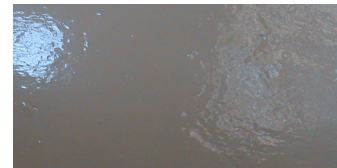


AFRICA'S NEWS LETTER VOLUME 1

OCTOBER, 2008 EDITION



The Plight of an African Child & Woman is social justice for all!



Africa's Emerging Hope from Sunset

IFFAMPAC AFRICA NEWS LETTER

The first ever IFFAMPAC Africa news letter is the voice & the mouthpiece for the families of missing persons from armed conflicts in Africa.

IFFAMPAC LAUNCHES IDENTIFICATION FOR THE FAMILIES OF MISSING PERSONS FROM ARMED CONFLICTS IN AFRICA



In June, 2008 IFFAMPAC's Africa Regional Office launched a special ongoing program for identifying families of missing persons. Identifying these families is critical because Africa is the continent that has been scrambled by armed conflicts in the form of civil wars, genocide, tribal conflicts, and other political conflicts. One of IFFAMPAC's goals is to inform the world of the plight of these families. IFFAMPAC has found that families of missing persons are mostly women and children living in a poverty-stricken environments with inhuman conditions. An inspection of refugee compounds by IFFAMPAC personnel on September 21, 2008 revealed that most women in local armed conflicts have been either raped or sexually abused by rebels.

Your donations of funds or services will help us to act as an advocate, link, and archive resource for family associations. In addition, it will enable IFFAMPAC to implement projects that directly benefit the missing and their families. Donations are US tax deductible. IFFAMPAC is a 501(c)(3) organization.

For more information about IFFAMPAC and our work with the families of missing persons from armed conflict, or if you can help us with additional funding, please contact us at:

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FINDINGS ABOUT FAMILIES OF MISSING PERSONS FROM ARMED CONFLICTS IN AFRICA

IFFAMPAC has confirmed that armed conflicts in Africa have claimed the lives of countless numbers of people, leaving behind multitudes of families in need. While there is no accurate factual statistical data regarding the exact numbers of families affected by Africa's armed conflicts, it is undeniable that these conflicts continue to escalate, leaving behind ultimate sorrow and human suffering for many thousands of innocent African women and children. Indeed, it is true that "no one disappears alone."



IFFAMPAC's Africa Representative, third from the left, at IFFAMPAC's Africa Family Identification Seminar

In Africa, families are faced with great struggles to stay together. Surmounting legal, social, and cultural difficulties that surviving family members of missing persons confront in addition to civil wars, genocide, and tribal conflicts (which are concurrent and on-going) make even the simplest day-to-day survival difficult. For example, laws in many African countries prevent women from inheriting land and gaining access to bank accounts. In every case, the emotional toll is overwhelming as families cope with the loss of a loved one and the loss of their means for a normal daily life. Until the truth about each missing person is uncovered, closure for these families is impossible and their grief is never-ending.

BREAKING NEWS!

IFFAMPAC DONATES 1000 EXERCISE BOOKS TO 1000 CHILDREN IN AFRICA



African Children Receiving Books from IFFAMPAC at Vision of Hope Community Centre

IFFAMPAC has confirmed that most families of missing persons and the vulnerable poor in Africa cannot afford to buy books and other educational materials for their children. As a result, these children are deprived of the right to education.

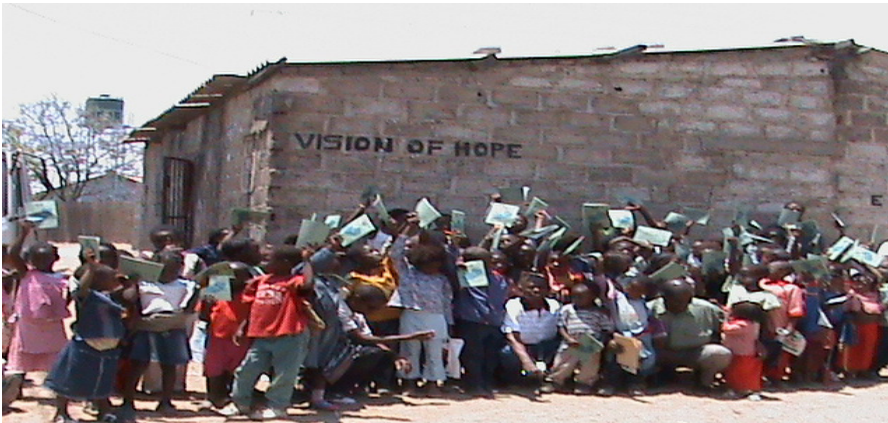
On October 7, 2008, the IFFAMPAC Africa Regional Office in Lusaka-Zambia donated exercise books to children from the families of missing persons and

