

Firelight Newsflash! 14 October 2008

Congratulations are in order...

Ms. Shorai Chitongo, founder of Ray of Hope in Zimbabwe, has been selected as one of 13 winners of the Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life 2008, awarded annually by the Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF). The award (which includes a cash prize of US\$ 500) honors creative and courageous women and women's groups around the world for their contribution in improving the quality of life in rural communities, for contributing to sustainable development and household food security, protecting the environment, transmitting knowledge, and standing up for human rights and peace. Established in 1994, WWSF has so far awarded 344 prizes in more than 100 countries.

A brief profile of the work of Ray of Hope published by WWSF is below (in French and English). We hope that Ms. Chitongo's story inspires and encourages you to make their your in promoting the human rights of women and children, ending poverty, preserving the planet, and safeguarding cultural heritage.

To learn more about the Women's World Summit Foundation, please visit: <http://www.woman.ch/home.php>

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### **A firm NO to domestic violence**

According to numerous studies, the home is, sadly, the main source of violence in societies. The problem is very acute in Africa, where most women, especially in rural areas, are not even aware of their rights.

Shorai's case came to nationwide attention when the horrendous story of her many years of abuse, including rape and terrible beatings by the most brutal of husbands became headline news in a leading newspaper. This article in turn generated intense debate and her story became a test case for the enactment of the Domestic Violence Act in Zimbabwe.

While living in rural Mutasa, she came across numerous extreme cases of domestic violence, including some that ended in the gruesome murders of the women who confided in her. Shorai (now 37) was especially touched by the plight of the children who saw their mothers butchered by their fathers and ended up on the streets. It is against this backdrop that she founded "Ray of Hope", a grassroots network of women survivors of domestic violence that seeks to rehabilitate and empower women and children affected by such violence. It numbers more than 2000 members who run ten community based income generating projects.

She has educated communities on the close link between HIV/AIDS and domestic violence and the need to make safe sex choices, thereby breaking the norm of women constantly submitting to men's sexual whims, whatever the

danger for them. She has also reinstated or retained in school dozens of children victims of domestic violence. And to address the resistance of men who prevented their women family members from attending Ray of Hope meetings (which they called “gatherings of marriage destroyers and prostitutes”), she successfully invited men to her workshops, calling in male presenters to give the talks.

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Un NON ferme à la violence domestique

D’après de nombreuses études, le foyer est le principal lieu où s’exerce la violence dans nos sociétés. Le problème est très aigu en Afrique, où la plupart des femmes, particulièrement en milieu rural, ne sont même pas conscientes de leurs droits.

Le cas de Shorai reçut une attention nationale quand l’horrible récit des nombreuses années d’abus qu’elle avait subi, y compris le viol et les agressions d’un mari effroyablement violent, fit la une des journaux. Son cas suscita un intense débat au niveau national et son histoire fit jurisprudence, conduisant à l’adoption d’une loi sur la violence domestique au Zimbabwe.

Shorai découvrit de nombreux cas de violences domestiques extrêmes, certains ayant abouti au meurtre des femmes qui s’étaient confiées à elle. Elle était particulièrement sensible à la situation des enfants qui voyaient leur mère massacrée par leur père et qui finissaient dans la rue. C’est cette situation qui la poussa à fonder « Ray of Hope » (Rayon d’Espoir), un réseau de femmes ayant survécu à la violence domestique et cherchant à réhabiliter et redonner du pouvoir aux femmes et enfants victimes. Le réseau compte plus de 2000 membres, lesquels gèrent dix projets communautaires générant des revenus.

Shorai a aussi éduqué les communautés sur le lien étroit existant entre le sida, la violence domestique et le besoin de faire des choix sexuels sûrs, brisant ainsi la norme de ces femmes constamment soumises aux caprices sexuels des hommes, quels qu’en soient les dangers. Elle a aussi aidé de nombreux enfants victimes de violences à réintégrer leurs écoles. Et pour dépasser la résistance des hommes qui empêchaient les membres de sexe féminin de leurs familles de participer aux réunions du « Rayon d’Espoir » (qu’ils appelaient « réunions des destructeurs de mariages et des prostituées »), elle invita les maris à ses réunions en faisant intervenir des orateurs de sexe masculin.

