Dear Friends,

As many of you know, one of HTH’s greatest strengths is our ability to empower and mobilize local communities in Togo to design their own response to the AIDS epidemic. Over the past year we have seen this approach mirrored in communities throughout the US and Canada. Using a decentralized community mobilization model, groups of individuals, large and small, have developed new and creative ways to generate tremendous support for our friends in Togo.

The pages of this newsletter are filled with examples of communities in the US and Canada who have come together around a cause. Through innovation and dedication these individuals have succeeded in organizing events, generating increased awareness and raising significant funds to support HTH’s work in Togo. I have had the pleasure of attending many of these events and have been repeatedly amazed by the time and dedication of so many individuals. If you were able to attend one of these events, you have seen what I’m referring to. If not, I recommend browsing through the pictures on the following pages and reading some of the short descriptions of recent events.

While this newsletter focuses on the accomplishments of communities throughout the US and Canada, we cannot forget the amazing and inspiring work our sister communities continue to achieve in Togo. In December 2008, HTH’s partner organization, AED-Lidaw, inaugurated its fourth health center in Togo. Located in the impoverished town of Kande, this center has tremendous potential to reach individuals who previously had limited or no access to adequate health care. Since December, the Kande center has already made great strides. Over 20 community members have been trained as essential staff and more than 50 new patients have begun receiving services. As developments in Kande bring hope to a new community of individuals affected by HIV/AIDS, work in our other three centers continues to grow and thrive.

This life-saving work would not be possible without the tireless efforts of our US based volunteers and the continued support of our dedicated donors. On behalf of our friends in Togo, n’labale, thank you, for the time, energy and support you contribute to this important movement.

In Solidarity,
Jennifer Schechter, Executive Director-HTH
First Annual Fête de Charité

This event was held on December 16, 2008 at The Upper Crust in New York City. Organized by Peace Corps Volunteer Aimee de la Houssaye, along with family and friends, this event was a tremendous success, raising over $15,000 for HTH. Aimee has had a big impact on the work of HTH during her two years of Peace Corps service in Togo. Many thanks to Aimee and her family for a terrific event!

Third Annual Hope Through Health Benefit

Held on November 15, 2008 in Huntington, NY, this event raised over $20,000 for HTH. 22 individuals joined the Stand With Us Campaign during this year's Benefit and pledged support for a total of 34 children!

HTH Presents at University of Washington Global Health Conference

On April 5th, HTH presented a poster describing its community-based model of HIV/AIDS care at the Global Health Education Consortium’s Annual Conference. HTH Directors were present to discuss the Community Directed HIV Initiative with the Conference’s 700 attendees. HTH was pleased to be part of this important event.

This year’s event also featured the premiere of a new short film entitled We Are One Family. If you missed this event and the film’s premiere it is available for viewing on our website http://hthglobal.org. Please take a moment to visit the site and watch this powerful short film.
We are so thankful for our ever-growing family of supporters and anticipate an expanded list of chapters in 2009! For those interested in starting a chapter, or in hosting an individual funding event in support of HTH, please contact Lauren Dockweiler at Ldockweiler@hthglobal.com.

If you are interested in getting involved with one of our existing chapters, please contact:

Colorado – Larine Martin at CO@hthglobal.org
San Diego – Eric Goldman at SD@hthglobal.org
DC – Anna Scwoch at DC@hthglobal.org
Los Angeles - Jacqui Lang at LA@hthglobal.org
New York – Mike Stockman at NYC@hthglobal.org
Seattle - Gavin Oxman at SEATTLE@hthglobal.org

Chapters Progress (2008)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds Raised</th>
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<td>Number of Events Organized</td>
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<td>Number of Active Chapter Members</td>
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<td>Number of Active Chapters</td>
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World AIDS Day Highlights

December 1, 2008, marked the eighth recognized celebration of World AIDS Day, and for Hope Through Health (HTH), the beginning of a month-long spree of Chapter activity. Six Events were planned in over six different cities, raising awareness around HTH’s mission in relation to the worldwide HIV/AIDS epidemic. Event structure varied for each chapter, but all events shared the common objective of better acquainting supporters, new and old, with our family in Togo. Media Consultant Jared Macary’s film, We Are All One Family, was featured at many of the events and illustrated the powerful connection between US-based HTH and AED in Togo. In addition, former HTH field volunteers hosted private events around this important day, further expanding the mission beyond its existing structure.

