

RECENT SOLID DONATIONS

Through the generous support of the Salt Spring Community and other benefactors, SOLID continues to offer on-going support to our partners in Africa in partnership with VIDEA - the Victoria International Development Education Association.

SALT SPRING ISLANDERS BUY GOATS

In the fall of 2010, residents of Salt Spring Island generously bought 94 goats through SOLID. The goats were intended for HIV+ mothers in Western and Nyanza provinces in Kenya.

On Tuesday, March 8th 2011, Marie Mackay, the “Goat Lady”, and SOLID director Lynda Turner traveled to Shianda village in Kenya, a small village in sugar cane country near the huge Mumias Sugar Refinery. Meeting the group of HIV+ mothers was especially poignant as they had been previously promised goats but let down twice. The women were even leery of the visitors from SOLID as they had been so disappointed before. They were relieved and overjoyed when we arrived with goats in hand.



The goats had been examined and given their shots by the government veterinarian. The women had also participated in a training session where they were taught how to care for their goats; feeding, housing, and general care. The nannies had also already been bred with a pure bred billy as an important component of Marie’s program includes the purchase of billys, who are moved from location to location to prevent in-breeding.

When the kids are born, there is a domino effect in that the kids are passed onto other mothers in the group. If the nanny has more than one kid, the owner keeps one and passes on the rest to another deserving mother in the group. This nanny is the beginning of a herd for many women.

The benefits of this program are plentiful; the goat milk is very nutritious and provides great health benefits for those affected by HIV. It can also be sold for more than cow’s milk, which brings much needed financial security into the household.

After the ceremonial speeches were completed, the delighted women were given their goats and they were overjoyed and deeply appreciative of the generosity of Salt Spring Islanders. After wishing for each nanny to produce triplets, Marie and Lynda returned to Kakamega.

Thank you Salt Spring. Your generosity has changed the lives of countless families in Western Kenya.

Lynda Turner, SOLID Board Member



PROVISIONS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Another area of great need in Africa today is for the provision of sanitary pads for menstruating girls and women. The vast majority of Africans cannot afford disposable pads, and if they can afford this luxury, the waste creates a huge garbage problem. Money donated by SOLID this spring was used to provide 106 feminine hygiene kits for girls in Standards grades 6, 7, and 8 at Quaker Primary School, Igunga.

While Lynda Turner was there kits were delivered to the 22 Standard 8 girls. The girls were gathered with their female teachers. Sex education is non-existent in Kenya so the girls were given a brief primer on their menses and then a demonstration on how to use the kits. Each kit had a small plastic pail with a lid, three pairs of underpants, five reusable sanitary pads sewn by Dormer K Education Centre and one half of a long bar of soap. The total cost of each kit was under \$5.00.

As we were leaving, one of the teachers approached us. She was in tears as she thanked us for providing the kits as this means that girls don't have to miss school every month due to their periods.

SOLIDS donation has changed the lives of 106 girls in Kenya.

Lynda Turner

NDI MOYO PALLIATIVE CARE

Since Beth Gessinger and Anna Callegari traveled to Malawi in 2007, SOLID has been proud to support Ndi Moyo in providing a comfort fund in the amount of at least \$3000 annually to offer much needed comfort items such as blankets, mats, food, transport, and basic medicines for those palliative patients in their last days and weeks of life.

The Ndi Moyo Palliative care Centre now has four outreach centres enabling patients who are suffering to be given the treatment and comfort they need without having to travel many hours (up to 30 miles from Salima). The outreach programme is operating at Lifeline, Thavite, Malawi Army College (MAFCO) and the Baptists Medical Centre. Four more should be up and running by June 2011. Ndi Moyo has trained over 700 health professionals (mainly from Salima District). Government commitment to palliative care at its health centres still requires much encouragement.

Approximately 300 patients with their families benefit from the palliative care services Ndi Moyo provides. It intends to reach out to the 1000 or so vulnerable children of it's patients in 2011.

As a vounteer, Anne louise stated in a recent communication:

“Lucy and Tony face a different challenge every day. Lack of morphine, lack of care, and poverty all conspire against them on a daily level”. We at SOLID are, therefore, constantly striving to support Ndi Moyo's valuable work.



Lucy and one of her patients in a new dress.

Lucy wrote recently:

“Special thanks from the Team in Salima to all the Friends of Ndi Moyo for keeping faith in us and for the continued support in these difficult times. We appreciate your sacrifice and we are grateful beyond words”.

Donations to Ndi Moyo can be made through SOLID's health initiative, Sala Hantle at:

www.solidsaltspring.ca

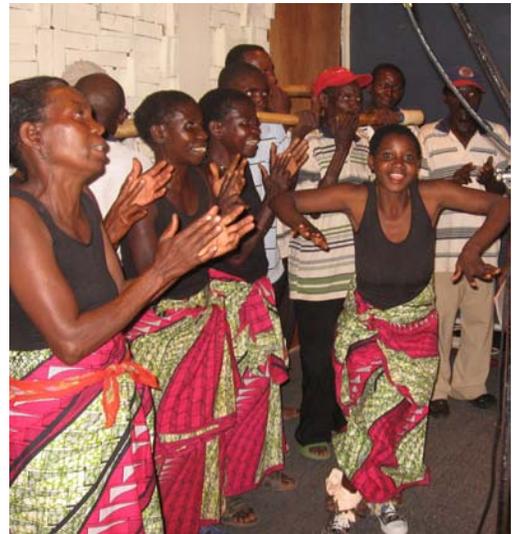
Anna Callegari

KWIZERA RECORDING

Phil Vernon

At long last the singing group, Kwizera, meaning “hope” or “faith” from Bwiza Rwanda has recorded an album.

