT ALERT:

You will read below that we have had to postpone the launch date of the Women's film. This is a good thing, since the finishing touches which are being done are going to make it a truly vivid and powerful piece. We're very thrilled with it and we know you will be too.

There are some suggestions about March 8th launches which I think you'll find helpful below!

Women's Film – PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN PLAN:

The Foundation is working with incredibly dedicated professionals on the women's film. It is finished, but since everyone is donating their time to make it as wonderful as it needs to be, there are some finishing touches which are being done now (sound, colour, DVD menu) –and which preclude it from being perfectly finished in time for International Women's Day! We know that many of you are thinking of events, and we're sorry for any inconvenience this might cause – BUT – there are many alternatives for your March 8th event:

- a) Screen the CBC documentary "The Man Who Couldn't Sleep". This one hour long documentary includes a segment on the Gathering. DVD copies will be mailed to each group on March 1.
- b) Share stories/quotes from Gathering Report. The report will be online before March 8 and we can help you choose quotes and stories to share with a wider audience.
- c) Screen "Grandmothers: The Unsung Heroes of Africa" again. Many groups have been showing all or parts of the Grandmothers Film that we screened at the Gathering – it is a powerful piece, and the media still runs portions of it and we hear that it is a powerful tool for raising awareness and discussion. Re-read the Toronto Statement and distribute it to as wide an audience as possible.

RE MOTHERS' DAY AND AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS COMING TO CANADA

On May 11th, 7 grandmothers will arrive in Toronto for the launch of the Orphans film – produced by the SLF on orphans in the context of the AIDS pandemic in Africa.

For Mothers' Day we are going to launch this film, and then the grandmothers (who are coming from the projects which attended the Grandmothers' Gathering in August) would like to come to your communities to visit and to have discussions and be at your events, and, we hope, at your screening of the Orphans film in your communities.

We are going to facilitate the travel of two African grandmothers to Calgary, 2 African grandmothers to Saskatoon, another 2 to Ottawa, and another 2 to Halifax.

If you are in one of these locations and are interested in hosting the African grandmothers and involving them in your events – they are very eager to attend and to meet you in your 'hometowns'!

We are hoping that grandmothers in each city will billet the grandmothers visiting (they'll come with one SLF staff member to assist them with travel and speaking, etc.).

The PLANNED SCHEDULE – SHOULD YOU ALL BE INTERESTED AND/OR AGREE:

May 11th – Toronto launch of the Orphans film – all the African grandmothers come together and celebrate and speak to the situation of orphan care in their communities and lives

May 12th – the grandmothers get on planes with SLF staff and travel to the 4 'hub' cities (which are close to the areas where there are the greatest concentration of Canadian grandmother groups)

May 15th – the African grandmothers leave to return to their homes in Africa.

THE AFRICAN GRANDMOTHERS ARE VERY EXCITED AT THE PROSPECT OF COMING TO CANADA AGAIN AND MEETING WITH THE GROUPS HERE. YOU CANNOT IMAGINE HOW BOUYED THEY ARE BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR EXISTENCE AND THE SUPPORT YOU ARE PROVIDING. MANY OF THE GRANDMOTHERS HAVE EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO RETURN AND CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE WITH CANADIAN GRANDMOTHERS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES – AND WE THOUGHT THIS TIME, WE WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO COME DIRECTLY TO YOU TO ACHIEVE THIS. THEY ARE INTERESTED IN MEETING WITH THE GROUPS, , SPEAKING TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN THE FILM, BONDING AND FURTHERING THE MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY FOR THOSE HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF GRANDMOTHERS IN AFRICA WHOM THEY REPRESENT WHEN COMING HERE.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF THIS INTERESTS YOU AND IF YOUR COMMUNITY WOULD LIKE TO ORGANISE SOMETHING AROUND THE ARRIVAL OF THE GRANNIES (AND BILLET THEM) AND THEIR VISIT TO YOU.

With warmth and appreciation,

Ilana

3.

UPCOMING RESOURCES

In response to your requests, we are happy to provide a synopsis of soon-to-be-available communications tools for grandmothers' groups, such as films and speaking notes – and of course, exciting developments on the website which will allow groups to connect and share information like never before! These resources will be mailed to all groups so that they arrive in time for the dates specified below. You do not need to make a specific request for these resources, although we do request that you let us know when and where you'll be using them.

Gathering Report and Video – Available to all grandmothers' groups as well as individuals who attended the August 2006 Grandmothers Gathering – **to be mailed out the first week of March**. Report will also be posted on our website in early March.

Photo CD – Contains high-resolution photos for use by grandmothers' groups on brochures, websites, etc, **March 12, 2007**.

Introduction to the Stephen Lewis Foundation – A 15 minute film narrated by Stephen Lewis which explains the work of the Foundation and includes a segment on the Grandmothers Campaign. Available on DVD in April. Will also include a 7 minute version for shorter screenings.

PowerPoint Presentation and Speaking Notes – Many of you have requested stories, photos and statistics for giving presentations on the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign in your communities. We are currently in the initial stages of development of a PowerPoint presentation that can be used alone,

or in conjunction with the Grandmothers Film. We are hoping to have it available for use by the end of **April 2007**.

