



African Voices

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2009

AHA, now in Washington DC

AHA intensifies its service to urban refugees

Pictures from the field

AHA on Facebook

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World AIDS Day - Namibia

For twenty years individuals and organisations from around the world have come together to bring attention to the global AIDS epidemic on the 1st day of December.

Having worked tirelessly on the fight against HIV/AIDS in refugee and community settings throughout Africa, AHA commemorated World AIDS Day with various activities and events.

In Namibia, the AHA Namibia team celebrated AIDS Day at Osire Refugee Camp and surrounding farms with a four day awareness-raising campaign. Important topics such as the need for voluntary

counseling and testing, prevention of mother to child transmission, anti-retroviral therapy and use of condoms were among the focus of the campaign.

Similar observations took place in AHA's other Country Offices that varied from a days event to a week of special activities.

AHA Namibia's HIV/AIDS Task Force take a pose with the Red Ribbon at Osire Refugee Camp. The Red Ribbon has been an international symbol of AIDS awareness since 1991.



AHA Zambia

We are pleased to announce that AHA Zambia has launched a new programme targeting urban refugees.

The Assistance for Urban Refugee programme targets 4,539 urban refugees and aims at improving the psychosocial, counseling and material support to vulnerable urban refugees; facilitating basic primary education support to refugee children and manage thirty education scholarships, promote basic reproductive health care and circulation of HIV/AIDS in-

formation; relocate newly recognised refugees released from prison detention to designated camps and settlement; and maintain refugee transit homes.

Zambia currently hosts a total of 117,000 refugees living in camps and resettlements. Urban refugees face many problems including family breakdowns due to lack of amenities and ability to integrate into existing local structures along with health and social problems.

AHA commenced its operations in the Republic of Zambia in 2000. Its programmes rendered

medical care and sanitation services to refugees in Mayukwayukwa Settlement and in Nangweshi Refugee Camp.

AHA Zambia's other programmes focus on Sexual and Gender Based Violence and Water and Sanitation.

To learn more about AHA Zambia, please visit our Zambia page on www.africahumanitarian.org

Clare Short Visits AHA Uganda



Right Hon. Short being briefed on AHA activities in Uganda.

Photo: Wossen Taye

Right Hon. Clare Short, Member of the British Parliament, recently traveled to the Republic of Uganda under her capacity as AHA's Trustee to familiarize herself with the operations and programmes of AHA Uganda. The Right Hon. visited project sites in Adjumani District and AHA's Country Office in Kampala.

Briefed on AHA Uganda's programme efforts, challenges, opportunities and vision, Rt. Hon. Short began her three day visit with a trip to Adjumani District where she was warmly received by all in the field and was able to see the activities of AHA, its relationship with partners and stakeholders.

In Adjumani District, The Rt. Hon. Short visited AHA supported health facilities in Magburu and Okusijoni

refugee settlements and discussed various issues with key staff members and leaders of the refugee community. Rt. Hon. Short also met with local authorities among whom were the Resident District Commissioner, Council Members, the Chief Administrative Officer and the Director for the Health Sub District.

The salient issues raised during her discussions included: the need to ensure the continuity of the services which AHA is providing to both refugee and local communities after the repatriation of refugees; the need to strengthen AHA's capacity building efforts to the district line departments particularly, in health; the need to continue with AHA's focus on high impact services and expand them to areas and communities that are

underserved; the need to improve on the health infrastructure which is well functioning though lacking adequate space.

In Kampala, Rt. Hon. Short visited the office of the Prime Minister, the British High Commission and met with officials of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Rt. Hon. Short's visit boosted AHA's profile as she did not hesitate to express her happiness on what she saw in AHA programmes to all offices.

This was the Rt. Hon. Short's second visit to an AHA project site. She has previously traveled to AHA Ethiopia's program in Southern Ethiopia.



The Rt. Hon. Short with AHA staff in Adjumani District.

Photo: Wossen Taye

AHA Delivers: Despite the Odds



Darfur, Sudan



Gbarpolu, Liberia



Darfur, Sudan



Grand Cape, Liberia



Darfur, Sudan



River Cess, Liberia

"The construction of a modern health facility by AHA will go a long way in the history of the Belleh District ".
AHA Liberia Beneficiary

Photo : Chad Hazlett, Demissie Tadesse



“Current trends of forced displacement in Africa suggest that the phenomenon is a direct result of the acts or omissions of misgoverned states”.