The music will be mixed and mastered here in Rwanda and then sent to Canada for the production of CD’s thanks to a donation of \$1000 from SOLID. Once made, Maggie Ziegler and Phil Vernon will find a way to bring the CDs back to Rwanda for Kwizera to sell for promotion and income generation.



TASARU AND THE MAASAI BEYOND

Salt Spring residents, Candace Cole, her husband, Eric Field and teacher, Mary Stebbins have lived among the Maasai for a few weeks at a time, every couple of years for the last decade. What follows is a selection from her recent report.

Far beyond the reaches of running water and electricity I found myself surrounded by dozens of women in a shock of raucous colours, singing and dancing. We were celebrating the birth of a baby girl.



In a way this ceremony binds the child, for life, to all present. Every adult participates in the care of every child. As one of those adults, I began to reflect on the many possibilities that had been woven together during our weeks among the Maasai, including ones the might change forever how this little girls future unfolds.

This event was one among many where people by the dozens lined up to be treated with acupuncture. Thanks to the generous donation of acupuncture supplies by Electro-therapeutic Devices Inc. I was able to offer clinics wherever I went. There is rarely any form of medical care available in this extremely poor and remote location on the high plateau of Kenya. Despite the fact that needles are completely foreign to them, the recipients, even the children, were open and enthusiastic about acupuncture.



Our aim has been to assist our African partner’s initiatives for self-determined and sustaining development in the areas of health and education. In the process we have educated ourselves and learned a great deal from our mistakes. Inevitably mistakes resulted from the short cut of “thinking about” what might help or what they need rather than by taking the far more time consuming and complex path of listening and asking questions and to hear from them what anticipated consequences and solutions might be.

ALTERNATE RITES OF PASSAGE

During our last visit we witnessed the burgeoning success of Agnes Pareyio's training among her fellow Maasai about the benefits of declining Female Genital Mutilation and early marriage and of educating girl children instead. SOLID had sponsored several of Agnes' initial training sessions in this remote region of the high plateau. Despite all odds, Agnes' work is continuing to change cultural practices, particularly in areas where people can experience for themselves that girls who are spared these practices can benefit not only their own families but also the whole community. Agnes is now developing a school for girls, which is currently under construction and will hopefully open this coming summer. "Ten girls in every class will be girls who have fled FGM" she said. The school will also serve to bring in funds to continue her work, and Agnes continues to rally for young women "There should be a dormitory in every school for girls who need to be safe" she said. SOLID will continue to support Agnes in her efforts to educate these deserving girls.

LIFELINE LIGHTS

Studying and working can be a real challenge without electricity. Thanks to Shelly Sherriff's link to Lifeline Energy's solar lights, SOLID was able to sponsor the transport of 40 solar lights to be distributed among these rural families. Paraffin causes many

serious burns to children every year not to mention that it is a poor and expensive light source. As many SOLID and Salt Spring islanders know, Candace Cole and Eric Field have a long standing relationship with the Maasia community of Olopirik, in the very remote highlands of western Kenya. While there are so many pressing challenges this community faces, virtually all are exacerbated by the lack of adequate, safe lighting. Like most of sub-Saharan Africa, they are not on an electrical grid, and rely solely on Kerosene to light the long dark nights. Thinking how life-enhancing safe and reliable lighting would be, I decided to contact the non-profit Lifeline Energy, an organization founded by Kristine Pearson. Kristine generously offered to donate 40 lights and a radio and to travel out to Olopirik to distribute them and provide community training.



SOLID EXCHANGE
Salt Spring Organization for Life Improvement and Development

The SOLID EXCHANGE has found a new home. Thanks to the generosity of ReMax, the SOLID EXCHANGE has been given a new home in the ReMax Office.



A core group of volunteers keep the store open 4 days a week: Tuesday to Friday 10:30 to 2:30 and we can be found at the market on Saturdays.

SOLID wishes to offer a big THANK YOU to the library for our previous location and a HUGE thanks to all our dedicated volunteers.

SOLID is a not-for-profit society based on Salt Spring Island, B.C. that is dedicated to supporting projects in HIV/AIDS impacted communities of sub-Saharan Africa with a particular focus on health, education and food security. Please see the SOLID website for more information and video of SOLID projects and issues.

SOLID is completely funded by the generosity of private donors. The success of all of our projects is due in large part to the amazing support of the Salt Spring Island Community. THANK YOU!!!!

The SOLID Board of Directors for 2011 is Anna Callegari, Meron Moroz, Melanie Furman, Lynda Turner and Sam Barlow. We can be reached at:

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