

Together we are changing lives... one girl at a time.

Dear Sponsors and Friends,

I am pleased to report that we now have (132) sponsored girls, thanks to all the sponsors and donors who continue to support the BEADS sponsorship program. I believe that two lives are changed with every sponsorship—the sponsored girl and you, her sponsor. Each girl is guaranteed school fees until her education is completed, which provides her the opportunity to determine the outcome of her own life.

Our workshops and programs continue to grow with several major additions. This year we have advanced our AIDS training, women's business development and human rights training; made major additions to the Top Ride Library/Reading program; and developed an intern program for BEADS high school and college graduates.

We are beginning to realize a core of educated Maasai girls and highly skilled women bead makers. These women and girls anticipate the opportunity to impart their knowledge to the people of the more rural and disadvantaged regions. Although the Isinya Region and the Amboseli Wildlife Sponsorship Region are both primarily Maasai, the differences in access to education and resources is astounding. During our most recent workshops, which combined both regions, people from the rural Amboseli Region consistently commented on how "backward" they seemed. Our goal this year is to transfer the established programs and skills from the Isinya Region to the Amboseli Wildlife Sponsorship Region.

The sponsored girls now include a college graduate, two girls in their second year of college (one in teacher training and one studying pharmacy), and four high school graduates. Six more girls will graduate from high school in January. This core of educated girls provides an excellent base of knowledge to mentor other girls. The graduates are prepared to intern and mentor while they wait for positions to open at college. Please refer to the article below on the intern program. In March 2004, I was able to visit each sponsored girl and to participate in many of these programs.

Our goals for 2005 are to increase sponsorships to 250 and to expand the critical additional programs which address AIDS training, human rights awareness, women's business development, and environmental education.

AIDS TRAINING WORKSHOPS

BEADS sponsored a five-day workshop in Isinya, Kenya, to train 60 people as AIDS Trainers of Trainers ("TOT's"). This training was immediately reinforced by a teaching tour with four TOT's in the Amboseli Sponsorship Region. Every section of the community from both sponsorship regions was represented at the workshops—BEADS-sponsored high school graduates, mothers, fathers, community leaders, chiefs, and warriors.

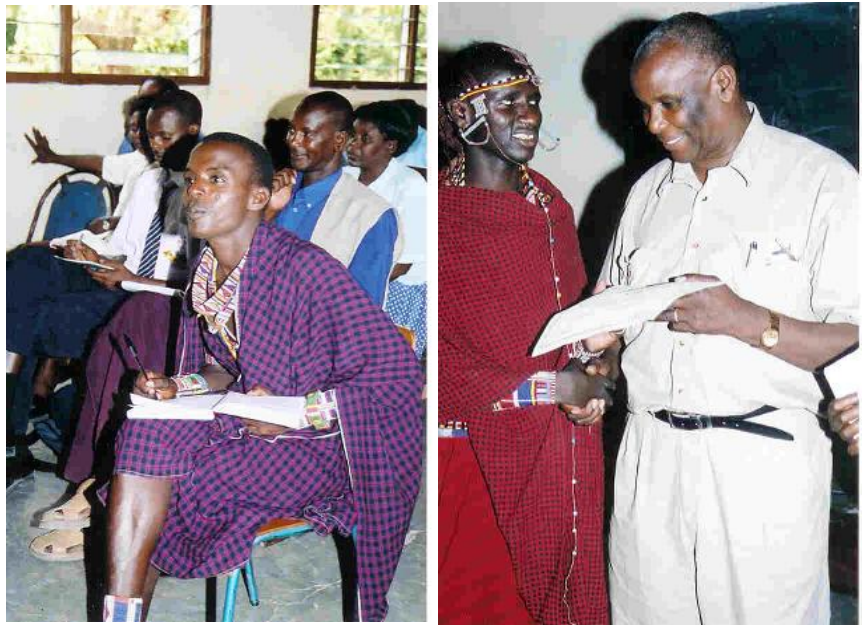


AIDS Training Workshop - 60 participants

During the five-day workshop, participants were certified as TOT's by the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). PCEA is one of the most respected organizations that train TOT's in Kenya.

The workshop opened with the question, "Who knows someone who has died from AIDS?" Everyone in Isinya replied "Yes" and everyone from Amboseli replied "No." Although I believe the rural

populations have been less affected, I doubt they do not know people with AIDS. The Isinya TOT's attribute the Amboseli participant's response to their lack of education and their belief in witchcraft. We have no available statistics regarding the prevalence of AIDS in the Amboseli Wildlife Sponsorship Region.



Warrior Joseph Sankale at AIDS training workshop (l) and warrior Parsitu receives certificate as AIDS trainer of trainers (TOTs) from Rev. Kogo of PCEA (r).

The workshop addressed symptoms and progression, methods of transmission and prevention, testing centers, available treatment including locations and costs, and caring for infected members of the community. Each participant practiced teaching and was charged with the responsibility to teach five peers a month in their local community.

