



the Stephen Lewis FOUNDATION

# GRASSROOTS

JUNE 2004

The AIDS pandemic is ravaging the continent of Africa.

As long as women and children continue to suffer and die, we believe grassroots efforts will help many who currently have no hope.

Welcome to the first issue of Grassroots, the Stephen Lewis Foundation newsletter.

It's been a year since the Stephen Lewis Foundation received its charitable status. Canadians like you, from coast to coast, have been incredibly generous – not only with your money but with your time, talent and creativity. Our commitment is to try to keep our administrative costs under 10% and thus far, we have been successful.

*Dear Friends:*

*It's been barely more than a year since we launched the Stephen Lewis Foundation. We've both been stunned, and deeply gratified, by the response. We've passed the two million dollar mark in contributions, and those contributions have come from over six thousand individuals and groups right across the country, often employing highly inventive fund-raising techniques. You can read on our website about the imaginative – and sometimes hilarious – activities that generated resources. And the flow continues.*

*More important, we're getting the money out, as quickly as possible, directly to grassroots projects as we promised. We're proceeding methodically, rather than rambunctiously, so that every dollar is well spent.*

*As we move into 2004, there are glimpses of light to break the suffocating gloom of HIV/AIDS. The World Health Organization has undertaken to get three million people into treatment by 2005, and a consortium of respected international organizations – the Clinton Foundation, UNICEF, the World Bank and the Global Fund on AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria – have undertaken to provide generic drugs at astonishingly low prices ... \$140 per person per year! Increment by painful increment, hope is rising.*

*But those are big plans by big outfits. They involve billions of dollars. They take a lot of time between promise and reality. At the community level, where people struggle heroically, where infections continue to mount, where the numbers of orphans rise dramatically, where people living with the virus face discrimination and stigma, things are still grim. Horrifically grim.*

*And that's where the Foundation comes in. We're part of that big picture, but in a modest and intensely human way. We make it possible for very ill women to gather courage from one another; we bring smiles to the faces of orphan kids as they return to school; we enable people living with AIDS to exhibit dignity and power as they confront the society around them. The Foundation has no illusions: the pandemic is a force of mass destruction. But it's a force that can be subdued by the strength of the human spirit.*

*Thank you for making it possible.*

*Yours sincerely,*

Stephen Lewis

Ilana Landsberg Lewis

# FROM THE GRASSROOTS OF CANADA

Here are a few examples of what grassroots Canada has done:

- Kirin Tsang, a Grade 5 student at Palmerston Avenue Public School in Toronto donated all his savings to the Stephen Lewis Foundation. "I did this," he said, "because, I saw a newspaper article about kids in Africa and other places who are suffering from HIV ... I am reaching out to help them so they can have some of the things that I have."
- Mary Billy from Squamish, BC decided to sell her knitted dishcloths to raise money for the Foundation. "If we all do whatever small things we can ... every dollar raised goes much farther in Africa than here in Canada, and perhaps will help ease some aching hearts or save some children."
- In St. John's, Newfoundland, Kevin and Anne Major turned their world music dance party into a fundraiser for the Stephen Lewis Foundation. "We see it as one small effort towards an immense human catastrophe, but one that many of us in the western world can easily undertake."
- Brendan Doherty and Andrew Morrison organized a concert in Iqaluit, Nunavut with all the proceeds going to the SLF. Andrew wrote, "The concert was a super success. We had 150 to 200 people there and made about 2,000 dollars. Everyone had a great time and we hope to do it again next year!"
- Albertan Susan Penstone and her sister raised funds for the Stephen Lewis Foundation by participating in a grueling 63 km trek through two Vancouver Island mountain passes. "I heard Stephen Lewis passionately talk about his work and his foundation. I was brought to tears and vowed if there was a way I could help, I would. The marathon provided a perfect opportunity."



# TO THE

With contributions large and small, the Foundation is well on its way to distributing a million dollars to twenty-two projects in ten countries. At all times, we've focussed our efforts on grassroots projects, providing resources to small, front-line groups.

Here is a brief description of just three of the projects we've supported so far. Please visit our website for a more complete and detailed list.

## • Umoyo Girls' School

This school located in Lusaka, Zambia helps to build the capacity and confidence of vulnerable teenage girls orphaned mainly due to HIV/AIDS. More than 80% of the girls who have graduated are engaged in further training, employment and small businesses. Funding for this project includes a significant contribution from Homemakers Magazine's 'Give Girls a Chance Fund' and the Tides Canada Foundation. In addition, the Stephen Lewis Foundation has received contributions for Umoyo from a private foundation and a host of individual donors. These funds combined make it possible for an additional 15 girls to attend the school each year for three years; 180 girls will be rescued from lives of isolation and despair.



