



GIRL CHILD NETWORK WORLDWIDE ACTION PACKET

OUR MISSION

Girl Child Network Worldwide supports and promotes girls' rights, empowerment and education by reaching out to girls anywhere who are economically deprived, at risk of abuse, subject to harmful cultural practices, or living in areas of instability.

BRIEF HISTORY

Girl Child Network was founded in 1998 by Betty Makoni in Zimbabwe. She and 10 high school girls established a girls' club in a local high school to combat the trauma of terrible sexual abuse that Betty herself had undergone, and that many girls were enduring from teachers, relatives and even officials. GCN has built four empowerment villages and 700 chapters across the country.

OUR PROGRAMS

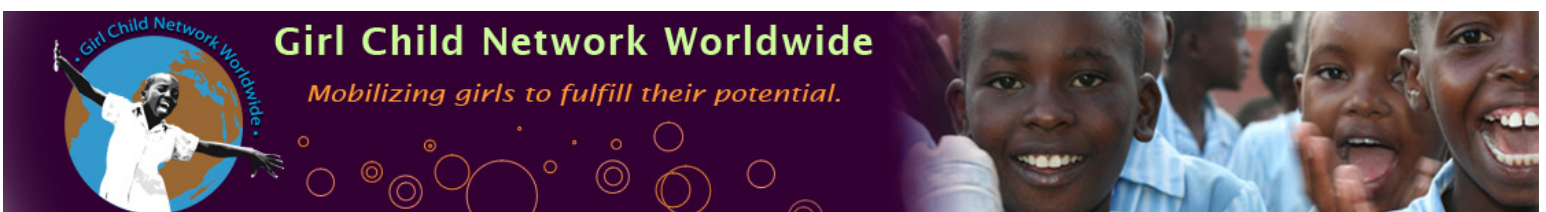
1. Grow the Girl Child Empowerment Model

- GCNW mobilizes girls into school clubs that enable them to learn their rights, prevent sexual violence and harassment, and become self-confident leaders.
- GCNW builds empowerment villages, integral centres for victims of sexual violence that provide medical, legal and educational services as well as access to police protection. We help to transform girl victims into survivors and leaders.

2. Raise money for the Girls Empowerment and Education Fund

- The first ever girls' empowerment and educational fund responds to crisis situations where girls' futures are at risk.
- We provide small grants for GCN clubs and self-help projects to enable girls to survive.

3. Make the GCNW centre in Essex, UK, the hub of international training in the Girl Child Empowerment Model.





HOW TO ORGANIZE A FUNDRAISER FOR GCNW

BEFORE THE EVENT

- o MAKE A LIST of friends from school, family, a club, book group or anyone whom you want to tell about Girl Child Network Worldwide. If you don't already have a fundraising kit and registration number from GCNW, send an email to info@girlchildnetwork.org to request one.
- o DECIDE ON A DATE and invite guests. Consider if you'd like to offer refreshments.

DAY OF THE EVENT

- o ASK GUESTS TO SIGN IN (sheet enclosed) as you welcome them.
- o PLAN TO SAY A FEW WORDS. Share with them why you are inspired by GCNW. Share the personal stories in this packet if you wish.
- o GIVE THEM BACKGROUND INFORMATION about the organization. (See pages 1 and 5.)
- o SHOW THE 30-MINUTE GCN VIDEO on your computer at www.girlchildnetworkworldwide.org, or on a DVD (email us if you need one). Answer questions or have a discussion about what people saw.
- o ENCOURAGE DONATIONS. Remember, every cent is appreciated. \$14 can feed a girl for a month. The inflation rate is so ridiculously high in Zimbabwe, for example, that one US dollar goes a very long way.