Across the board in December, local events raised unprecedented levels of funding and support for HTH. A total of 300 of individuals attended HTH events, with over $23,000 raised to support our comprehensive healthcare program structure in Kara and its surrounding satellite centers. 2008 was a big year for HTH, marking the first official year of the organization’s expansion from its headquarters in Boston to individually established grassroots chapters located throughout the U.S.

Chapter Updates

The last two quarters of 2008 proved to be extremely productive for HTH grassroots activities. Individual Chapters were busy hosting events of every kind, ranging from individual house parties to triathlons. The busiest period of activity was December, with the largest number of events organized around World AIDS Day. In total, over fourteen events raised over $12,000 for Hope Through Health during the last half of the year. The chapter model has proven to be an extremely effective way to bring people closer to the cause, regardless of geographic location. With six active chapters in place, the hope is that our supporters will have the opportunity to be a part of a global mission on a local level.

Students Raise Awareness and Hope for Children of Togo

On May 6, 2008 Unionville Montessori School, in Markham, Ontario held a Red Day to raise money for Hope Through Health. The fundraiser was organized by the Grade 8 students who made a presentation and posters to introduce the charity to the school, collected money and presented their achievements to the rest of the student body. A few days after Rebecca Bigioni and Calvin Chan introduced the cause to the school through their presentation, every student enthusiastically brought in money to donate and dressed in red to show their support for the children in Togo who are struggling with AIDS. The halls and rooms of UMS bloomed in red t-shirts and dresses and $1,669 was raised for HTH.
World AIDS Day in Washington DC

HTH partnered with the Georgetown University AIDS Coalition (GUAC), a well established student organization that hosts an annual Unity LIVE concert/performance every year on World AIDS Day. Each year GUAC chooses a featured charity for the event and this year GUAC selected to donate all the proceeds to Hope Through Health. The event took place on December 5th, 2008 and featured dances and a cappella performances from around the world interspersed with presenters highlighting important facts and messages on HIV/AIDS. Anna Schwoch, HTH DC Chapter Representative, gave a very nice overview of HTH with pictures on a slideshow rotating behind her. Approximately 250 university students and members of the community attended the event at Georgetown University. Over $1,400 was raised for Hope through Health. GUAC has already indicated that they would like to feature HTH as the beneficiary organization for next year’s Unity LIVE concert!

Celebrating Togolese Independence with King Mensah & HTH

On April 25th, 2009, in celebration of Togolese Independence Day, an animated community of close to 400 welcomed "the King of Togolese music" in Greenbelt, MD for an amazing show. King Mensah hails from outside of Lome is the winner of 2 Kora Music Awards - “Philosophical, poetic and socially committed, King Mensah’s music and creations are inspired by Togolese music traditions. With a deep love for Togo and its musical legacy, King Mensah charms audiences with the traditional sounds of his country. The main theme of King Mensah’s music is hope: hope for street children, hope for the oppressed, but also hope for people of every country and origin”. In between musical acts, DC Chapter members Sewa Agbojan and Melanie Spence presented a brief overview of Hope through Health and how Togolese could get more involved here in the states. At the end of the concert, they were also interviewed by a Young African Online Radio Station about the importance of HTH and the issue of HIV in Togo. We were overwhelmed by a positive response from the Togolese community and a genuine interest to show solidarity with purchase of red ribbons and wanting to learn more about how to get involved. We look forward to expanding HTH’s opportunities to talk about it’s mission within more diverse and artistic forums.
HTH Annual Board & Member Meeting

2009 Hope Through Health members met in Washington D.C. for the annual membership meeting. A special thanks to Sara Bushman who organized meeting space at NAFSA: Association of International Educators

