



HARAMBEE EAST AFRICA

Initiatives of Change

Africans making a difference

I hope that you are at peace with the New Year 2010. Whatever the case, trust me you have massive reasons to really look into your life and be grateful! As M.J. Ryan says, *"The more we focus on what is good and right in our lives and in the world, the better and sweeter life is."*

The idea of having this regional newsletter was conceived back in 2007 but it really never took off. We have courageously dusted off and we want to move on! And you have to help us make it real, effective and impactful by sending your stories and reports. Don't undervalue the simple experience you just had ... you never know when some few sincere words and small deeds can change someone else's life!

Africa faces a lot of problems and struggles. Despite the Continent being famous for corruption, wars and poverty, there is a reality which runs parallel to this: the thousands of Africans on all levels of society who are working to make a difference. It is with this in mind that we introduce *Harambee East Africa* which aims to share the stories of hope amongst ourselves and with the rest of the world.

Harambee East Africa newsletter will be covering personal news, stories from the past and the present and upcoming events from the Eastern African region and other parts of Africa. It will be produced four times in a year i.e. March, June, Sept and Dec. You are invited to send in your news, events schedule and comments.

Get enlightened and Enjoy...

Ann Njeri

NEWS FROM UGANDA

Uganda Youth Conference- by Joan Nabbanja

On Saturday 23 Jan 2010, we held our first youth meeting with the theme *"raising responsible leaders in Uganda"*. The youth came from different backgrounds; Christians, Muslims, university and high school students, and people working with NGOs. Our main objective was to share our experiences from the Harambee Leadership Training and Action for Life program and also to share our plans for Uganda.

As we shared our plans, we also talked about the vision that we developed during the Harambee program in Ethiopia (*see report page 3*). Participants were challenge to own the Vision although it looks so general and unattainable but we should bring it down to Uganda, we should start with our own country, we have to make it real.

One of the participants said that, *"I have been inspired and at the same time challenged by what you people are sharing and what you have so far done with your lives. We are the same age but your level of thinking and perspective towards life and the world is very different. I feel that you have not wasted your years and you are lucky to live such lives at this stage in life yet. From today on I am going to live responsibly in my own life and in my country"*

At the end of the meeting we got a good response from the participants who showed interest in our programs and signed up to be part of this big venture that we are undertaking. We will be meeting every once a month and we plan to hold a workshop for them to go into the depth of IofC.

Ugandans visit to Rwanda- by Joanne Nabbanja



From the 27 -30 January, a team from IofC Uganda (Jamilu Sebalu, Dorothy Tingu, Andrew Mukwana, John Mosa, and Joanne Nabbanja) visited friends of IofC in Kigali, Rwanda. The purpose of the visit was to build and give support to the team, form a committee for farmer's dialogue with a clear structure and to mobilize participants for the forthcoming farmer's Dialogue conference in Uganda in 1-10th May, 2010. Among the things discussed were funding, supporting the young people from the region (East Africa Region). Supporting the Creators of Peace Program through the peace circles and forming a committee for the farmer's dialogue chapter in Rwanda.

NEWS FROM KENYA

Kenya I Care

The Kenya I Care programme, designed to reach the most promising and the most vulnerable section of our society -- the youth, has continued to run wider and impacting the lives of young people across the country. The Subukia team has particularly been highly proactive in reaching out to the students and youth groups. In a meeting held in end of last year, the team agreed that we should give the programme a stable ground and a systematic way of operation in order to be more effective and efficient. There are more than 100 schools and youth groups visited so far.



Clean Elections Campaign

The young and energetic team in Subukia joined by some from Nairobi met and agreed that we should start the Clean Elections Campaign as early as now. Judging from the feedback we got from the last CEC in 2007, we should start now so that we can be able to reach even the interior villages. Many agreed that our country is standing on a dangerous ground and if action is not taken now we might have to suffer violence come 2012. Many people are swearing that they will not vote come 2012, and we understand them. But we have to make them see the sense of going back to vote even after the Post elections violence in 2007 which left many lives totally messed up. A team was put in place to come up with a strategic plan for this mission. One thing was clear, IofC has something to offer.