# GRASSROOTS OF AFRICA

## • WOFAK

Women Fighting AIDS in Kenya is an organization of 300 women who do home-based care for the sick and dying. The unique feature of WOFAK is that it is an AIDS support organization run by women and for women (80% of whom are HIV positive). The programme also aims to support more families and communities to ensure their increased involvement and commitment to the care of people living with HIV/AIDS at home, and to ensure holistic care that would be difficult to provide in a hospital environment. The Foundation is funding a second WOFAK project in 2004 that provides vocational training to orphans and other vulnerable children in the Eastland slums of Nairobi.



## • Reach Out Mbuya in

Masaka, Uganda is an integrated centre for medical services, counselling, testing, orphan care and income generating projects. Funding from the Stephen Lewis Foundation has been used to purchase a pre-fabricated building and to build a new pit latrine. A latrine may seem odd, but it's a vital part of care when diarrhoea is such a widespread consequence of AIDS. In 2004, the Stephen Lewis Foundation is also supporting Bread of Life, a micro-credit programme under Reach Out Mbuya Parish HIV/AIDS Initiative. It aims to enable self-sustaining economic activity and to improve the social welfare of Reach Out clients.





# VOICES FROM THE

## Living a positive life\*

**M**y name is Rose Mary Namuli Mugalula. I tested in 2000 and was positive. I was shocked by the results, but had to pray very hard. I knew I was going to die very soon. I was frightened because I thought I was alone, was tired, and lonely, because I thought that my days are over. By that time that's when I developed the abdomen T. B. In 2001, I joined Reach Out program. And I started my treatment. Now I am a widow and I'm caring for 3 orphans for my sister who also died of AIDS. Always my words are, Today is me, But Tomorrow maybe you or someone else. You know when you learn that you are HIV POSITIVE you need a lot of love, care, and support. And above all we need love. We don't want to be discriminated, by people, because we are all the same. The different is only the virus which is in our blood. We don't want to be despised, we need our due respect... since I joined Reach Out I feel I was resurrected from the dead. Let us fight AIDS together, let us break the barriers, let us be more open,

*to advice the young ones especially the new generation to protect them to give them every thing in truth and love. Let us stand and fight up to the end.*

Rose Mary Namuli Mugalula / Reach Out Program

*\*excerpt*



## Seeing the Results in 3-D

**M**wamba and I visited a few Umoyo graduates at their places of work. I didn't know we were doing this, and when we pulled up at a petrol station, I assumed we needed petrol. Instead, we went inside the shop and met Grace. She's been working at the shop at the petrol station since graduating. She was so dynamic, engaged and confident. She was arguing with Mwamba about how Umoyo had promised to buy her some hair salon driers because she wants to start a salon business. He thought this was hilarious because, he said, she used to be so shy and quiet and now here she was telling him she had a plan and wanted to develop a career. It was such a nice aspect to the visit – to see the results in 3-D. Here was an 'outcome', a real, live girl who has learned, grown and become an independent, strong woman.

Anurita Bains

On assignment at the Umoyo Girls' School

# FRONT LINES

## THE SILENT\*

THIS IS THE TIME TO LISTEN, LISTEN  
AND LISTEN REAL GOOD  
FOR THE GENERATION IS DIMINISHING,  
ALL BECAUSE OF IGNORANCE  
WHAT DON'T WE KNOW ABOUT IT?  
WHAT HAVEN'T WE SEEN OF IT?  
WHAT HAVEN'T WE BEEN TOLD ABOUT IT?

DAY AFTER DAY, WE ARE INFECTED.  
DAY AFTER DAY WE ARE DEFEATED  
THOUGH INFECTED, LOVE US  
FOR THE GENERATION STILL HOPES ON US.

Saida Asman / Kibera Sex Workers

\*excerpt



## After the Genocide

**M**uhayimana joined the Rwanda Women's Network. The organisation brings together women victims of sexual violence during the genocide. The women are given

psychological help and medicine to treat or cure various illnesses mostly linked to HIV. Members meet and share experiences of what happened to them. "This has been very helpful," says Muhayimana. "We take care of each other. We help each other to get food and other necessities," she adds speaking from the Village of Hope, as their clinic and the surrounding housing estate are known. "The most important thing to me now is to see my kids grow up and go to school. I want to see them live a better life than mine," Muhayamina says of her two children. It is heartening to see that Muhayamina can still smile, joke and even dream. "I put all my efforts in taking my children to school and doing everything I can to see that they can have a better life than mine."

