

Granny Bulletin

July 20, 2007

*The **Granny Bulletin** is an update on the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign, intended to keep grandmothers' 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.*

Greetings grannies!

Welcome to the final bulletin for the month of July. In this issue, we will go over some technical (but interesting) information and also share some personal and heartening stories from the projects we support in Africa – again a small sample of many wonderful initiatives across sub-Saharan Africa.

Dear Grannies,

We have been hard at work creating the new Grandmothers Campaign website over the last few months. At long last, it is finally here!

We've had the designer upload the test site to the correct web address, which means that the site should appear online sometime this weekend. Please check the site on Monday, July 23rd at www.grandmotherscampaign.org.

ABOUT THE SITE

We have tried to create a website that will help facilitate discussion, interaction and networking among grandmothers groups in Canada and beyond. In order to have the most accessible and interactive forum possible (given all of the things we want it to do!), we used a template to create the website which will allow for different levels of access for different users.

As a result, we've created a public section of the site, which can be accessed by anyone, and a registered section of the site, which is intended specifically for granny groups.

In the **PUBLIC SECTION** of the site, you will find:

- An **interactive google map** of granny groups across the country.
- Information **About the Campaign, the Grandmothers' Gathering, and how to get involved**

- Information about available **resources**. (Please note that in order to reduce duplication, large features such as the event organizers' photo gallery, logo gallery, and news articles will remain only on the SLF website.)
- A '**share ideas**' section, where you can submit articles about your group's experiences with fundraising, advocacy and awareness raising.
- An **event calendar**, listing grandmother events across the country. Click on each date and read more about what others are doing to support grandmothers in Africa.
- A **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** section, with answers to questions about tax receipts, communications and other common queries.

In the **REGISTERED SECTION** of the site:

We are creating **an account for each group**, with the primary contact listed as the main person for the group. Once a group is registered, the primary contact will receive an e-mail with their group's **username** and **password**.

Once the site is live, your group will be able to login and use the following features:

- **Group profiles**, where each granny group can post their contact information, edit their profile, group description and post photos!
- **Submit events** for the event calendar.
- **Submit news** and updates for the homepage.
- **Granny bulletins** — the site features an archive of previous granny bulletins, and future bulletins will also be featured on the site.
- A **weekly poll**, which will help us determine what issues and ideas are important to you. Please cast your vote, or suggest a poll topic for us to use!
- A **discussion forum**, where registered users can post messages on any number of topics, from fundraising to advocacy. The forum requires an additional username and password. We will send a list of instructions on how to use the forum in the coming days.

We want the site to be as useful as possible — please send us your comments, thoughts and ideas about how it can fulfill your group's needs. Over the next few weeks, we will be adding content and modifying sections based on your feedback.

In the coming days, you will receive another e-mail with instructions on how to use each of the interactive features of the website. If you have any further questions about how to use the site, please don't hesitate to send them to questions@grandmotherscampaign.org.

**If you discover any errors in your group name, location or primary contact information, please let us know.*

The July 6 bulletin featured a profile on Reach One Teach One Ministries (ROTOM) based in Uganda. Since then, we have received an update from our colleague Kenneth that we are sure will warm your hearts:

Introduction:

On my last monitoring visit, I met many children and grannies under ROTOM grandmothers support project. While I could see so much need I was overwhelmed by the joy in the faces of the grannies and children I met. The wide smiles were infectious and the stories of hope restored were touching. I worked hard to hold my tears because the appreciation from these grannies and children was overwhelming. I knew it was not me to take the credit but many grannies in Canada that have donated the money for this project through SLF. I also knew that Erican and Norah our project staff who day in and day out are working to better the lives of these grannies and children deserved the credit.

The real stories:

Teresa Kyabahara is not sure of her age but believes she is in her early 70's. She is a widow and grandmother. She is one of those full of praise for the support received from SLF supported ROTOM grandmother support Project. "We now have enough food and are assured of medical treatment when we fall sick. Girls who had left school are back learning to become tailors. Thank you very much for loving us. We have given you a new name because of what you have done for us. We call you RUKUNDO (love)..., Teresa told me while holding the youngest of the grandchildren under her care.

Teresa, like other grannies in the project, has received a goat, receives regular food supplements, has participated in weekly fellowship where she receives support from our staff and other grannies. When she falls sick, she is assured of free medical treatment. It is these and other benefits that have put a smile on her face and changed her life.



The following is a brief introduction to Women and Children Development Organization (WCDO) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia that benefits from the great efforts of the **Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign**:

Although HIV prevalence rates remain relatively low in Ethiopia, when compared to countries like Swaziland and Botswana, the effects of the virus are still devastating. As in other countries around the continent, HIV/AIDS is disproportionately infecting and affecting women in Ethiopia. According to 2006 UNAIDS statistics, prevalence among adult women is double that among adult men!

Women and Children Development Organization is an example of the responsive grassroots organizations meeting the many challenges posed by the pandemic. WCDO was established in 1995 and works in urban, rural and pastoral areas on community development programmes affecting children, women and other disadvantaged groups. Their mission is to bring about sustainable development changes with maximum community participation.

The Stephen Lewis Foundation is financially supporting a WCDO project based in the town of Hawel-tula – a town with high poverty and unemployment levels and growing social concerns. HIV/AIDS is becoming a major problem and the numbers of vulnerable and orphaned children are growing. There is only one clinic in the town providing services focusing specifically on HIV/AIDS.

WCDO's project aims to:

- Enhance school attendance for 50 children (30 of whom are orphans and 20 are vulnerable children) through the provision of full educational support including access to clothing, nutrition and transportation to school;
- Strengthen the capacity of 45 women (25 of whom are grandmothers caring for 30 orphaned children and 20 who are impoverished mothers caring for 20 vulnerable children) through HIV/ AIDS prevention training, VCT* service, family planning services and provision of access to credit services;

In the 12 years since its inception, WCDO has been hard at work. The following are some highlights of its achievements:

- Provided loans to 300 women and organized for income-generating activities, including the establishment of a bakery;
- Provided educational support to 5,000 school children
- Provided health and hygiene education to more than 15,000 community groups aged 10 and above;
- Renovated 77 homes;
- Organized 5000 youths into working groups conducting training workshops on HIV/AIDS for peer educators, counsellors and volunteer caregivers;
- Constructed and installed a public library with the capacity of 70 seats;

- Conducted training workshops and organized experience-sharing sessions on good governance and democratization for government officials, court officials, women's representatives, youth groups, traditional leaders, and representatives of community-based organizations and civil society organizations;

**VCT – voluntary counselling and testing for HIV.*

The July issue of our newsletter *Grassroots* is hot off the presses. If you would like an electronic copy, or a copy of our printed version, please get in touch with us and we will be happy to add you to our mailing list(s).

Visit www.stephenlewisfoundation.org for up-to-date information.

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