

BOOKS FOR AFRICA



SPRING 2007

NEWSLETTER

Books For Africa is the largest shipper of donated textbooks to the African continent. Books For Africa shipped over 16 million primary, secondary, post-secondary, and community library books to 30 countries since 1988. BFA has received the highest ratings from the Minnesota Charities Review Council and Charity Navigator.



BFA Sends First Container to Chad

BFA will be sending its first ever container of books to Chad in June 2007, where it will help refugees coming across the border from the Dafur region of Sudan. Our partner in Chad provided the following report on how these books will be utilized:

Many of the people of Darfur that

escaped the genocide of Omar Bashir's government are now living in refugee camps in Eastern Chad. In one camp, Camp Bredjing, the refugees have schools and are educating each other to learn English. With all their enormous hardships, they have so much hope for the future because they are learning English. Their plea to the world- "please send English grammar books."

With all the misery we came across on our journey we found this place full with hope and inspiration. Everything they are faced with isn't enough to rob them of their hope for

the future. Where most of us might not even want to get out of bed, these folks look forward to another day of teaching and learning.

The markets nearby the camps sell books for the children. Firewood is a commodity in the camps surrounded by desert, wood is very scarce and so has become valuable. Since they don't have money the kids are gathering firewood to pay for their books. Their mothers help. The children must venture outside of the camps to get the firewood and the locals get angry because they are using the limited resources, so they beat them. This does not deter them from going back the next day to get more firewood. Mothers also go to gather wood.

Something so simple as to send books to these people would stop this from happening and give hope where maybe some would say there should be none.

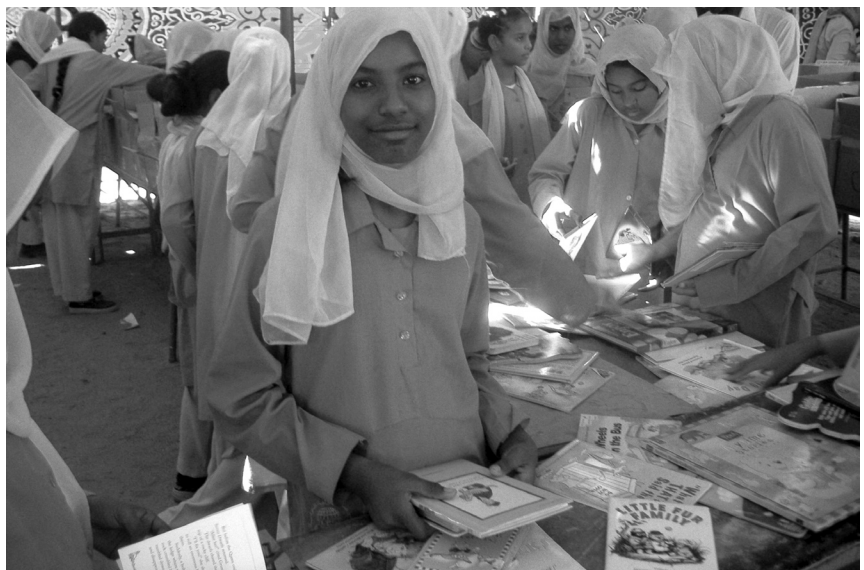
Very Special Thanks for the great work of Books For Africa and its partners. A 40-foot container filled with tens of thousands of books for all of Chad is on its way in June 2007.

—Robert Simental

Director

www.GoogleDarfur.com

Right: Books For Africa partnered with Better World Books to secure a container of books shipped to Sudan in collaboration with the Sudan-American Foundation for Education. This container was received in Sudan in November of 2005. Pictured at right are girls selecting children's books at a special book exhibition held by the Ahfad University for Women in Omdurman, Sudan. Ahfad University for Women works in close collaboration with the Sudan-American Foundation for Education and organizes book exhibitions where representatives of schools and universities can select books to add to their libraries. Books For Africa is proud to work with organizations such as the Sudan-American Foundation For Education, Ahfad University for Women, and Better World Books.