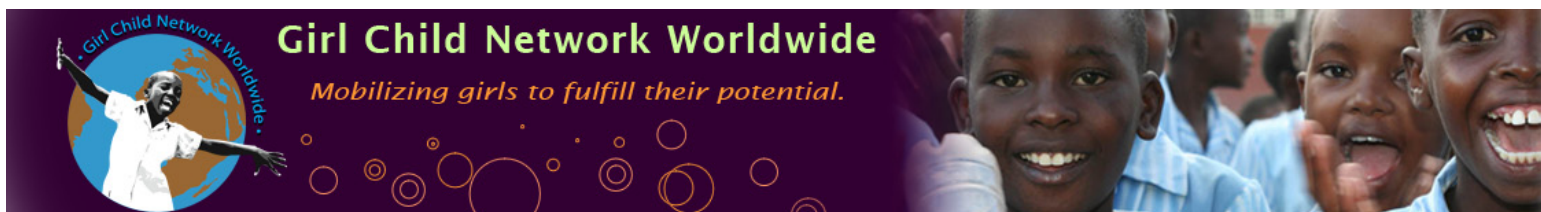
- o INFORM GUESTS THAT THEY CAN GO ONLINE TO MAKE DONATIONS at www.girlchildnetworkworldwide.org, which will go directly to the GCNW's trust fund in UK. The most successful fundraisers leave the computer on and ask people to donate right then and there!

OR: If guests want to write checks, they should be made out to Girl Child Network Trust Fund UK. (Note that checks to Girl Child Network Worldwide can not be deposited).

AFTER THE EVENT

- o SEND THE CHECKS in one envelope to:
Girl Child Network Trust Fund UK
P.O. Box 239
4200 Park Blvd.
Oakland, California 94602 USA

If you're outside USA, be sure to attach enough postage and mail donations to:
Girl Child Network Trust Fund UK
Dove Project
4 West Road
Westcliff on Sea
Essex SS0 9DA
United Kingdom
- o THANK YOUR GUESTS by email or by hand for coming and/or for donating. Consider asking the people who weren't able to come to make a donation.
- o FIND OUT if anyone wants to organize their own event and send their email to info@girlchildnetwork.org.





REAL GIRLS, REAL STORIES

The World Health Organization reports that the average life expectancy for women in Zimbabwe is 34 years.

ONE SMALL STEP TO EMPLOYMENT; ONE GIANT STEP FOR WOMANKIND

Gillian Bomba lost her parents to AIDS at an early age. She had to fend for herself and her siblings. She moved a lot so as not to burden relatives, but she always kept up in school and got good grades. At age 21, Gillian completed advanced classes and excelled at music, and was ready to graduate and work as a teacher. But with skyrocketing inflation in Zimbabwe, she couldn't pay her school fees of \$150 to get her diploma. Since Gillian had been active in Girl Child Network empowerment clubs for several years, she turned to Girl Child Network Worldwide for help. When Melanie Doherty learned of Gillian's plight at a fundraiser, she not only pledged the \$150, but donated the money online right away to the GCNW Girls' Empowerment and Education Fund.

"I really need to collect my school results so I can look for work as a temporary teacher and sustain my HIV positive sister and my younger sister."

- Gillian Bomba, GCN member

WATCH OUT

By Gillian Bomba

We can do anything, the sky is the limit
 You did what you did to us
 But this time we will not let you escape
 Don't say we didn't warn you.
 We will harm you.
 Only to make sure that we are free and safe.

Reprinted with permission, Paola Gianturco, Women Who Light the Dark (powerHouse Books, 2007)