*Dr. Dawit Zawde,
President, AHA*

African Center for Humanitarian Action

ACHA, under its capacity as Secretariat of the African NGO Task Force to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, recently organized a civil society consultative meeting on the 2009 African Union Special Summit of Heads of State and Government on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) at the African Union Headquarters.

The forum aimed to enable the inclusion of the views of civil society actors engaged with the issues of the Summit and to contribute, from their experiences, towards the successful outcome of the summit’s deliberations by presenting their observations and recommendations on the draft Conference Background Paper prior to its finalization was attended by humanitarian actors from all five regions of Africa.

Participants exchanged views on refugee, IDP and returnee legislations, collaboration of governments and civil societies, various intervention methods and the capacity of civil societies. The forum agreed that current refugee, IDP and returnee problems cannot successfully be tackled unless the root causes of displacement are addressed. The issue of adequate protection of vulnerable communities and the need to strengthen the capacity of indigenous institutions engaged in the field were also among the main discussion of the forum.

The meeting was concluded with a call for the involvement of more civil society and humanitarian actors in presenting their views on the issues to Member States prior to the Special Summit in April 2009. Participants were encouraged to continue contributing their valuable inputs in the Experts and Ministerial Meetings scheduled to start the next day.

To read more about this event and recent ACHA activities, please visit our website at www.achanet.org

Volunteer Programme

Jen Steele came to AHA as a volunteer Programme Officer for ACHA, an outgrowth of AHA. After four and a half months in a voluntary position, Jen was able to secure funds for ACHA to partially cover her consulting fee for an additional four month period. The secured funds also covered the cost of hiring a stipend volunteer Programme Officer and a Researcher.

During Jen’s tenure, ACHA was supported by three additional volunteers and one consultant. It received grants valuing roughly USD21,000 to support project initiatives and was on the cusp of receiving more to further establish itself as the leading coordinating body for African humanitarian action. With the support of the ACHA staff members, Jen assisted ACHA in launching its knowledge management system, branding profile and materials and in beginning programme delivery.

Jen worked in partnership with entities on topics ranging from AU engagement, civilian protection and institutional capacity building to assessments of appropriate humanitarian aid and mapping of African humanitarian NGOs. Jen along with several other volunteers published *Partnership to Protect: CSOs and the AU*, a toolkit aimed at assisting African NGOs in the development of civilian protection advocacy methods aimed at the AU.

The challenge of starting a new organisation was exciting for Jen and she enjoyed working with her ACHA team mates and with ACHA’s partners. She is currently based in NYC working as a consultant in the development and humanitarian sectors.

AHA’s Volunteer Programme was launched in 2006 and has hosted over 20 volunteers from around the world. To learn more about the programme and our volunteers, please visit our websites at www.africanhumanitarian.org and www.achanet.org.



From Left: Jen Steele, Hannah Snowden, Idil Lambo, Jorike Schmal and Naomi Pardington

Photo: Bilen Shimelis

Briefs

AHA- Washington DC

AHA has now become a US registered tax-deductible non-profit charity certified by the District of Columbia NonProfit Corporation Act.

This new status will allow AHA to reach out to the large African Diaspora community in the US and will help with fundraising efforts as contributions would be tax deductible.

AHA Trustee, Ambassador Irvin Hicks, facilitated the registry.

15 Years of Service

2009 marks AHA's 15th year of service delivery. Preparations to commemorate this landmark with beneficiaries, staffs, Trustees, friends and stakeholders are under way.

Please refer to our website for updates on this event.

On Facebook

AHA has joined the largest online social networking database, Facebook, to increase its visibility among vibrant citizens of the world concerned with human welfare.

Vacancies and volunteering opportunities are advertised on the AHA page along with regularly updated pictures from our field offices.

We look forward to befriending all our supporters on Facebook.

AHA Review

AHA has embarked on an institutional wide Program and Organisation Review in collaboration with the International NGO Training and Research Center (INTRAC).

The review will assess AHA's governance, management, finance and project delivery and make recommendations as to the way forward.

The findings will be presented to AHA's Assembly of Trustees at their next gathering in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia.



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AHA is an international pan-African non-governmental organization. Founded in the aftermath of the Rwanda genocide in 1994, AHA has since worked in 16 African countries in capacity development, education, healthcare, refugee protection, repatriation, women's rights, and in water and sanitation.

With a mission to end adversity across Africa utilizing first and foremost African resources, AHA has assisted over 10 million vulnerable people throughout the continent.