

**Sanam Vaziri Quraishi Foundation
Progress Report
April to June 2007**

Community Consultations

Free the Children welcomes news on recent community consultations and local support in the community of Salabwek. A general community consultation has taken place to address several key areas of the project. The Salabwek Headmaster, Mr Maritim commented that since the school building has begun, that enrollment in the school has increased. Children and parents in the community are seeing a positive change in their community and are very excited with the future development of the school and the community. Furthermore, the parents in the community are working in partnership with Free The Children in order for the building of the school to happen. They are:

- Carrying water from a local water hole in order for the curing of the cement¹;
- Helping to plant trees and flowers in and around the school grounds;
- Fundraised for the use of a local tractor to plow the land for the creation of the community garden;
- Helped Free The Children prepare the garden in order for planting to begin;
- Leveled the building site ground of the school so that the school would be built on a flat foundation.

Embodying some of the local traditional values, such as collective self-help and sustainability, concerns on the importance of tree planting at school and in the community in order to decrease deforestation were expressed. Community members discussed ways in order to ensure the growth of the trees through protective measures and watering routines. In addition, the community discussed the possibility for a community garden and how it will be able to help provide the children of the community with a varied diet that is well balanced. Free The Children provided a workshop on healthy eating as an important method of actively promoting health.

Parents Committee

All committee members are elected by parents with the supervision of the local education officer. Each grade from Salabwek Primary School is represented in the parent/teacher committee. The committee is headed by a chairman (Daniel Biseei), treasurer (Richard Chemobor) and a secretary (David Maritim). The current Salabwek Parent's Committee has 18 members. The committee's responsibilities are to:

- Balance the school budget;
- To withdraw money from the local account for any important projects/purchases;
- Employ and help fundraise for Parent - Teacher Assistants;
- Advocating for teachers and students through letters to the local education officer and the Ministry of Education (MoE).

The Parents Committee is very much committed to working in partnership with Free The Children in the building of the Salabwek Primary School. On every building occasion, committee members and parents are helping to dig the foundations of the classrooms and to assist in the overall completion of the classrooms.

¹ After concrete is placed, satisfactory moisture content and temperature must be maintained, a process called curing. Adequate curing is vital to quality concrete.

Community Gathering – Health Introduction

Approximately 400 men and women from around the community gathered at the Salabwek building site. The purpose of the gathering was to introduce Free The Children's health projects and programs to the community, and with the help of the community, how the programs will be implemented. Free The Children requested the help of the community to enable women to attend future leadership and health workshops.

The topics discussed at this initial gathering were:

- Community health;
- Health initiatives that can be taken by the community;
- Empowerment of all members of the community;
- Leadership in the community (particularly women and children);
- Traditional Birth Attendants (recognizing who the traditional birth attendants are in the community, and planning for training in hygiene and antenatal care).

Community Gathering – Health Phase I

Free The Children requested the attendance of women in order to start implementing health initiatives in the community. At this gathering, approximately 130 women attended. Initiatives started at the gathering were:

1. Leadership Introduction/Education
 - The rights of women and children were discussed;
 - Empowerment of women and children were discussed so that they can realize their full potential as a leader in their families and communities.
2. Change Seminar
 - At the seminar, ideas were expressed as to how women can take leading roles in their lives despite the different obstacles that they may face;
 - It was discussed how collectively communities can overcome any obstacles and improve their living status;
 - The need for the communities to form small groups in which each group will be responsible for their own health initiative was expressed. These groups will also be responsible for empowering and enabling other community members.
3. School Gathering

The main objective of the gathering was to discuss hygiene and first aid treatment. Some of the key components of the hygiene discussion:

 - Education was given on the importance of hand-washing after visiting the washroom and before eating to prevent the spread of diseases;
 - The 'Leaky Tin' Method was introduced and implemented. This method shows community members how a 5 Litre or 10 Litre containers can be used to wash hands at home and at school.
4. Health Motivators
 - Free The Children facilitated forming Health Motivator Teams within the school. These leaders of the school are responsible for motivating for encouraging other children to be clean at home and at school;
 - The Health Motivators are to encourage other community members to incorporate the 'Leaky Tin' hand-washing method into their homes;
 - The Health Motivators are also going to promote the importance of primary education for all children.

5. School Health Club

- Free The Children facilitated forming Health Clubs within the school;
- The Health Club Team is responsible for all of the cleanliness within the school, including the toilets, classrooms, and the compound;
- In future, Free The Children will work with the Health Clubs so that they will be trained in Emergency First Aid, and will be able to assist any student or community member in a health emergency;
- The School Health Club members will also be advocates for health throughout their community.

School building

Before the project could begin, the community members had worked for months to ensure that the roads to the school were passable for vehicles. They were able to widen the road in areas that were previously impassible for cars. They were also able to make the road much smoother in order for the safe delivery of the building materials to the work site.

- Free The Children discussed the importance of primary education for all children and community members;
- Also discussed was how primary education leads to an empowered community and helps to create positive change within the community;
- Free The Children talked about how the education of the youth leads to an increased infrastructure within the community leading to increased job opportunities, health benefits, and overall general community wellness.

Salabwek Primary School Population	
Salabwek currently has 928 students attending the school:	
Nursery School =	112 students
Standard 1 =	96 students
Standard 2 =	86 students
Standard 3 =	74 students
Standard 4 =	82 students
Standard 5 =	81 students
Standard 6 =	84 students
Standard 7 =	90 students
Standard 8 =	34 students

The first phase of the construction of the school building has revealed results. The attendance of the teachers has been 100% for the past month. Currently at Salabwek Primary School there is:

- One fully completed classroom;
- One classroom has the foundation finished and is currently in the process of putting up the walls of the structure;
- One classroom has just finished the foundation and is currently in the process of leveling the stones before the walls can be erected.

Gender equity

In addressing inequalities in the community that are often deep-rooted and gender-based, initiatives are being taken to promote education for all children — girls and boys. With the Headmaster, teachers and local community members, Free The Children has discussed the importance of the girl-child in school, and the significant role of women in the community. Men and women in the community are encouraged to send their children, boys and girls, to school. The building of the school has created hope for members of the community, and they see the potential that all of their children will have in gaining greater access to a quality education. They have expressed hope that the education will better prepare their child with

knowledge and skills needed to adopt healthy lifestyles and to take an active role in society. Moreover, they acknowledge the positive outcomes of a leadership role of the girl-child and the role of women in the community. and the importance of eliminating disparities. Community members recognize the importance of empowering all youth in the community, eliminating disparities and the need for women mentors in the community for the youth.

Additional information

Free The Children has been able to host youth groups from around the world at Salabwek in order to work in partnership with the community on the construction of the school. It has been an educational experience for both the students from abroad and for the community members. Daily, the students engage with community members in conversations about culture, education, development and life from different positions. The students and community work together as a team in order to see the fruition of the school building and create a connection between their own classrooms in North America and those in Kenya.