Reconciliation Work

Joseph Wainaina continues to advocate for peace and reconciliation in the Rift Valley region. He is currently working with a group of over 35 people from different tribes. Soon he plans to have a truck full of peace lovers which will go from Western Kenya region to Coast region carrying the message of peace. Watch this space!

NEWS FROM ETHIOPIA**Harambee Africa**

The 5th Harambee Leadership training programme came to a successful beginning and ending in Ethiopia in



Harambee Africa 4 Team -Ethiopia

October- November, 2009. The programme attracted 17 participants from seven countries to explore ethical leadership in the 21st century Africa. What does the Africa in which you want to live and raise future generations look like? How can Africa serve as hope for the world? What vision for Africa inspires you to make a lifelong commitment to achieve? The young dreamers came up with a collective vision for Africa that they intend to live for;

“An Africa that is economically prosperous, politically vibrant, ecologically sustainable and socially inclusive; a continent of people who celebrate their cultural heritage and diversity, bringing hope to the world”

If you like the vision, you are allowed to adopt it....and live it! Good luck!

VOICE OF THE YOUNG**IS THERE HOPE FOR SUDAN??** By Vincent - Sudanese in Melbourne

David Nyuol

You know very well the situation in Sudan. During the war what was embedded in me was a huge lump of hatred and feeling of revenge towards my fellow countrymen. But fortunately that changed when I came to Australia and did Life Matters course with Initiatives of Change. That course was an eye opener to me. I had a conviction then and I'm staying true to it until today. Since that Course I had always sought to peacefully resolve problems of Sudan. I feel a desire of working together to build Africa that we all desire to live in. No-one will bring such a change if not Africans themselves.

The civil war in Sudan was fought over greediness and selfishness of individuals. This is not over until we all stop blaming others and start to work towards peace and reconciliation in Sudan. This is only possible if a number of young people from Sudan, who are committed to bring change, unite and work for it. Our problems can no longer be solved by people from outside but rather ourselves by joining forces.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH - **Just one person taking action can inspire others to do the same.** ~Leslie C.

MUSIC FOR CHANGE! By Mike Muikia- Subukia Kenya

I love music. My life would be unfair if I lived without listening to the radio. Music conveys lifestyles, different people's thinking, morals and much more. It's through my love of music that I came across this family of change makers. At first I didn't understand this 'Be the change you want to see in the world' slogan. I was 17. Four years down the line, I've come across people of very different kinds and diversities. Some are ambitious and change oriented, others charming, inspiring and others always wishing to be with.

However, work has to be done, and in time. Reaching out to people I'd never had met and places I'd never

have been is so interesting, and sometimes challenging when you have to stand before thousands and give an impromptu sharing.

Today, seeing others like my own brothers and sisters sounds as good as good music to my ears.



Mike Muikia

I say No to Tribalism! Follow this link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tymSgrUZZ70> to see a video interview on YouTube of Ann Njeri Ndiangui from Kenya, an International Coordinator of Creators of Peace, on her efforts to fight negative ethnicity in Kenya.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rajmohan Gandhi's visit - Kenya

On 28 March, 2010, Rajmohan Gandhi, the President of Initiatives of Change International will visit Kenya. He will be in the country until 2 April, 2010.

Mr. Gandhi, a grandson of Mahatma Gandhi of India, is great inspirational leader. His visit will be part of a round-the-world tour under the title "*Voyage of Dialogue & Discovery.*" The tour will cover 15 countries. Kenya and South Africa are lucky to be included in this pursuit for "*Dialogue and Discovery*"

Farmers Dialogue- Uganda

International farmers Dialogue will take place in Kampala, Uganda on 1-10 May, 2010. More details and application: <http://www.fd.iofc.org/node/46771>

All Africa Conference- Kenya

It is great pleasure to announce the upcoming *All Africa Conference* in Nakuru, Kenya on the 12-16 May, 2010 at St Mary's Pastoral Centre. It aims to bring together IofC friends from around Africa and beyond for a reflective, refreshing, re-energizing and re-strategizing time which will be punctuated by sharing practical ways to get the Africa we need.

The theme of the conference is '*Africa, Do I Care?*' To register for the conference, please go to; <http://www.iofc.org/node/46709>, for conference programme outline <http://www.iofc.org/node/46710>