the children coming from the most vulnerable poor families. These books will enrich the children's education.



The lack of education for these children is largely the result of refugees who have fled from neighboring countries which were at war among them: CONGO DRC, Burundi, Rwanda, Burundi and Angola. These refugees have taken up residence in shanty compounds commonly known as suburbs or Ghettos. The emergence of these compounds has caused rampant problems of poverty and crime. As a result, the children in these living conditions suffer, because the breadwinner is missing or their parents cannot work or due to lack of educational background.

Poor School Infrastructure in Africa, with dilapidated broken desks



IFFAMPAC Africa Representative posing with Children at the centre

The inspection by an IFFAMPAC Representative confirmed the poor infrastructure of the learning environment and the lack of school furniture, equipment, and supplies. As a result, IFFAMPAC has begun the process of seeking assistance from donors to help with the construction of low-cost basic schools. The photos above and below show the poor school infrastructure and environment.



Poor school infrastructure in Africa undermines the right to quality education for an African child. Most post armed-conflict areas have no school infrastructure. As a result, children do not go to school. IFFAMPAC believes that the right to education and providing an adequate education is the greatest challenge in Africa; hence the need to develop links with other stakeholders to help establish schools in Africa. IFFAMPAC has developed a project to begin a process of establishing appropriate schools and recreation centers in Africa.

The Condition of African schools

IFFAMPAC MONTHLY REPORT AND UPDATE

IFFAMPAC OPERATIONS IN URBAN REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

IFFAMPAC has intensified its operations in urban refugee settlements. The organization is working to identify a massive number of women, men, and youths defined as families of missing persons from armed conflicts. This process is important in order to offer services to these people. One of the most important first steps for most families is psychological counseling. That is, IFFAMPAC helps families identify emotional issues and survival needs so that workable solutions can be developed.

FORMATION OF FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS



IFFAMPAC began holding meetings with families of missing persons to enable them to form Family Associations. These Family Associations will lobby more effectively than individuals for reform and protection of the rights of family units in Africa.

These Family Associations will promote self-help with a focus on developing a strong, healthy family unit.

IFFAMPAC will also help Family Association members pursue better economic opportunities and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Families of Missing Persons at an IFFAMPAC special Meeting on the formation of Family Associations

IFFAMPAC has helped Family Associations write Bylaws which these families have submitted to their respective Government Departments of Home Affairs for scrutiny and further advice. On September 12, 2008 IFFAMPAC Africa Representative Evan Lombe met with a group of families to form the *Refugees Association for Better Life Club*. In addition, at this special meeting Mr. Lombe shared with the participants what he learned at the UN Human Rights Conference, which was held on September 3 - 5, 2008 in Paris, France.



IFFAMPAC Africa Representative



Refugees at IFFAMPAC Meeting

WHO ARE THE FAMILIES OF MISSING PERSONS IN AFRICA?



In armed conflicts between recognized military forces the dead and wounded are usually carefully recorded. Sadly, this is not the case in less structured confrontations, such as rebellions, religious hostilities, “Ethnic Cleansing”, internal security operations, and even some international peacekeeping missions.

Many people caught up in these events disappear and remain unaccounted for. Some have been taken prisoner or seized by rebels or the state; many are the accidental victims of crossfire or the explosive remnants of war, such as landmines; still others may be hiding in fear for their lives; and some are minors separated from their parents

when they fled the violence. Adults, children, citizens, and visitors can all be missing persons from armed conflicts. They are people in the wrong place at the wrong time.