“With great honor as my duty, I would like to inform you that the need is great for English books. Guinea-Bissau is a Portuguese speaking country ... the demands of our countrymen concerning English language skills is increasingly high. I need only English books....”

**—Daniel F. Nabicamba,
ESL Instructor, Guinea-Bissau**

Liberia Consul General: Books Will Change The Lives of Many Liberians

By Julia N. Opoti

This article reprinted with permission from Mshale (www.mshale.com), first published 04/26/2007.

Liberia's Consul General, the Honorable Alexander P. Gbayee, was in St. Paul yesterday, as a guest speaker at an annual fundraising luncheon for Books For Africa (BFA). Since its inception, almost twenty years ago, BFA has grown to become the largest shipper of donated books to Africa.

At a time when Liberia is recovering from the effects of a long civil war that has striped the country of all its physical resources, the role of BFA in providing books for this generation of Liberians cannot be more pivotal.

In narrating his childhood drive to read, Gbayee expressed the challenges faced by children all over the continent. His father wanted him to learn English so that he could read letters sent to his village. At eleven, Gbayee went to a classroom for the first time. Although the school was free, it did not have textbooks, and for two years the school used magazine cut-outs to teach its pupils to read.

Gbayee is confident that access to textbooks will enrich the lives of many Liberian children, “In the future these books will change the lives of many Liberians,” he said.

Among many partnerships across



His Honorable Alexander P. Gbayee, Consul General for Liberia with Martha Sinoe, President of the Organization of Liberians in Minnesota (OLM) at the annual Books for Africa fundraising luncheon. Photo: Tom Gitaa/Mshale

Africa, BFA is partnering with the Liberian government to ship 335,000 books to rebuild its educational infrastructure. BFA will also work closely with the University of Liberia to meet the needs of its students.

Twin Cities based scientist, Dr. Azah Tabah from Cameroon, appealed to fundraisers to invest in the future of a generation. In a presentation demonstrating the need for textbooks by children in Bali, Cameroon, Dr. Tabah stressed the meaning of education to a continent that is building itself. “These are basic educational needs,” she said.

This year, BFA celebrates the opening of a larger warehouse to meet the growing needs of children in Africa. According to founder, Tom Warth, the reason for giving is simple. “These books would otherwise be recycled. We should simply invest in

shipping costs, a mere thirty eight cents per book.”

BFA donates books to about 26 English speaking African countries shipping about 22 tons of books each week. Guinea Bissau will receive books for the first time.

In attendance were about three hundred members of the larger Minnesota community.

Gandhi Mohamed, a Minneapolis entrepreneur and native of Somalia, was touched after watching a video presentation of a young South African girl who vowed to work hard, and with an education, find a cure for AIDS. Mohamed said, “It is important that the African Diaspora join the efforts of others to empower our children.”

Books for Africa urges all to end the book famine in Africa. You can find them at www.booksforafrica.org.

If you would like to learn more about Books For Africa please call 651-602-9844 (fax 651-602-9848).

E-mail: bfa@booksforafrica.org Web: www.booksforafrica.org



Better World Books Fund Announced

The Books For Africa / Better World Books partnership continues to grow and grow! In early March, establishment of the Better World Books Fund of Books For Africa was announced at a special ceremony at the Better World Books warehouse in Indiana. The first check in the amount of \$55,000 was formally presented. This revolving fund, providing \$165,000 in each of fiscal years 2007 and 2008 (to defray shipping costs), will enable the shipping of well over 17 containers (600,000 books) to Africa in the coming fiscal year.

"We are thrilled to be able to set up the Better World Books Fund with Books For Africa and provide a committed stream of funding for specific book shipments that our partners

(student groups, libraries, corporate book drive sponsors, and the general public supporting us through their purchases on www.Betterworld.com) can help directly support and sponsor," said Better World Books President and CEO, David Murphy. "Working closely with our supporters and Books For Africa, the Better World Books Fund will make a very immediate and significant impact by getting desperately needed books to more African children in more communities throughout the continent."

