

Summer 2008

SUMMER 2008 NEWSLETTER

My Sister's Keeper greets you with the radiance of the summer sun and wishes you all the warmth and light that it ushers in!

KUNYUK SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION UPDATE: TIME TO RAISE THE ROOF!

Finally! Because of your generosity the classrooms and dining facilities for the Kunyuk School for Girls are now raised to roof level! While the prolonged rainy season and the difficulty of transporting materials prolonged our original start date, the construction is now well underway. Amidst the isolated landscape that was devastated by 20 years of civil war, this campus is a symbol of hope for the 1000 enrollees who are poised to become future leaders and peacemakers in the region. We trust that you'll be as excited as we are to behold these pictures.

While much has been accomplished, much has yet to be done. The administrative offices, library and latrines remain at foundation level. If all goes well, we anticipate the ribbon-cutting for the full campus this November. In the mean time, we are in the final stretch to raise the remaining \$20,000 of our estimated \$350,000 construction budget. Furthermore, since our funding for the adult literacy program has come to an end, we are also looking for funds to sustain this vital empowerment tool. We hope that you will continue to walk this amazing journey with us. Please donate on line at www.mskeeper.org.

“BEADS FOR NEEDS” FUNDRAISING PROJECT

After only a few weeks of sales, Liz Walker Journey Productions "Beads for Needs" raised more than \$5,000 toward the construction of the Kunyuk School. "Beads for Needs" is the brainchild of Liz and jewelry artisan, Joan Kraus. In January 2008, Joan viewed A GLORY FROM THE GOD, Liz’s documentary that profiles Reverend Gloria and MSK. Joan had created handcrafted Glory Angel lapel pins to sell at the Watertown, MA event. Liz had fashioned several trading bead bracelets in hopes of reintroducing the craft to our Sudanese sisters who had stopped producing crafts during the genocidal civil war. The bracelets are made from African trade beads, acrylics and donated junk jewelry—a reminder that people in

Sudan must use whatever they can find to survive. "Beads for Needs" now includes a dozen Boston area beaders who meet regularly to create hundreds of bracelets. The bracelets are available for a \$35 donation. All proceeds benefit the Kunyuk School for Girls Construction Project. For more information log onto www.lizwalkerjourneyproductions.org

SISTERHOOD FOR PEACE ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

Our exciting initiative, Sisterhood for Peace: Transforming Sudan, was launched a year ago in partnership with Interaction Institute for Social Change (IISC). The Sisterhood, led by twelve phenomenal Sudanese and African American women leaders, has met monthly to design an outreach strategy to engage diverse Sudanese and African American women as global activists to end genocide and secure justice throughout all Sudan. Over the last several

months, we've turned the corner from strategy design to implementation. We're effectively modeling ways for women to cross boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, religion and geography to speak out together for peace in all of Sudan. The result has been a flurry of activity from our fully activated networks, particularly with other key American advocacy groups and within the Sudanese Diaspora. We have been busy responding to incoming requests for support, advise, facilitation, and capacity building.

For example, in April, Cynthia Parker, our IISC project consultant, along with Kiara Nagel, our project manager, facilitated a two-day meeting with the Darfuri Leaders Network, a broad-based alliance representing 20 Darfur Diaspora organizations across the United States. Currently, the Sisterhood staff is organizing a July convening of 20 diverse Sudanese grassroots women in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. The women will meet with the Nobel Women's Initiative over two days to discuss ways the Nobel Women Laureates can leverage their collective authority to facilitate peace in Sudan. We are also working with the Southern Sudanese Women's Empowerment Network (SSWEN) to plan their upcoming conference, also in Juba, in August. Lastly, we're hosting a series of Sudanese Women's Dialogues in Boston throughout this summer to network with local Sudanese women. As we make this connection, Sisterhood sisters are developing our facilitation skills and peace-building dialogue which will be used for the "toolkit for change" we are currently producing.

Please check out the Sisterhood website at www.sisterhoodforpeace.org.

GLORIA BECOMES BOARD CHAIR OF SAVE DARFUR COALITION

In this exciting new role, Gloria will oversee the Coalition's efforts to raise public awareness about the ongoing genocide in Darfur and advocate for a lasting and just peace in Sudan and the surrounding region. Gloria is honored to lead her fellow board members and excited to support the new president, Jerry Fowler, and the SDC staff. Gloria notes, "I'm looking forward to forging deeper and wider partnerships with the vast network of activist colleagues throughout America, in Sudan and around the world. With more efficient sharing of resources and more effective collaboration, I am confident that we'll see the changes we've been pressing for."

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

My Sister's Keeper is thrilled to introduce three new board members, Joaquina "Jacqui" Borges-King, Aisha Francis and Sister Bridget Haase.

Jacqui is an attorney who practices with the State of Connecticut in the Office of Consumer Counsel, where she advocates for Connecticut's ratepayers in all utility and energy matters.

Aisha is an experienced fundraiser who works for the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in the areas of individual giving and donor stewardship.

Sister Bridget, O.S.U., has ministered from the mountains of Appalachia to the deserts of Sudan. She now serves as Coordinator of the Spirituality Program at The Boston Home, a long-term care facility for people with multiple sclerosis and other chronic degenerative diseases.

Thank you for your generous donations, prayers and volunteer service. We welcome your comments, suggestions and inquiries. Email us at info@mskeeper.org. Visit www.mskeeper.org to stay abreast of the latest happenings in our humanitarian and advocacy efforts on behalf of the great people of Sudan.

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