STAFF
Jennifer Schechter - Executive Director
Kevin Fiori Jr. - Associate Director
Dr. Aboukouwou Saibou - Medical Director
Kerim Abass - Psychosocial Director
Peter Denis - Field Director

Aimee Delahoussaye - Field Liaison (Ketaa)
Danielle Hess - Field Liaison (Bafilo)
Taylor Maturo - Field Liaison (Kande)
Lauren Dockweiler - Chapter Coordinator
Jon Lascher - Communications Coordinator
Patrick Aylward - Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant
Jared Macary - Communications Consultant

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HTH Annual Board Meeting

On January 24th, 2009, HTH board members and volunteers from across the country gathered in Washington, D.C. for a successful day of planning and discussions. Over 30 members filled the meeting room to capacity highlighting the dedication of HTH staff from across the country and marking the largest annual meeting for HTH since its inception in 2005. Even through these trying economic times, HTH members are committed to finding innovative and effective solutions for providing health services for the poorest of the poor in Togo.

HTH set ambitious goals for 2009 and is confident we will succeed with support from our extraordinary partners. 2009 promises to be an exciting year for all of our chapters across the country and our partners in Togo. HTH looks forward to expanding our national chapter campaign to include even more HTH supporters. There are also cutting edge media projects being developed in order to attract more support for our projects in Togo.
New Field Developments

-In December 2008, HTH opened its third satellite clinic in Kandé, an under-served rural town 40 miles north of Kara. The health center currently provides medical, psychosocial, and nutritional support to over 50 members. Membership is growing and by the end of 2009 staff anticipate providing services to over 100 members.

-With the reestablishment of ties between Togo and the European Union, the Togolese Ministry of Health has announced a program to provide antiretroviral therapy at no cost for up to 25,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Togo.

-Camp Espoir 2008 was a huge success! The Camp brought together 135 orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) from across Togo, including over 30 children from AED Kara, Bafilo, Kétao and Kandé. Children learned about health, income generating activities, human rights, and many other topics while having a great time just being kids. At the end of Camp Espoir, over 500 insecticide treated bed-nets were distributed to OVCs from HIV associations throughout Togo.

-HTH Volunteer, Mila Gorokhovich, completed her survey and feasibility study of small income generating activities currently underway at AED. HTH is currently investigating how to best implement her recommendations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>by the numbers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adults receiving medical and psychosocial care</td>
<td>1514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of female patients</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children living with HIV/AIDS receiving comprehensive support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patients receiving life-saving anti-retroviral therapy</td>
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<td>AIDS orphans supported</td>
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Camp Espoir

In 2008, AED Kara, in collaboration with the Peace Corps, successfully designed and implemented the fourth annual Camp Espoir. Over the past four years Camp Espoir has expanded to incorporate AIDS care associations from every region of Togo. This year nine associations with over 135 OVC campers participated in three weeks of Camp. AED Kara staff chose to emphasize networking and information sharing between care associations working with OVC populations. During pre-Camp training, over 25 Togolese association workers benefited from brainstorming sessions about providing effective care for children in resource poor settings and improving collaboration on HIV/AIDS treatment issues. AED is working to build capacity within the AIDS association community and is in turn ensuring the future success of Camp Espoir. AED staff write the Camp proposal, design and implement pre-Camp training, and serve as group leaders in all camp activities.

After camp ends, the work continues. Almost all participating associations created follow-up programs to maintain care for children. In the regional capital Atakpame, the association Cercle de Reflexion pour l’Emergence des Jeunes (CREJe), has created a Big Brothers and Big Sisters program. In Dapaong, Bassar, and Lomé similar programs are underway. In Kara, AED created Club Espoir, a monthly day camp that brings over 75 OVCs together. Operational since 2005, Club Espoir now includes children from the newly opened Kandé center. All of these follow up programs get the children out of their homes and into care centers where medical, psychosocial, and other consultations are provided. Camp Espoir is a unique and important project for AED and shows how a successful care model can be shared with other associations.
Karka

Karka tested HIV positive after her husband passed away. She spent the years following her husband’s death in and out of the Kandé hospital while simultaneously taking care of her two young children, Nicolas, and Pelagi. The sparsely stocked hospital could do very little for her. Every month Kandé’s physician assistant held support group meetings for people living with HIV/AIDS and each month I invited Karka to attend. She always refused, fearful that someone might find out she was HIV positive, causing shoppers to avoid purchasing vegetables from her at the market; her only source of income.

