

*Dear Friends of Voices of Hope:*

*I hope each one of you had a good summer. I was in Kenya for two months this summer working on our Voices of Hope Project. While in Kenya, I was able to visit with our Voices of Hope first group of students. Eleven out of the fourteen have graduated from college. This group of young women has come a long way from where they were when they first started two years ago: frightened, facing genital mutilation/forced marriages, and lacking in self-confidence. Now they appear hopeful, optimistic, sure of themselves, and confident in their future, the future of their families and of the Maasai community.*



*In the last two years these young women have demonstrated their leadership skills through their volunteer work in the Maasai and non-Maasai communities. They have become change agents and teachers, and have tackled big issues such as: lack of education for girls/women, health problems (especially in the area of HIV and AIDS), and the malnutrition of children. Most important, they have had the courage to address traditional beliefs and practices such as female circumcision, and forced marriages. These practices have denied the education of the female child, justified the violation of female human rights, and led to the lack of respect and leadership opportunities for girls and women in their community.*

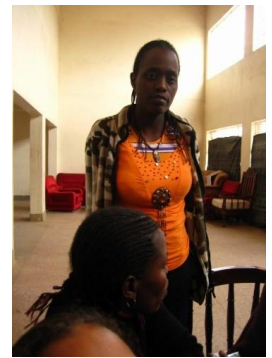
*I would like to share how each of our eleven graduates are doing. Sumule and Lorna, (both Community Development graduates) are doing their internships with social services in two rural stations of the Kajiado District. We received news that they are doing exemplary work; empowering young Maasai girls and also educating the community about the value of education for both boys and girls. Susan, (our other Community Development graduate) is working in a small supermarket in Kajiado as she continues to seek work in her field of study. Betty, (a Hotel Management and Tourism graduate) has become engaged to a man of her choice and is looking for work in her field. Miriam, (our Education Major) has been employed to teach at a private elementary school in Kajiado District beginning September. Diana and Catherine, (our two Catering School graduates) are interviewing and actively enterprising by advertising their baking abilities of cakes and pastries at the local restaurants in Kajiado. Sison, (our graduate from Secretarial College) is interviewing and looking for employment. Jennifer, Jennifer K, and Magdaline (our graduates from Cosmetology) continue to be successful in their own Beauty Salon. These ladies have proven that Maasai women can make a career as beauticians and business women, and have enjoyed watching their customer base and business continue to grow. Three of our original students are still in college. Evelyne will be a third year student at Moi University studying Sociology and Women's Studies. Sarah is continuing to pursue her degree in Epidemiology, and Faith is in her third year studying for a Registered Nursing Degree.*



*This trip was also very exciting because I was able to work with my Voices of Hope Kenya Committee and choose another group of fourteen young women. Along with our three remaining students, we will have seventeen women studying in various colleges this September. This year's recruitment was bittersweet and very difficult. We had to make some extremely hard decisions in narrowing down the candidates from the 143 applications we received. Our committee listened to each of the candidates as they told their heart breaking stories of poverty and the hardships they endured. Some of them had already experienced forced genital mutilation and some had run away from their*

father's home and were hiding with relatives to keep from being forced to marry. Their stories and their pleas for help were heart rendering and we yearned for the ability to be able to help them all.

***This experience, as difficult as it was, only reinforced to us our need for more Sponsors and also the necessity of building a Safe Home as soon as possible to protect these young women from these atrocities and discriminatory cultural practices.*** I am so thankful to those of you who have made the decision to become Sponsors and donors to our Project. You are not only rescuing these young women from the violent act and on-going pain and degradation of female genital mutilation, but also from enduring forced marriage and a life of poverty. As a result of your intervention, they can now achieve their dreams of further education and become positive leaders and change agents for others in their community so they too can have "voices of hope".



In addition to the recruitment of our new students, we were also able to begin phase one of our borehole/building project that will include a Safe Home/Community Center. The road was completed, the fence was put up, and we were able to construct a small metal building where our security guard and his family will stay. Later this fall, the borehole will be drilled and water will be made available to the community, local elementary school, and our future Safe Home/Center. Once the water is available, our security guard will also plant and over-see a garden that will provide vegetables to our Safe Home and a source of income for our Project. We are so thankful to our benefactors for their faith in our Project and their wish to make a difference in the lives of young Maasai women and their community. We also ask for your prayers as we continue to look for funds for phase two of our Project that will include the Safe Home/Community Center.



In spite of all that we have been able to accomplish this past summer, there is still much to do; and the need continues to be great. We are so thankful for those who have been faithful in supporting our Project and we ask others to also search their hearts to see how they too can help. Perhaps you are able to provide assistance with grant writing, bookkeeping, printing, fund-raising, or our website. Or, maybe you wish to host a Voices of Hope event at your home, club, or church to introduce others to the Voices of Hope Project. There is also a great need for financial assistance in the building of our Safe Home and Sponsorship for one of the 129 young women who were left behind. Sponsorship is \$100 per month and can be shared with others. (Four people providing \$25/mo. or 10 people providing \$10/mo. can sponsor one young woman for an entire year of education, food, shelter, and safety.) Or perhaps you are not able to assist us financially and are only able to support us in prayer. For any and all of these acts of kindness, we are truly thankful and trust that you will follow your heart where it leads you. Blessings to you and yours...Rachael Tengbom [shoenkai@aol.com](mailto:shoenkai@aol.com) (509)-438-8835 \* VOH\*P.O. Box 6563\*Kennewick, WA 99336 <http://voicesofhope-kenya.blogspot.com/>



-----**(Clip & mail to: Voices of Hope\*P.O. Box 6563\*Kennewick, WA \* 99336)**-----

\_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor a Voices of Hope Student at the following amount per month: \_\_\_\$100 \_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\$25 \_\_\_\$10 Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Make a 1X Pledge of: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Assist with \_\_\_Bookkeeping \_\_\_Grant Writing \_\_\_Website \_\_\_Fund Raising \_\_\_Other

\_\_\_\_\_ Make a monthly Pledge to the Safe Home/Center in the amount of \_\_\_\$25 \_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\$100 \_\_\_\$200 \_\_\_\$500 Other\$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to host a Voices of Hope "Party With a Purpose" to help spread the word about Voices of Hope and its mission. Rachael Tengbom will be your speaker and African items will be made available to your guests. Contact: [theo\\_dobie@yahoo.com](mailto:theo_dobie@yahoo.com) for info.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_