Silent Victims of Rwanda's Genocide  
Hirondelle News Agency / Village of Hope



# FROM THE BOARD MEMBERS



## Gender inequality and AIDS is a preordained equation of death

*...We're paying a dreadful and inconsolable price for the refusal of the international community, every member of the community without*

*exception, to embrace gender equality. And in so many parts of the world, gender inequality and AIDS is a preordained equation of death.*

*...There's nothing new in that. It's irrefutably documented in encyclopaedic profusion. The culture, the violence, the power, the patriarchy, the male sexual behaviour...it's as though Darwin himself had stirred this Hecate's brew into a potion of death for women...*

*...It is matter of bewildering shame that even an insatiable pandemic, malevolently targeting women, has failed to demonstrate, once and for all, the size of the gender gap, and the deadly risk we run by failing to close it...*

*...It's time, country by country, to make the struggle for gender equality the cause célèbre of the land.*

Keynote Lecture by **Stephen Lewis** UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa at the 11th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections / February 8, 2004, San Francisco, CA



## Development and AIDS

*I had such a memorable visit to the Cotlands orphan care facility and the Gogo Grannies in Johannesburg last November. The faces and feelings will be with me forever. Here at home, I was part a development community roundtable*

*with Kofi Annan and discussed strategies for partnerships to meet the important Millenium Development Goals, especially those related to HIV/AIDS. I also hosted a Remembering Rwanda panel discussion in Antigonish with Gerry Caplan, Willy Rangira and Patrick Taman. 200 people came out to the Coady Institute at the University to hear the experiences of six Xtending Hope volunteers who have just returned from working in Botswana and Rwanda on youth HIV/AIDS prevention strategies and Anti-Retroviral adherence programmes.*

**Mary Coyle**, SLF Board Member  
Director, Coady International Institute  
St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia



## Community access to medicine and health care

*Over the last five months at St. Michael's Hospital, University of Toronto, I've worked extensively with Stephen, Canadian and international NGOs, policy analysts and government officials on Canada's proposed bill to amend its patent act (Bill C-9). The title of an article I wrote says it all: "Access to Medicines and Global Health: Will Canada Lead or Flounder". I spent the month of February in Malawi, Nigeria and Cambodia establishing a research programme on community based care programmes for people living with HIV and I continue to work on access to medicines and health care in the developing world. Of course, I'm still busy with my clinical practice at St. Michael's hospital in Toronto and, along with my partner Rolie, I'm enjoying our newly-arrived son.*

**Dr. James Orbinski**, SLF Board Member  
Research Scientist, Associate Professor  
St. Michael's Hospital, University of Toronto



## Advocacy for women and children

*A year has passed quickly since I got the call from Stephen to join the Board of Directors. I am grateful to be part of this passionate and eloquent advocacy on behalf of the millions of women and children in Africa infected by AIDS. My travels took me to the World Social Forum in India earlier this year. The plight of the millions dying of AIDS and the terrible stigma experienced by women and children is a painful reality never reported in the media; the need for public education came home to me loud and clear. Here at home, I spoke to a gathering of women on International Women's Day in Nanaimo, BC with a message of gender equality that resonates around the world. As the incoming President of the United Nations Association, Vancouver Branch, I know all too well that it's been a year of pain but also a year of hope. Thanks to Stephen, to Ilana, and to all the volunteers and donors across Canada.*

**Patsy George**, SLF Board Member  
Social worker, community activist  
recipient of the Order of British Columbia





# the Stephen Lewis FOUNDATION

## The African Advisory Board

*To ensure a strong degree of African guidance, the Foundation has an Advisory Committee of prominent Africans who will meet once a year to discuss objectives, policies, best practices, successes and failures.*

*The Advisory Committee is headed by the Honourable Graça Machel, former Minister of Education of Mozambique, and currently the Chair of the Foundation for Families and Children of Mozambique (and an Honorary Degree recipient of Ryerson University).*

*Other Members of the Committee are:*

- \* Dr. Banu Khan, Executive-Director, National AIDS Council of Botswana;*
- \* Dr. Agnes Binagwaho, La Commission Nationale pour la Lutte Contre le SIDA - CNLS; and*
- \* Ms. Sisonke Msimang, Director of the Youth HIV/AIDS Network of Africa.*