When men disappear in armed conflict, women often find themselves suddenly the head of the family. But too often, they do not have the education, the emotional support, or the opportunity for employment they need to provide for their children or other dependants. Worse still, laws in many countries prevent women from inheriting land and gaining access to bank accounts. In the case of a missing person, no death certificate is issued and, without it, the wife is unable to claim the use of family funds. As a result, thousands of children have been sold, abandoned, or given away and women left homeless.

AFRICA’S SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF FAMILIES OF MISSING PERSONS

- Most of the African families of missing persons are living as refugees and illegal immigrants in other countries that they have fled to during an armed conflict in their region. Due to the lack of legal immigration papers, many obstacles must be overcome for opportunities to work and to obtain financial assistance from the respective government. As a result, they live in poverty and social disgrace.
- These families live in poverty-stricken environments with inhumane conditions in addition to living with the grief of losing a loved one whose fate they do not know.
- Some are even more unfortunate, and are either imprisoned or are left completely homeless. Women are mostly the victims of inhuman suffering.
- Their children do not go to school, because mothers who are left alone with the responsibility to look after them cannot work, due to lack of basic skills, education, and opportunity. They have no voice to advocate for their human rights.



WHO IS IFFAMPAC?

IFFAMPAC is a registered international non-governmental organization (NGO) which holds special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. IFFAMPAC stands for the International Federation of Family Associations of Missing Persons from Armed Conflicts. Our global organization unites Family Associations worldwide to provide families with a global support network. We act as a link to other NGOs, and governmental agencies to address the social, economic, and legal problems that surviving family members face post-conflict. At the request of families, IFFAMPAC representatives meet and negotiate with governmental officials to provide information on missing family members. We also work on behalf of families to develop favorable national judicial reform to address the surviving family needs.



IFFAMPAC Africa Rep Mr. Evans Lombe, third from the left, with Affiliates & Volunteers during Africa field work

IFFAMPAC PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL FAMILY CONVENTION

IFFAMPAC President and Founder Jane Durgom-Powers has written an innovative, aggressive, and timely International Convention creating a new human rights category: the Family Unit. IFFAMPAC believes families should have legal standing under the laws of all nations with corresponding rights. With legal rights come obligations for governments to follow and enforce. IFFAMPAC seeks the assistance of all NGOs globally to band together and lobby governments to become Contracting Parties to this Convention.

This International Convention recognizing the rights of the Family Unit opens the door to a new direction of human rights. The recognition of the rights of the Family Unit would have a significant impact on poverty and human grief and suffering throughout the world by unlocking doors of access to education, work, and relief assistance for family members missing a breadwinner during periods of armed conflict. Nowhere would the results of this Convention be felt more directly than in places such as Africa, where civil war, genocide, and tribal conflicts have left so many families broken and unable to cope.

The lobbying process has begun in Africa to enact this International Convention as a national law. With the continued support of generous donors and governments throughout the world, IFFAMPAC will continue to unite families who are fragmented and missing members, provide relief and assistance to these families, and fight for the recognition of a basic level of human rights for these families, so that they can act on the behalf of missing family members until those members are found or until their fate is known.

IFFAMPAC AFRICA PROGRAMS and PROJECTS

IFFAMPAC AFRICA has developed several projects. For example:

- Project to Identify Families of Missing Persons from Armed Conflicts in Africa. In order to create social and economic restoration for these families, so that their human rights could be observed and respected by both the Government and other stakeholders.
- Project to Build Schools and Recreational Centers in the post armed conflict countries. This project is aimed at providing free education to the families of missing persons from armed conflicts. These schools will give hope for the African Children to be educated.



Children in Africa need schools, supplies, and equipment for an adequate education

IFFAMPAC is in the process of negotiating, approaching, and inviting the international donor community to support its programs of building schools, skills centers, and recreational centers for the families of missing persons from armed conflict. The goal of this project is to enable students to receive an education and learn sustainable skills which will promote self-reliant and productive integration into society.

Currently, seventeen (17) African countries are being targeted; Zambia, Uganda, Liberia, Angola, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Chad, Central African Republic, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Africa, Eritrea, DRC Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda.

