

## About Us

My Sister's Keeper is a women-led, women-focused, humanitarian action group.

We are a faith-inspired, multi-racial, collective of women who work together to lend sisterly assistance to communities of women in various locations throughout the World. At present, we are focused on supporting the aspirations of women in the African country of Sudan. It is our hope that our way of working together will inspire other small groups of women to form sisterhoods that support the hopes of women who dare dream in the face of dire socioeconomic conditions. Such is the essence of My Sister's Keeper.

Here's our story:

In July 2001, Gloria White-Hammond and Liz Walker were invited by Zurich-based human rights organization, Christian Solidarity International, to travel to southern Sudan to take part in a slave redemption mission. As part of a delegation of several other African-American ministers, White-Hammond and Walker participated in the liberation of over 6,700 enslaved women and children. Bearing witness to the untenable realities of slavery taking place in the 21st century changed their lives forever.

The next year, White-Hammond returned with Cynthia Bell and Pat Brandes, still reeling from the struggles and stories she learned of from the formerly enslaved women she had met a year earlier. We spent days talking with women in villages throughout the south-western region of Sudan, in Gogrial County. We asked the women to share ways in which American women might come alongside in solidarity in support of their efforts. We heard them speak of a need for grinding mills to lessen the amount of arduous physical labor they would need to do to prepare daily meals, and shared their dreams for schools to educate their girls. Through talking sister to sister, the basis for a trusted working relationship between the Sudanese women and the American women was solidified.

The courage, resilience and forward thinking of the Sudanese women during the midst of a raging war spurred us to get busy. Upon returning to the States, we established an organizational vehicle for the work &mdash; calling it, "My Sister's Keeper". In this, we wanted to assist the women with the economic development, healthcare and education projects they initiated. Our approach was and is that of listening closely to the concerns and opinions of the Sudanese women, mobilizing resources in the United States on their behalf and lifting up the plight of Sudanese women to the World.

The next year, Ashley Lanfer and Melinda Weekes joined the four women, and in July 2004, traveled with White-Hammond and Bell to Gogrial Country. By then, the women leaders in the village of Akon had begun schooling their girls under a large baobab tree. They asked us to help build support and a physical structure for the education of girls in the village Akon. We agreed.

After years of continuous hard work and positioning "My Sister's Keeper" to grow and succeed in fulfilling its mission, the six of us envisioned the possibility of expanding our board membership and asking other sisters to join.

In 2007 we pleasantly welcomed Sister Bridget Haase and Joaquina Borges-King on our Board. With their support we have expanded our networks and are working together to complete the construction of the school. We will continue to support the girls' school and help educate the next generation of Sudanese women leaders.

On January 9, 2005, the longest running civil war on the Continent of Africa the Sudan North-South conflict - officially came to an end with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Although peace has come to the south, there is no peace in western Sudan. As of this writing, genocide rages in the Darfur region. Along with the women of Gogrial, and many people of good conscience across the globe, we long to see the day when all of Sudan experiences lasting peace and equitable prosperity. The amazing women we have befriended during our travels to Gogrial County continually inspire us to do our part. We keep their stories, faces and dreams in the forefront of this work. In this, we are our Sister's Keepers.

A threefold chord is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:12