Better World Books is BFA's largest funder and its largest source of university-level books. For FY 08, Better World Books will be providing a minimum of \$600,000 in cash contributions, a full 50% of the BFA operating budget. These donations will be generated from book collection activities on over 1,000 college campuses and 800 libraries across the United States where Better World Books has a presence. Thank you Better World Books!

"I recently returned from Tanzania where I spent six months teaching mathematics to form one and form four students at Kifaru Secondary School. The conditions at the school were typical to an African school, 40 students in an old room with 30 desks and a beat up chalk board. Out of 120 students I taught, only one actually had a textbook."

"We hope by working together we can bring hope to the youth through reading."

—Vincent D'Agostino, Peace Corps Volunteer in Swaziland

Board of Directors

Gena Doyscher, President
Michael Henley, President-Elect
Emma Kasiga, Secretary
Thomas Warth, Founder
Nance Anders
Lane Ayres
Henry A. Bromelkamp
Jan Clymer
Xavier Helgesen
Karen Johnson
Gerald Mroska
Luanne Nyberg
Wil Ofori
Doris Pagelkopf
Pam Pappas Stanoch

2005-2006 Ambassadors Circle Members

Abdurashid Ali Somali Family Services
Frank Babka World Population Balance
Carol Engebretson Byrne President, Minnesota International Center
Alan Castro Co-Founder, Academic Book Services
Adam Ciresi Target Corporation
Michael Wirth-Davis President and CEO, Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota
Almena Dees Lerner Publications
Jack Fortin World Vision (retired), Center for Lifelong Learning
Tom Gitaa Editor, Mshale
Pat Harris St. Paul City Council
Rang Hee Kim Counterpart International
Jim Klobuchar Public Speaker
Ruth Knoll The Andrah Foundation
Joseph A. Miller Vice President, Follett Educational Services
The Honorable Anna Mkapa Chairperson, Equal Opportunities For All Trust Fund (Tanzania)
David W. Murphy President and CEO, Better World Books
Rachel Riensche Minnesota Public Radio
Barbara Rose Aid to Africa Federation
Nata Samb Lincoln International High School

Margaret Sents

Karen Sawyer Smith Wells Fargo
Chris Smithco World Vision
Carol Taylor International Education Program Coordinator, Brother's Brother Foundation
Asratie Teferra Zebra Consulting International
Gary Waltenbaugh MercyCorps
John Vreyens Director, University of Minnesota, Office of International Agricultural Programs

Paid Staff

Patrick Plonski, Executive Director
Deb McDonald, Assistant Director
Carole Patrikakos, Development Associate
Kristin Kane, Program Associate — Promotions and Logistics
Brad Mattson, Warehouse Manager
David Lund, Warehouse Assistant
Erin Groble, Intern



Books For Africa
253 E 4th Street, Suite 200
St. Paul, MN 55101 USA

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NOTE: If your name and/or address is incorrect or if you no longer wish to receive BFA's newsletter, please make name and/or address corrections or write "delete" on your mailing label and return it to BFA.



Combined
Federal
Campaign

Combined Federal Campaign

**Books For Africa's
fiscal year ends on
June 30th. Please
help us out with an
end of fiscal year
gift if you can!**

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
PERMIT NO. 4593



**"So many parents
cannot afford the cost
of books whereas
within a library they will
be at the reach of all."**

—Ms. Silvia Ebote,
Director, Global Education
Services,
Cameroon



**"I ask you to assist us
with books on all sub-
jects... to have literate
communities with
know how.... Your
assistance with books
will revolutionize the
situation in many lives
here. "**

—Arthur Mbumbuka,
Director Youth Build Future,
Mbeya, Tanzania

Left: Schools received books distributed
by BFA through The Friends For Life NGO
based in Accra, Ghana in the fall of 2006.



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Tel: (+254-20) 810901-19
Fax: (+254-20) 811575
Website: www.ku.ac.ke
When replying please quote

P.O. Box 43844-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
E-mail: kuvc@nbnet.co.ke

Ref.:KVC/10/8/3-1/79

6th June, 2007

Mr Patrick Plonski
Executive Director
Books for Africa
253 East 4th Street, Suite 200
Saint Paul, MN 55101
U.S.A.