One evening, very late at night, the physician assistant and I secretly visited Karka. It was our last home visit after a long night of visiting families trying to mobilize community participation amongst people living with HIV/AIDS in Kandé. We were exhausted, and Karka knew it. Instead of inviting her to the next meeting we explained that we could not bring AIDS treatment services to Kandé without support from her and others in the community. She was silent for a few moments and shook her head. Karka realized that if community members did not work together for a solution, a solution would never come. She vowed that she would fight alongside us for as long as it took until affordable access to health care was available to every person living with HIV/AIDS in Kandé. During our visit, through the lantern light, I could see the passion in her eyes. She would not rest until AED opened. The process was slow at first. Members, freshly recruited by Karka, trickled into meetings month after month. By her third meeting, Karka, was a prominent member of the group, translating technical information from French to Lamba, Kandé’s local language. Over time the staff at AED Kara recognized her aptitudes and invited her to a series of training in Kara and Lomé. She became one of two people in Kandé able to perform pre- and post- HIV test counseling. Since October 2008 she has been working three and a half days a week without pay to provide free consultations to anyone who is HIV positive, or anyone that is thinking of getting tested for HIV/AIDS.

Before the inauguration of AED Kandé, Karka paced nervously. She was about to be named the president of AED Kandé in front of the entire community. Days earlier she confided in me that she did not want to give her acceptance speech in French as is protocol during most official Togolese ceremonies. Karka is a short woman, but when the moment came for her to speak, she took hold of the microphone and transformed from the once timid woman to the confident President of the most important association in Kandé. She spoke powerfully to her community in Lamba, about the importance of AED, urging the community to stop the discrimination that is so rampant in her community and get tested. The crowd cheered as she returned the microphone to its stand and later confessed how easy it had been to speak from her heart about something she is so passionate about. Karka Pierrette is now one of AED Kandé’s strongest recruiters, bringing people off the street to be tested and then making sure they get the care they need if they test positive.

Third Satellite Clinic Opened in Kandé

The HTH policy of decentralization is designed to make services more accessible and more affordable for impoverished individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Prior to the opening of the Kande center, AED Kara staff knew there were many individuals living with HIV in Kandé but few of them enrolled in AED Kara services. The cost of round trip transportation from Kandé to Kara is around $6.00, a nearly impossible fee on top of other costs including children’s school fees and food. The trip for a healthy person is arduous; stuffed into an overcrowded small car weighed down by a mountain of cargo makes for a long and uncomfortable ride. When AED opened its doors in Kande in December 2008, this barrier to care was removed. By bringing services closer to members, HTH is helping to save lives and money while at the same time empowering a community in their fight against HIV/AIDS.
January 1st is typically the most anticipated day of the year throughout Togo. It is a day where Togolese celebrate life and distance its difficulties from their minds. On this day in 2005 I ran into a mason named Kao at the village telephone booth. I hadn’t known him well but he looked distressed and eager to talk. He told me that his newborn baby girl had just died and he was sick as well. This was the beginning of a situation that would only worsen as the year continued.

A few months later, on a late rainy season morning, I was walking home with my friend and host brother Stan. We had just finished weeding a field of beans and were anxious to get back and shower and have lunch. Voices emerged from a distant field and we exchanged greetings. When we came closer they told us that Kao had died. It came as shock but death often comes quickly to rural Togo. Stan turned to me right away and told me that the cause had been AIDS. We slowed our pace and continued along the path in silence.

Kao left behind two wives, Adjoua and Adwa, and five young girls, the eldest had just begun high school. In Kabiye culture—the predominant ethnicity of northern Togo—only deaths of those 70 years and older are to be celebrated. Kao’s death was a somber affair: not only for the fact that he was just half way there, but also for the realization that AIDS had now reached a small subsistence village far away from any major city. Kao’s wives’, wearing just a cloth around their waists, went to the river to purify themselves after their husband’s death. This is a typical custom for Kabiye women yet what was not typical were the women’s bodies. Obvious to the onlookers were the wives’ withered forms. Clearly the disease had gone further than Kao and his daughter.