Our goals are to refine the 60 TOT's teaching skills through additional training. With adequate support, we could reach 2,400 people each year. This could make a massive difference in the war on AIDS. Without support for these programs, I fear the Maasai in our two sponsorship regions are in grave danger of being decimated, due to their lack of knowledge of the disease combined with their polygamous lifestyle.

BEADS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BEGIN INTERN PROGRAM

High school graduates in Kenya must join a waiting list to enroll in college. This provides the perfect opportunity for the girls to intern for BEADS programs and help the more disadvantaged public schools and rural communities. The interns are uniquely qualified to work with the rural Maasai community, as they speak the native Kimaasai language and share the Maasai culture. The work experience is their first opportunity to participate in any form of work and is a greatly empowering experience.

Florence Nasoore's story exemplifies the goals and aspirations we have for the sponsored girls. Florence was just 12 years old in 1998 when her father was looking for her husband. Through her sponsorship, Florence escaped teenage marriage and became the first girl in her family to attend high school. In January 2003, Florence graduated from high school with honors, which qualified her for acceptance at the university when the waiting list clears. An 18 year-old girl with nothing to do for a year was a frightening prospect, both for me and her mother.



Florence Nasoore (l, center) and Mercy Noonkiletti (r, center), interns with BEADS, teaching AIDS awareness and human rights.

Florence and the three other BEADS high school graduates (Irene Olting'idi, Mary Memusi and Mercy Noonkiletti) were certified as trainers of AIDS trainers through the BEADS AIDS training workshop in March. Mercy, Florence, her mother and Warrior Joseph Sankale accompanied me on the one-week teaching tour in Amboseli. Afterwards, the girls continued their studies for six weeks at Top Ride School, training as reading specialists and teachers. Beginning in June, they started teaching at Enkong Narok School, providing AIDS training and adult literacy for the community in Amboseli National Park.

Enkong Narok School is typical of most public schools in rural regions. The level of education is so abysmal that sponsored girls have been rejected by quality private schools where we tried to place them. Our goal is to improve the education, which will enable sponsored girls to transfer to a quality school when they are old enough to leave home and attend boarding school.

As a BEADS intern, Florence introduces herself in fluent Kimaasai by telling her story to the local Maasai community—this usually produces a gasp of astonishment from all. They are amazed that Florence is Maasai—amazed at her success which has qualified her for the university—amazed that their daughters could also achieve this success.

This January, six more high school graduates will join the intern program with more to follow every year. This core of highly educated Maasai girls is a unique resource for the entire community.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Dupoto Women's Group, under the supervision of BEADS program assistant Rukia Kadidi, continues to improve their product quality and increase the variety of products. Weekly meetings at their workshop, sponsored by BEADS, provide the opportunity to improve their beading business and act as a forum for the women to discuss the critical issues of AIDS and women's rights.

Look for our new jewelry and products on our website. The products are the primary income for more than (25) women and their families. Please remember all the sponsored girls and their mothers when you are doing your holiday shopping.

PROGRAM ASSISTANT ~ PATRICK PAPTITI

Leader of the Warriors and Women's Rights Advocate

"Although Patrick has been mauled by a lion and nearly killed, the bravest thing Patrick ever did was to accept a school sponsorship last January and return to 9th grade," according to the chief of the region, Olitiptip. Patrick Papatiti is the BEADS program assistant in the Amboseli Region. But more importantly, he is also the leader of his "age set" which is a group of 8,000 warriors from the Amboseli region. Patrick will be the leader of this age set for life. Patrick is 25 years old, married and has a one year-old child. This was a very difficult decision for Patrick to return to 9th grade, but he realized that his education will be pivotal in his ability to effectively lead his community.



Patrick Papatiti, leader for life of the Amboseli warriors, begins 9th grade.




Patrick Papatiti enrolling a BEADS sponsored girl.

Patrick's message to the warriors is that no girl should be forced to be circumcised or married. Our hope is to provide Patrick with the resources to immediately address the critical issues of the warriors' role in women's rights issues and the transmission of AIDS. The issues of women's rights are extremely sensitive and primarily rely on the education, acceptance and support of the men. Only through acceptance by men will the girls be able to avoid female circumcision and forced teenage marriage. Within the next 18 months, this warrior age set will graduate to junior elders and become eligible for marriage. There is no time to waste.

BEADS gratefully thanks all the donors who helped to fund and support these programs:

African Wildlife Foundation
Center for the New American Dream
Garden of Eve Women's Group
Girls Learn International
Neel Foundation
Lipp Foundation
Tortillis Lodge at Amboseli National Park
Portledge School
Sigi Berwind
Casey Fraites
Virginia Mahoney
Jean and Jim MacAleer
Kathryn Steen
Rosemary Smith
Pete and Eloise Smyrl
Sarah and Alvaro Sanz
Doug Walker
Don and Sue Zuckert
(I apologize to the supporters I may have accidentally omitted.)

Sincerely,



Debby Rooney
BEADS Co-Founder