

September 2013

Dear friends,

“We don’t want relief. We want water. Give us water, and we can grow our own food.”

Those words are the basis for Sahakarini’s latest project - the building of a sand dam in Kenya. We are working in partnership with the very experienced Utooni Development Organization there.

Sand dams are practical, sustainable, grassroots initiatives that will benefit a whole community for years to come. The dams are designed to catch, filter and conserve water for later use. With more reliable, safe and plentiful water, people can grow more produce and from there generate added income to start new enterprises and live healthier lives.

You can hear more about them at our eleventh annual **Loaves and Fishes Dinner on Friday, November 15, at the Norsemen Inn, Camrose**. Our presenter will be Barb Stolee of Calgary whose visit to a sand dam led to our participation.

In 2010 many of you purchased goats for distribution to widows in Iryango, Uganda. Last winter Don and Chris Rebus had the opportunity to visit the village and meet many of the women. They saw firsthand the difference a goat, a hoe and small plot of land can make to a family and a community. You can see some of their photos at the Dinner as well.

There have been a number of changes at Sahakarini over the past year. Because of changes in direction at CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) we, like many other smaller organizations, no longer receive project funding from them. We are grateful for the funding we have had in the past and for all we learned working with them. We feel confident and capable to carry out projects on our own even though they may of necessity be smaller in scope.

For the next while we will need to concentrate on smaller projects than those undertaken in the past but ones that still have very high impact. Sand dams fit very well into this framework. We also continue to anticipate funding support through the provincial Community Initiatives Program.

Another implication of the changes at CIDA is that we can no longer afford the services of an executive director and must rely more than ever on the engagement of our committed and talented board, volunteers, and supporters to reach out and get the job done.

We plan to conserve our resources and still keep in touch through better use of the internet and e-mail. There is a note enclosed with this letter asking for your e-mail address. This is important because the more of you we can contact by e-mail, the better we can conserve our resources. Just return the card or send us an email at sahakarini@gmail.com letting us know. If like me, you still like that piece of paper in your hand, we will certainly continue to contact you by regular mail.

We are also looking into ways of e-mailing donation receipts, again a way of making the best use of our resources. To provide you with ongoing information on our projects and events, we have revamped our website. Visit us at www.sahakarini.org

In closing, I would like to personally **invite you** to the **Loaves and Fishes Dinner on Friday, November 15 at 5:30 pm at the Norsemen Inn, Camrose**. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. Tickets are \$35 for adults, \$20 for students and \$10 for children under 12. For more information you may call the office at (780) 672-8222 or dinner chairperson, Valerie Fielding, at (780) 672-5948.

Someone once described Sahakarini to me as “**a community of friends with a shared passion to help the poor and the marginalized.**” That community remains strong and we hope that we can continue to count on your friendship and support. There is so much we can accomplish together.

Sincerely,

Gail Stolee
President