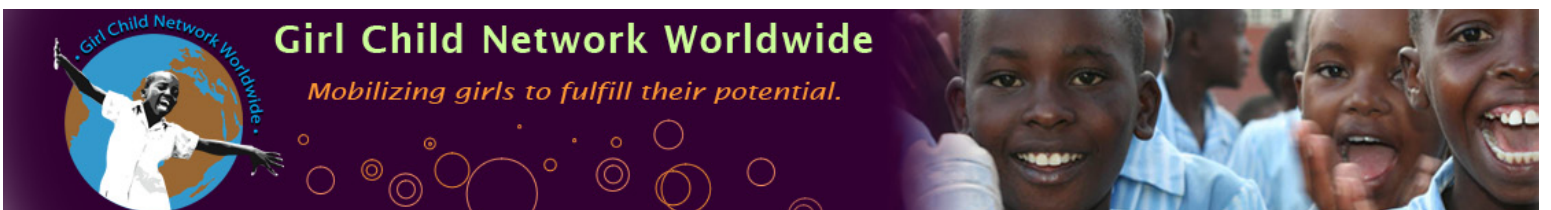
\$14 ALLEVIATES STARVATION

Zimbabwe's government-sponsored youth militia has been terrorizing the population for many years. One main method: beating and raping women and girls of all ages. Some girls fled for their lives to South Africa or Botswana. They arrived starving and suffering from bruised bodies and torn genitals. A US supporter of Girl Child Network heard about it and gathered her friends and family to raise money for the girls - the result: \$2,600. Esther Saidi, a 20-year old girl who had benefited from GCN scholarships sent news that 143 girls each received a rescue packet containing oil, cornmeal, sugar, soy, soap, Vaseline and sanitary pads. Each packet cost \$14 and lasts a month. GCN used the remaining \$600 to give extra cash to survivors who were the most severely hurt.

"Each food kit reassured every girl that despite extreme poverty and starvation in Zimbabwe, there is hope."

- Betty Makoni, GCN Founder and President

www.girlchildnetworkworldwide.org



STOP RAPE

Following is an excerpt from *Women Who Light the Dark*, by Paola Gianturco:

Stopping child rape has become a national issue and GCN members and staff lead the movement. They have earned support from people in government, churches, nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and from educators, Kraal heads, chiefs, politicians, men, boys, and women.

The first step for GCN: empower girls to protect and defend themselves, and to help one another. If a girl is raped, GCN obtains medical, psychological, and legal counseling and provides safe haven for up to 100 at its three [now four-Ed.] Empowerment Villages. . . . The organization also conducts media campaigns against rape perpetrators, and pass for laws that levy stringent penalties for rapists and the traditional healers who counsel them.

(Reprinted with permission, powerHouse Books, 2007) <http://www.womenwholightthedark.com>

The Mutasa District was widely known as having the highest number of rape cases in the country. GCN has been conducting prevention and response programs there for a decade, and a major decline in rape has been reported by the Sherukuru police.

TURNING HIERARCHY ON ITS HEAD

Zimbabwe has the highest ratio of orphans to population than any other country in the world, according to UNICEF. Recently, community groups that serve orphans, including GCN, gathered for education and celebration. This day was unique because the so-called “high table” was set for the orphans, not the invited guests, as is the norm. While the rest of the gathering was served only sadza and stewed meat, the special guests (orphans) were served sadza, stewed meat, rice, matemba, beans and juice. It was humbling and heartwarming to witness such noble work being done by very poor communities for the disadvantaged.