Grandmothers' Password-Protected Webpage – We are currently in the initial stages of development for a password-protected webpage for grandmothers' groups. Each group will have a password that will allow them to access a list of all grandmothers' groups, share events, and do much more to stay connected and informed! We are hoping to launch this webpage by the end of **May 2007**.

4.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Since the Stephen Lewis Foundation was established in March 2003, we have funded over 170 projects in 14 sub-Saharan African countries. Below is just one more example of the critical work that is facilitated by your continued support. We have chosen to use the words and examples provided to us by the projects themselves, with only minimal editing for length. Enjoy!

Community Asset Building Development Programme (CABDA)

Kakamega, Western Province, Kenya

Project Background

The area served by the project is one of the most densely populated areas in the district. The total population is 3,057 and agricultural activities are the mainstay of the local economy. Due to high population growth and subsequent land divisions, the average farm size per household is 0.6 hectares. This area is one of the poorest and there is uncontrolled spread and infection of HIV/AIDS. Many young adults aged 24 through 40 years are dying daily leaving behind very young children. These children are then left to either stay with their very old grandparents that are unable to take care of them well, or other people within the community.

The main objective of this project is to provide food, school uniforms, school fees, establishment of kitchen gardens for orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), training for caregivers (including grandmothers) in leadership, income generation, nutrition, psycho-social support, and small loans for the start-up of businesses. It is expected that the profits from small businesses set up by caregivers shall be used to meet the needs of the orphans in their care. The caregivers, together with OVCs between the ages of 10 through 18 shall also help in establishing kitchen gardens for grandmothers who are very sick, and yet taking care of OVCs.

Project Implementation

Activity One: Orphans and Vulnerable Children Support (OVCs)

Children whose parents have died of HIV/AIDS and are living with caregivers shall be provided with food such as maize and beans. At the end of every month, the caregivers who are with OVCs shall meet with all the OVCs as a group once per month. In this meeting, each caregiver will give an oral report on the progress of the OVCs they are taking care of. They shall have counseling sessions and receive advice from relevant government ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and pastors in the area. The OVCs shall participate in recreation activities and eat together. Each caregiver shall also be given one bag of maize per year, and a quarter bag of beans (1 bag = 90 kgs) to cook at home for the orphans in their care. At the beginning of the year, the OVCs shall also each be given a pair of school uniforms. A total of 480 OVCs shall be supported under this project.

Activity Two: Support to Caregivers

Six caregiver groups, each with a membership of twenty people, totaling 120 caregivers who are taking care of OVCs within their communities shall be supported under this activity. Each group shall be trained in leadership, how to run income-generating activities, and psycho-social support. Each caregiver shall then be given a loan to set up a small business. Each caregiver that has received a loan shall be required to save within their group once their business begins. This money shall be used to establish a revolving loan fund within the groups so as to continue assessing loans to the caregivers at the completion of the project, as needed. Each caregiver shall be required to save a particular amount each month, which will be repaid to CABDA over a period of 12 months.

Activity Three: Support to Grandmothers

The caregivers supported through the preceding activities have identified 30 grandmothers who are too old, and/or too sick to work. Each grandmother, although sick, has a piece of land and therefore can be helped to establish and maintain a kitchen garden with help from other caregivers and OVCs between 10 and 18 years of age. Traditional vegetables shall be planted in their kitchen gardens which can be sold as well as eaten at home for nutritional value. Each grandmother shall also keep 4 chickens for eggs and meat, using funds provided by CABDA.

Activity Four: Payment of School Fees

Many OVCs in this area complete primary education, but have no school fees to continue to high school. This project shall have a bursary fund for 3 children that perform well and cannot otherwise proceed to high school, in order to pay school fees for one year. The project shall also pay nursery school fees for 50 children.

Activity Five: Follow-Up

CABDA shall make available second and third loans to ensure caregivers' businesses are sustainable. The loans provided shall be from the revolving load fund. Transitional training shall also be provided and shall include psycho-social support and business counseling. Caregiver groups will continue to meet once per month.

CABDA COST EXAMPLE (these are simply examples, there are other costs and needs which are equally pressing to make the project a success)–

- *One uniform costs 600 Kenyan shillings, which is equal to approximately \$10.20 Canadian. This project will provide 480 uniforms for a total approximate cost of \$4,896 Canadian Children cannot attend school without a uniform.*
- *One 90 kg bag of beans costs 4000 Kenyan shillings, which is equal to approximately \$68.00 Canadian. This project will provide 60 bags of beans for a total approximate cost of \$4,080 Canadian.*
- *Each chicken costs 300 Kenyan shillings, which is equal to approximately \$5.10 Canadian. This project will provide 4 chickens each for 30 grandmothers totaling \$612 Canadian.*
- *Each high school bursary for school fees costs 20,000 Kenyan shillings, which is equal to approximately \$340 Canadian. This project will provide 3 bursaries to orphans and vulnerable children, for a total of \$1020 Canadian.*

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