



Vision on Africa (VoA)

Mile Marker

Make a Difference

Volume 1, Issue 1

October 2006



Message from the Founder/President Senedu Araya-Sellassie

Vision on Africa (VoA) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide technical assistance and to build capacity through knowledge transfer to grassroots civil societies and non-governmental organizations in Ethiopia as well as in other African countries. Our operational vision is to identify existing gaps in program implementation by executing intervention strategies. Our mission objectives target health, poverty reduction, governance and capacity building. The first project for VoA in Ethiopia is in the health sector providing technical assistance to existing domestic NGOs and grassroots initiatives involved with mother-to-child prevention of HIV transmission. Our capacity building strategies are based on creating partnerships with other organizations, whose main activities target vulnerable women who tested HIV positive and whose children are at risk of being born with the deadly virus.



VoA has reached its initial goals by establishing a Mother and Child Health Care Center in Ethiopia as well as creating partnerships with other organizations that have instituted a variety of programs in Africa that will enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

This is the face of Vision on Africa today - an organization that has diligently established a strong base and served the underserved for the last few years, with purpose and passion driven employees/volunteers and supportive sponsors.

All of the above shows our dedication and ongoing commitment to our "Make a Difference" Journey.

-Senedu Araya-Sellassie-

VoA's Projects

Sub-Saharan Africa is a region characterized by poverty-triggered high death rates due to malnutrition and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. VoA has taken its first step in addressing this situation by establishing an integrated Mother and Child Health Care Center in Ethiopia. The center focuses on the prevention of mother to child transmission of

HIV by providing antenatal care, immunizations, family planning, and voluntary counseling. It is crucial for expectant mothers to test themselves for HIV/AIDS since knowledge of a mother's status can help save the life of her child. Mother-to-child transmission can occur during pregnancy, during delivery, or while breastfeeding; however preventive steps can be taken in order to

reduce the probability of the transmission. VoA has projected that it will assist 13,600 mothers and their families by providing them with a comprehensive health care program during a five-year period. During this time, we estimate that 8,000 women will become pregnant, and expect at least 960 women to become HIV- positive. During the period of September 2005-September 2006, the center has provided services for approximately 2306 women and 516 children. VoA will continue providing aid through the programs of its Mother and Child Health Care Center.



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VoA's Projects Continued...

Sustainable Development Project: Arts & Crafts Initiative

VoA's objective for its arts and crafts training is to enable the participants to become self-sustaining and independent entrepreneurs.

Over 150 people were trained in arts and crafts skills. The program runs twice a week for a period of 7 months.

32 people received certificates of completion and have done so by finishing the full length of the training. The rest of the group continues



to work towards certification. The trainees can make stuffed animals, hand bags, wallets, jewelry boxes etc. to generate income on their own.

Every 1st Thursday of the month, the participants show and sell their products at the International Women's Bazaar at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. All the proceeds from selling their self-made products have been going back to drive the project until now. The products were also featured and auctioned off at one of VoA's

fundraising events held in Washington, DC. The auction raised nearly \$3,000.

VoA is in the process of setting up an e-shop to sell the items made by the group. The e-shop will make their products available to a wider market.



Fitawrari Lake Adgeh Primary School

An element of VoA's mission upholds the commitment to create partnerships with community based organizations in Africa in order to implement educational programs. VoA has formed such a partnership with the Fitawrari Lake Adgeh Primary School in Nifas Silk, Sub-City Kebele. The school is comprised of 71 teachers, 8 administrative staff members, and 9 support staff members who provide education to 2,622

students. The student body includes 262 (93 males and 169 females) orphan students. The partnership is based on VoA's provision of school materials and moral support to those orphan students. Education is crucial for the development of Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, the literacy rate (those age 15 and over who can read and write) in Ethiopia is 42.7%; compare that to the U.S. which has a literacy rate of 99% and the urge to support education becomes clearer. VoA is motivated to continue help-

ing promote education in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Zewaye Orphan Vulnerable Children (OVC)

Sub-Saharan Africa is a region consisting of 43 million orphans (2003). In 2003 alone, 5.2 million children became orphans due to high mortality rates in the region caused by infectious diseases, mainly HIV/AIDS. VoA has joined forces with an orphanage located in Zewaye, which is home to a monastery that supports 22 orphan children. The center has improved the lives of these children in need. However, it is limited in its capacity to accommodate all required needs, includ-

ing those related to health and educational advancement. VoA has created a program in which individuals can sponsor a child with a simple donation of \$1 a day. With this minimal donation, each child will be able to receive proper medical treatment and nutritious meals. VoA encourages individuals to join



us in this beneficial project by making a generous contribution of \$365 to cover one full year for one orphan/vulnerable child (OVC). VoA has been successful in finding sponsors for most of these children, however, caring sponsors are still needed for seven children.