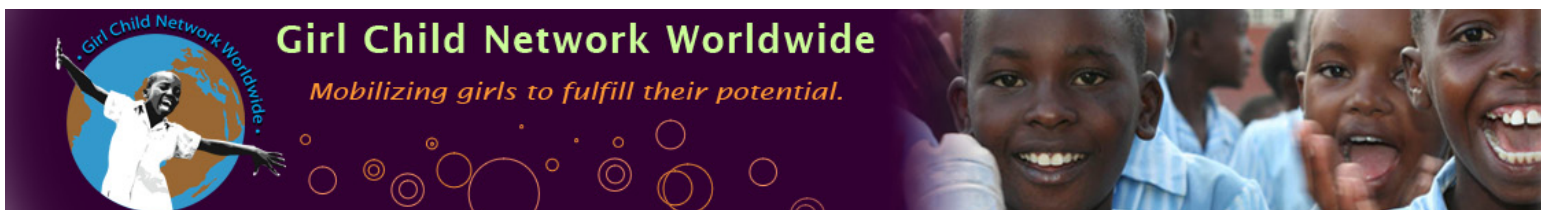
UNIFORMED SOLIDARITY

By Betty Makoni, Founder and President, Girl Child Network Worldwide

I breathed a huge sigh of relief when my colleagues Priscilla and Pippa announced that 10 boxes of uniforms had been donated to GCN. When I visited the rural girls clubs we'd built in Zimbabwe, I found girls half-naked and cold or hungry. My conscience shook me because the girls taught me that too much luxury, which I was enjoying by then as GCN Director, was just too dangerous. I asked myself how we can empower girls when their basic needs are not met. I had long forgotten that one day I had walked to the rich girls' school in a half pair of shoes, and when everyone laughed at me, I failed to excel in any subject that term as I had done before.

Every girl going to school must have a decent uniform or just a dress that will make her feel part of the school and will boost her confidence to succeed. The story of one rural Zimbabwean girl heading to Oxford University whom I met during an empowerment program in rural Rusape has made me think about kind actions we can do for girls—807 uniforms and some warm jackets now in Zimbabwe are being distributed through girls clubs.

It's quite a symbolic message to girls that education must be attained despite big obstacles. So there we are, ladies—every uniform to every girl does not end only with an actual piece of warm clothing, but it represents the uniformed solidarity of our struggle for equality in education.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GCNW

The Girl Child Empowerment Model works well because when girls learn and defend their rights, they turn knowledge into power.

WHERE DOES MY DONATION GO?

100% of your donation (minus a 1%-2.7% paypal transaction fee if you donate online) goes to the Girl Child Network Trust Fund in UK. For example, a volunteer raised \$2,600 from friends that went to 143 girls who had been assaulted by the Zimbabwean youth militia. They received basic food and sanitary supplies.

Donations also support peer groups and education about girls' rights. Abused girls can stay in empowerment villages. The Girls Empowerment and Education Fund helps girls finish school, relieves severe poverty and enables them to know and defend their rights as equal citizens.

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IS MY DONATION TAX DEDUCTIBLE?

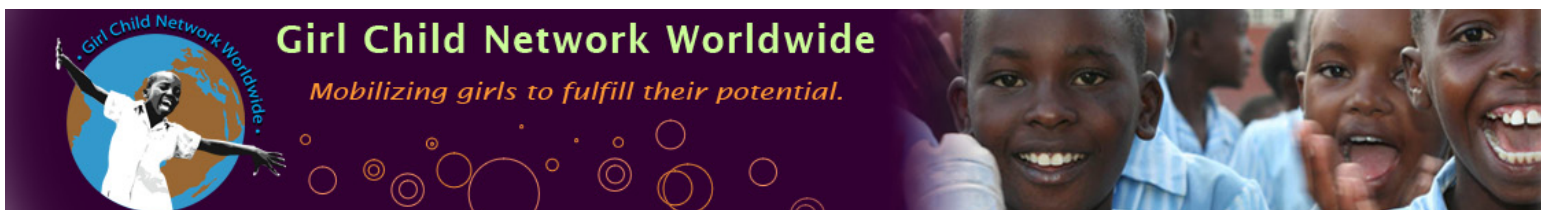
If you are from the UK, your donation is tax deductible. If you are from anywhere outside UK, your donation is not tax deductible. GCNW is applying for charity [501-(c)-3] status in the United States. When that goes through, donations by US residents will be tax-deductible.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED? Go to our website (www.girlchildnetworkworldwide.org) and sign up under "Volunteer." We always need help spreading the word and raising money. Keep in mind that even a dollar goes a long way.

HOW CAN I SET UP A GIRL CHILD NETWORK CLUB? Contact the main office in UK at gcnworldwide@btinternet.com and they will send you a manual.

Photos by Paola Gianturco and Girl Child Network. Select photos reprinted with permission from Women Who Light the Dark by Paola Gianturco, powerHouse Books, 2007.

www.girlchildnetworkworldwide.org



Girl Child Network Worldwide

Mobilizing girls to fulfill their potential.