Dear Mr Plonski,

RE: BOOKS FOR KENYATTA UNIVERSITY FROM BOOKS FOR AFRICA (BFA)

This is to thank you for your participation in the function where His Excellency the Ambassador of Kenya to the United States officially received books on behalf of Kenyatta University from your organization, Books for Africa (BFA).

An important aspect of Kenyatta University's Strategic and Vision Plan is to establish links with institutions of higher learning, organizations who share common interests with us, and our growing number of alumni spread across the world. I have noted that your organization which started operations in 1988 has shipped more than 15 million books to educational institutions in several African countries in an effort to meet your meet your goal of "ending the book famine in Africa".

Given the closer relationship that Kenyatta University is forging with its alumni spread across the United States and elsewhere, it is my belief that your organization will be of great assistance in shipping educational materials that have been collected for us.

I wish, on behalf of Kenyatta University, to thank you for having assisted in shipping the books to us.

With kind regards.

Yours Sincerely,

PROF. OLIVE M. MUGENDA, Ph.D, EBS
VICE-CHANCELLOR

c.c. Dr. Harris Mule, Chancellor, Kenyatta University
Prof. Onesmo ole-MoiYoi, Chairman, Kenyatta University Council

FQG/jgw

Kenyan Ambassador Receives Books for Kenyatta University from Books For Africa

Reprinted from media sources

On June 2, 2007, the Kenyan Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Peter Ogego, on behalf of Kenyatta University received thousands of books from Books For Africa (BFA), a non-governmental organization based in St. Paul, Minnesota. In welcoming Ambassador Ogego, Patrick Plonski, Executive Director of Books For Africa pointed out that BFA enjoys working with institutions throughout Africa and the United States to transport books and educational materials to end the "book famine" in Africa. Established in 1988, BFA is the largest shipper of donated textbooks to the African continent and believes that the greatest equalizer is to give individuals access to an education. Plonski said his organization was proud to partner with all groups involved in this momentous Kenyatta University (KU) project.

The current book drive for KU has been a collaborative effort between the Vice Chancellor, Professor Olive Mugenda and Dr. Edward Kisiangani, the Director of Alumni Relations at KU; Deb McDonald, Assistant Director, BFA; Wilfred Pere, Educa-



Representing Friends and Alumni of KU at the ceremony were Dr. Leah Keino and Dr. Ebby Luvaga of Iowa State University, Dr. Jane Rose Njue of Northern Illinois University, Dr. Agnes Odinga of Hamline University, and Dorothy Rombo (faculty on study-leave from KU) of the University of Minnesota, who have all been actively involved in this project since October 2006. Also present were Wilfred Pere, and James Wakiaga, First Counsellor at the Kenyan Embassy.

tion Attaché Kenyan Embassy in the United States; and Friends and Alumni of KU in the Diaspora who collected books from colleagues at their institutions. Kenyatta University is meeting the costs of shipping these books from the United States to Nairobi.

In receiving the books, Ambassador Ogego emphasized the importance of education in Kenya and pledged his support to the Diaspora community in the US to engage with projects that help foster development in Kenya. He pointed out that Kenya's expansion of higher education is exerting pressure on available resources and such efforts are needed to bridge the resource gap.

Although the current KU-Book Project was initiated and implemented by Friends and Alumni of KU in the Midwest of the United States, Pere challenged other groups to initiate similar projects to support other public and private universities in Kenya.



Patrick Plonski, Executive Director, BFA welcomes Kenyan Ambassador to the US, His Excellency Peter Ogego at the BFA Warehouse.

"Our school we look after orphans who cannot afford secondary school education in our community...we need your help for text books for our school library."

**—Sr. Stella Nabacwa,
Project Manager, Mukono, Uganda**

"We are proud to be associated with Books For Africa that is determined to quench the thirst and famine for text books in Africa."

**—Hassan Basajja,
Chairman Board of Trustees,
Kampala International University,
Uganda**