New Publication: "Mobilising children & Youth into their Own Child- & Youth - led Organisations"

Published by REPSSI (<http://www.repssi.org/>) this book examines how child-led associations can develop social awareness and organisational skills of children. The book empowers children by giving them a voice in their own affairs and can be especially powerful in advocacy efforts. In contrast to individual and even group based counselling based approaches, this approach has the potential to reach really large numbers of children and youth.

To download the publication, see: <http://www.stphils.org.za/child-led-REPSSI.pdf>

Request for Proposals: Strengthening the Engagement of Women and Girls with the Global Fund in Southern and East Africa

Deadline: December 21, 2008

Region / Countries: Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Reunion, South Africa, Southern Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

The Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), the Open Society Initiative for East Africa (OSIEA), and the Open Society Institute's (OSI) Public Health Programme are requesting proposals from coalitions of women's rights and HIV/AIDS organisations in Southern Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda that wish to develop proposals for submission to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria addressing the specific vulnerabilities of women and girls.

In response to the proposals received, OSISA, OSIEA, and OSI will provide funding and technical support to assist selected coalitions to conduct an assessment of the funding needs of HIV programmes for women and girls in their country and, based on their findings, develop a detailed proposal to be submitted to the Global Fund that outlines and estimates costs for specific, evidence-based interventions to:

- * improve women's and girls' access to HIV prevention information, technologies, and services, including sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health services;

- * increase HIV-positive women's access to care, treatment, and support;

- * meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of HIV-positive women and girls; and

* promote the human rights of women and girls, particularly those living with HIV and AIDS.

The coalitions should be comprised of organisations that have experience working with and for women and girls in the area of HIV/AIDS. They should be broad and inclusive, should involve organisations that work with and for women living with HIV/AIDS, women living in rural areas, young women, and sex workers, and should advocate for the protection of women's human rights.

Following the technical and material support provided by OSISA/OSIEA/OSI, each coalition will be expected to submit their proposal to their country coordinating mechanism (CCM) for inclusion in a country-level proposal to the Global Fund.

For submission details and additional information about this RFP, see: <http://www.comminit.com/en/node/269745/ads>

The Reporting Skills and Professional Writing Handbook: a practical toolkit for development professionals

If you or your team / colleagues are facing difficulty in your project monitoring and evaluation reports, the Reporting Skills and Professional Writing Handbook (2nd Edition) is a self-study programme based on the best of 10 years' experience working with NGOs over hundreds of training courses.

The resource is free to download at <http://www.reportingskills.org>. Just enter your name and email address to download Module One (Professional Writing and the Writing Process) and start receiving the rest of the course for free over the following weeks.

Online Resource: Starting a Small Business

From the Community Organisers Toolbox (<http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/>), this guide provides information and a stage by stage approach on how to start a small successful business. It contains the following sections:

Starting a small business

Stage 1: Idea and opportunity screening
2.1 Finding new business ideas and opportunities 2.2 Screening the ideas and opportunities 2.3 Checking if the business is financially viable

Stage 2: Planning
3.1 Production 3.2 Marketing 3.3 Management 3.4 Financial 3.5 Writing a business plan

Stage 3: Start up
Stage 4: Monitoring

To access, visit the following website:

<http://www.etu.org.za/toolbox/docs/organise/smallbusiness.html>

Report: More Aid for African Agriculture: Policy Implications for Small-Scale Farmers

After years of neglect in favor of health and education assistance in Africa, the food crisis has concentrated the donor community's minds on the need for overseas development aid for African agriculture. This is welcome, but what sorts of policies are being proposed and what impact will they have for the African farmer? This report from the U.K. Food Group concludes by asserting that agriculture and rural development in Africa will have to concentrate on more people-centered, food-focused and environmentally sustainable approaches if the development of African agriculture is to serve the long-term interests of the majority of Africans. Read the full report

at: [http://www.ukfg.org.uk/docs/More_Aid_for_African_Agriculture MAIN_REPO RT.pdf](http://www.ukfg.org.uk/docs/More_Aid_for_African_Agriculture_MAIN_REPO_RT.pdf)

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Monitoring, Evaluation and Technical Assistance (META) Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.