The next morning the Adjoua and Adwa went to weed their fields. There was no time to mourn as the women felt an increased burden to provide for themselves and their children. They worked hard and rarely stopped for a break. It was clear that Kao’s wives were in need of medical care and likely unable to afford the necessary treatment. This was the point of entry for the Association Hope for Tomorrow (AED), HTH’s partner in Togo. AED quickly sent up a psychosocial expert to talk to the family and assess the situation. After a few visits a level of trust had arisen and the women were willing to travel to Kara—the closest city—to be tested. This trust was essential especially as the women became gradually more alienated throughout the village as word spread that they did have AIDS. The immediate concern for Adjoua and Adwa’s health and the future of their children was compounded by villagers’ fear that they too could contract the disease, either through the local beer or pastries the women prepared for a source of income.

Adjoua and Adwa traveled down to Kara and their tests both came back positive. Adjoua had contracted Hepatitis B as well. A young woman named Rose accompanied the women throughout the process. Rose was an extremely strong and brave woman who had gone through the same process a couple of years earlier and had the same result. Soon after, the women were given their results and received additional consultations from AED’s support staff. They began taking the anti-retroviral treatment and returning to Kara once a month to receive this medication. Slowly a sense of hope was emerging, one where the women began to imagine that they would be there for their daughters’ future.

This process of medication and psychosocial support was complemented by the girls’ participation in a camp of other young people who had been affected by the disease. Three of the five girls attended Camp Hope where 50 children under similar circumstances gathered together to tell their stories, express themselves, and learn essential life skills. Kao’s family had gone from one of fear and uncertainty to hope and possibility. There were still many unanswered questions such as how to change the perceptions of the local community and how to feed a seven-person family while paying for school fees for five girls. But the dynamic had changed and both the women and the girls were provided a support network that restored their health and strengthened their prospects for the future.
Stand With Us Campaign 2009

What is the Campaign?
Hope Through Health has created a new way for you to stand in solidarity with those living with HIV/AIDS in West Africa. For only $20 per month, you can ensure the health of one HIV patient in Togo for an entire year. All proceeds from the Stand with Us Campaign go directly to providing medical and nutritional support to our patients.

What is the goal?
We need 200 members by January 1, 2010 to pledge their support to 200 individuals living with HIV/AIDS and in poverty.

How to join?
Our secure online service facilitates convenient, automated monthly payments directly from a credit card or checking account. Visit www.hthglobal.org and make a monthly, recurring donation of twenty dollars or more and you are a member! Please feel free to contact us at hth@hthglobal.org for more information.

STAND WITH US
2009 members

Casey Whitsett
Emma Davenport
Ryan Gregory
Joanne Cimorelli
Gayle Dunham
Ryan McCannell
Donald M Krumm
Lisa Thompson
Gavin Oxman
John Birke
Donald Weak
Stephanie Weber
Susan Gillig
Risa Ziegler
Alyson Gordon
Mark Paar
John and Raquel Higgins
Christiane Geisler
Thomas Fiori
Robert Gerhardt
Debi & Kevin Fiori Sr.
Brian Hanlon
Fatou Dieye
Elizabeth Ferguson
Nikki Maxwell
Linda Cashdan
Eric Goldman
Louanne Sheneman
Elizabeth Leavitt

Dawn Fiori
David Beck
Jennifer Schechter
Christine Tellez
Carol Palmer
Patrick Aylward
Emily Ragan
Douglas Soviero
Joan Marshall
Stacey Maslowsky
Kimberly Leonard
Sal Accamando
Robert Giordano
Matthew Vaccurro
Lawrence Leake
Jacqueline Ackerly
Vaughan Spilsbury
Kimberly Phillips
Nina Goldsztejn
Ford Spilsbury
Craig Whitmer
Elizabeth Bailey
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Troy Ocasio
Jana Shih
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