Join us in our "make a difference" journey.

Workshops

VoA is aware of the difficulties facing African immigrants in their arrival to the United States. VoA is committed to helping these immigrants adjust to a new culture and form networks within the African community. So far, VoA has conducted two cultural adjustment workshops in the Washington DC area in which cultural comparisons between Africa and the U.S. as well as the subject of assimilation versus adjustment were discussed. Participants learned about the different cultural practices that are standard in the U.S. Additionally, VoA carried out a capacity building and skill enhancement workshop in which

information was shared with African immigrants about organizations which provide free skills training. Another type of workshop offered by VoA is the participatory needs assessment workshop in which atten-



Participatory needs assessment workshop

dees share their experiences among the group and provide support for

those who have recently arrived to the U.S. The workshops' turnout has been very satisfactory with an average of 30 attendees per workshop, however, we would like to encourage individuals to join us and participate in our events. It is imperative that we come together to strengthen and support our African community in the U.S.

**"I wish I had someone to guide me when I arrived to the United States. It would have given me a much better start. I appreciate what VoA is trying to do for African immigrants. It is a very important service."
-Workshop Participant-**

2006 "Make a Difference" Events

February 25, 2006

VoA's first event was held at Howard University. The purpose of the event was to introduce VoA to the world and connect community activists and donor organizations as well as individuals with our mission.

But with the generosity of our guests, VoA raised a total of \$26,000 including incremented pledges made that day.

The event was attended by various organizations such as World Vision -DC represented by Mr. Michael Worsley,



Ms. Felicia Vida Stovall

Ms. Felicia Vida Stovall of Amerigroup and Mr. Ted Alemayehu of US Doctors for Africa. A number of other national and international organizations were also present in our audience of 177.



Mr. Ted Alemayehu

May 23, 2006

The second event was a successful fundraiser that brought in \$6,000 from t-shirt sales and the auctioning of arts and crafts from our Sustainable Development Project. We had 65 attendees at this event, which was a great accom-

plishment, thanks to the generosity of the Water Front Gourmet and its owner, Mrs. Yesem who sponsored us by providing a lavish dinner.



Miss Pauline Muchina

Guest speaker Pauline Muchina from UNAIDS reminded us that in order to make a difference, it is important not only to reach into our pockets but in our hearts. Her comments resonated within us all as a key to reaching success in our humanitarian effort.

International AIDS Candlelight Memorial

VoA participated in an International AIDS Candlelight Memorial on May 20, 2006 at the St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Annapolis, MD.

The memorial featured presentations from different organizations working to address the challenges of HIV/AIDS in local communities.

The key guest of the Candlelight Memorial was Pauline Muchina, a member of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians who has served on several boards, including the Global AIDS Alliance. She believes that "our diversity is our strength."

She seeks to foster collaboration in all areas of people's lives. Pauline said we must all do what we can to bring about change.

Muchina believes that ending gender-based violence and discrimination against women is an important ground for building on-going communities and stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The International Candlelight Memorial is a grassroots program which encourages communities and individuals around the world to participate through involvement. It is held in

over 80 countries. The initiatives are activities that provide opportunities to honor those who have been affected directly and indirectly by AIDS. The memorial allows organizations to educate communities on HIV/AIDS issues. It also gives partners a chance to discuss the impact of AIDS in their respective service areas.



Africize your mind...



1. The largest country in Africa is Sudan, which also ranks as the tenth largest country in the world, covering an area of 2,505,810 sq km.
2. The geographical Northernmost Point in Africa is Ras ben Sakka, Tunisia.
3. Liberia, which means "Land of the Free," was founded as an independent nation by free-born and formerly enslaved African Americans. Liberia is also home to one of the oldest higher learning institutions in Africa, University of Liberia, which opened in 1862.
4. Empress Zewditu (also spelled *Zawditu* or *Zauditu*) of Ethiopia who reigned from 1916 to 1930 was the first woman head of an internationally-recognized state in Africa in modern times.
5. The *Tuareg*, a nomadic Berber ethnic group that mostly live in Western and Northern Africa, are Muslim and matrilineal. Unlike many Muslim societies, women do not traditionally wear the veil, but men do.

Our Sponsors

VoA would like to thank all of those who have joined in our efforts to "make a difference." Our Sponsors are the backbone of the operation and without them VoA programs would not be able to be implemented. Our Sponsors are the source of all our success. Thank You!!

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- Miss Senedu Araya-Sellassie

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www.visiononafrika.org, choose the Contribution/ Donation button and click on Donate now. It is a secured and reliable system or make checks payable to:

Vision on Africa (VoA)
5500 Holmes Run Parkway
Suite 4C
Alexandria, VA 22304