



Embassy of the United States of America

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3 June 2008

Dear Zane

I just wanted to send you a note today to tell you how much I appreciate the work SADAG is doing and how effective I think your training especially the Speaking Books have been in the communities I am working with.

As you may recall, we funded the SADAG training of staff and caregivers for 3 paralegal advice centres in the Eastern Cape. The centres included Lusikisiki Paralegal Advice Centre, Port St Johns Community Advice Centre, and Qunu Advice Centre. These groups received funding from the US Ambassador's Community Grants Program in 2007 to help further the work they are doing in their respective communities to help orphans and vulnerable children. As part of the funding for each of these groups, we included training by SADAG on depression specifically as it relates to children, trauma, and HIV/AIDS. This we did to prepare the project members with some training on OVC psychosocial issues because we were also funding them to conduct OVC awareness workshops in their respective communities (with various stakeholders) and wanted to make sure the psychosocial issues were discussed in the workshops. I visited with the groups in May, and they were all **extremely pleased** with the training and Speaking Books and have even asked for additional ones in Lusikisiki so that government representatives and other stakeholders can be trained. This is at the specific request of the stakeholders who heard about how good it was. I am convinced that the training you gave them was excellent preparation. Thanks so much for that!

I know you already know that the Speaking Books are a big hit, but one of my Eastern Cape project coordinators asked me specifically for your details so that she could order more of the books. She plans to use them continually in the communities as an outreach tool. She recently had visitors to her site from the Department of Social Development and she showed them the book she has and how she uses it. They were **very impressed** and have asked that she be funded by the District Municipality as a mentor to other groups because her group is a model in its methods and effectiveness. I believe Nomonde is so keen to use these books because they are in the local language, they are so informative and educational, but mostly because they are **fun** as well and people respond to them more than to the same old printed brochures. They are especially good for a person who can't read at all, but who need some confirmation in a printed form that what a caregiver is telling him is true. Here is a book that talks to you - so you don't have to read to know you have "seen it in writing". The response we had to the books from the caregivers here at my Ambassador's Ceremony and workshop was really something -- they all wanted more and tried to get more out of your staff. Thanks for sending the extra Speaking Books that you did - although it has started immense competition among my grantees!

I only wish I had more money for each project. I would like to see SADAG training and Speaking Books going to each of my grantees, and I will work on it for next year...

Thanks so much for all you do. It's great to have such a group like SADAG doing this type of work at this time in South Africa. It has definitely made a difference in the areas I am working.

Regards,
Chalone Savant
HIV/AIDS Community Grants Coordinator
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