## Impatient for Change

*In sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that 13 million children have lost their mothers or both parents to AIDS. Every five minutes, an African youngster between the ages of 15 and 25 is infected with HIV. ...They are statistics that make me impatient for change, and frustrated with the lack of progress we have made in improving the lives of children despite the many promises made by adults and leaders of all kinds ... The challenge for each of us is to move from rhetoric to action. We must realize that behind every statistic is the face and the life of a child, someone's daughter or brother or grandchild ... When we see and treat all of the world's children the way we see and treat our own children, maybe then we will act with the urgency that is so desperately needed.*

**Graça Machel,**

Speech given upon receiving a doctorate of laws  
Ryerson University,  
November 17, 2001

## The Stephen Lewis Foundation and Anti-Retrovirals

Stephen Lewis has advocated powerfully for the urgent need to make generic Anti-Retroviral Drugs (ARVs) available for export to Africa. So, donors often ask why the Stephen Lewis Foundations does not direct money to treatment. Here is a brief summary of those reasons.

First, it's a question of sustainability. Treatment is a very sensitive matter: if, for any reason, treatment is interrupted during the course of the client's life, then the client is almost certain to die. We would never want someone's life to hang on whether or not we can get the money to them in perpetuity.

Second, treatment must fundamentally be the responsibility of Governments, through their public health systems, funded both internally and externally. It's never just the cost of drugs: there's infrastructure and capacity and training. It all requires huge amounts of money, ranging into the billions.

Third, while the focus on treatment is critical, it is equally critical to respond to the countless people who are HIV positive, but are not yet facing full-blown AIDS.

Fourth, when we intervene in the fields of palliative care and orphans and associations of people living with AIDS, providing food, shelter, education, psycho-social support, counselling, jobs, home-based care, training and medicines, we are effectively releasing other funds for antiretroviral treatment.

## STOP THE PRESSES

In the last short while, Canada has taken three initiatives on HIV/AIDS which should be noted. First, the generic drug legislation has passed both the House of Commons and the Senate. Second, Canada has given the World Health Organization \$100 million towards 3 by 5, i.e. to put three million people into treatment by 2005. Third, Canada has doubled its annual contribution to the Global Fund on AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria ... from \$35 to \$70 million.

## IF YOU CAN GIVE MORE, PLEASE DO.



We're new at this business of asking for money, and I must admit that we feel a little self-conscious about it. All of you who receive this newsletter have already been most generous, and it makes us a trifle anxious to ask for more. But, if you can give more, please do.

What began as a dream of making a difference at the grassroots of Africa has become a remarkable reality in a very short time. The pain of HIV/AIDS is really being eased in community after community, family after family. It's incredibly exciting.

So, please use any of the available means for making a contribution. You can visit our website to get the details. Once a year, once a month, cheque, credit card, debit – whatever – it's all entirely straightforward.

We hope you have as much pleasure in the giving as we have in the receiving. And you cannot begin to imagine the sense of friendship and gratitude that's felt in Africa.

*Thank you so much.*

**PLEASE!** Send us your email address to: [info@stephenlewisfoundation.org](mailto:info@stephenlewisfoundation.org)  
so that we can send you future newsletters

We'd also encourage you to visit our website at:  
[www.stephenlewisfoundation.org](http://www.stephenlewisfoundation.org).  
You'll find a lot of information there to keep you up to date on our activities.

If you have any problems printing the SLF forms or donating online, please call us and leave your phone number. We will call you back as soon as we are able.

## THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GIVE TO THE STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION.

► **Cheques** should be made payable to *Stephen Lewis Foundation*. Please note that as of July 1 2004, our contact information will be:

STEPHEN LEWIS FOUNDATION  
The Robertson Building  
215 Spadina Avenue, Suite 134  
Toronto, ON M5T 2C7  
(phone) 416-533-9292 - (fax) 416-850-4910

Please ensure that your name, address and phone number are included on the cheque so that we can send you a tax receipt.

► **Contribute every month through a credit card or a bank debit.** That saves us the expense of asking you for a donation every year. Visit our website for instructions. *Monthly donations are invaluable because they allow us to plan ahead knowing that we have a reliable source of revenue.*

► **Send us your 2004 contribution now.** That too saves us the expense of asking you again.

*La Fondation Stephen Lewis a maintenant une feuille-info bilingue. Pour l'obtenir, allez à notre site Web et cliquez sur « Plan Events », puis sur « Foundation Materials and Resources ».*

Publication Mail Agreement #41002516

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Stephen Lewis Foundation  
The Robertson Building  
215 Spadina Avenue  
Suite 134  
Toronto, ON M5T 2C7