STORIES OF FAMILIES OF MISSING PERSONS IN AFRICA

- ***Mrs. A is a Burundian. She lived in Burundi until 1994 when her husband was killed by rebels during Genocide. She escaped into CONGO DRC, as a Refugee, but things went wrong. Another Civil War erupted in that country. On her way to Zambia, an unknown Rebel raped her in the bush. As a result of this action, she became pregnant and gave birth to a boy. So every time she looks at her son, she does not have complete love for him because the circumstances which lead to have him is said to be traumatic and evil.***
- ***Mrs. Z lived in CONGO DRC with her five children and husband. It was daylight when her husband was at work and tribal war erupted. While at home, she heard the conflict raging in the area. When her husband arrived home, rebels arrived and killed him and their son in her full view. Fortunately, she escaped the rebels with three children and ran into the bushes and managed to catch a train in Lubumbashi. She is currently living as a refugee.***

- *Mr. X lived in Burundi with his family. His father was a political secretary of FLODEBU. When Genocide erupted in 1993, the rebels started hunting for his father. When they found him at home, they asked where his father's house was. Mr. X refused to show them. The rebels kidnapped Mr. X's wife and children. Mrs. X was raped and Mr. X was badly tortured. One night, a rebel soldier felt sorry for him, and allowed him to escape. That is how he was saved. After some months, he was told that his wife was released by rebels, and later died in Zambia. His father and mother were likely killed in Genocide massacre. He is always traumatized by these inhuman events. He feels it's better to die.*

- *Mrs. N lived in Rwanda happily with her husband and her seven children before the genocide. In 1993, during the time of intensive ethnic cleansing between Hutu's and Tutsi's, Mrs. N and her children ran for safety into CONGO DRC Refugee Camp at the Boarder. Unfortunately, the camp was bombed and the family scattered. Thereafter, on their way to Zambia, she located her husband, but two children are still missing. She describes her story as a miracle, and currently they are living in poverty without hope for themselves and five children. At the time of interview, the children did not have a meal. Mr. N requested if he can be resettled in an alternative country.*

WHY SUPPORT, DONATE and FUND IFFAMPAC WORKS IN AFRICA?

In Africa, IFFAMPAC has begun to get an accurate accounting of the surviving families and their missing family members. Our approach gives us unique understanding of the overall problems that families face, and will enable IFFAMPAC to represent them effectively at forums such as the United Nations and international conferences with governments, agencies, and other NGOs. The planned project for building schools, skills and recreation centers for these families is a cornerstone for the fulfillment of fundamental human rights for a basic unit of society, which is the family.

IFFAMPAC welcomes donors to become part of the project implementation team. Our organization cannot work in isolation. As a team we can realize success. We welcome volunteers, and other organizations to affiliate with us. We also welcome in-kind donations.

For Donations and any other assistance please contact the following persons:

1. Ms. Jane Durgom-Powers at: jed-p@iffampac.org
2. Mr. Evans Lombe at: evansmukopa@yahoo.com

A BRIEF HISTORY OF IFFAMPAC

Below is a brief list of the history and accomplishments of IFFAMPAC.

1970s: Our President first became involved with the issue of people who have disappeared and their families. She worked directly with families around the world, helping them to set up Family Associations. She began drafting national laws and reforms to assist surviving family members.

February 2003: The ICRC conference on The Missing recognized the need to unite and co-ordinate the work of the numerous associations of affected families in many parts of the world. Our President addressed the conference.

April 2003: IFFAMPAC was incorporated in the USA.

March 2006: IFFAMPAC was appointed to the United Nations Working Group on Persons who are unaccounted for in Connection with Events in Kosovo.

May 2006: The United Nations Economic and Social Council granted IFFAMPAC Special Consultative Status.

December 2007: IFFAMPAC was approved for association with the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI).

March 2008: IFFAMPAC opened a Kosovo branch office in Pristine.

April 2008: IFFAMPAC opened an African branch office in Lusaka, Zambia.

September 2008: IFFAMPAC is chosen by the UN to conduct a workshop on families of missing persons from armed conflicts at the UN prestigious meeting in Paris, France celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

If you would like more information on the issue of missing persons from armed conflicts or if you can help us continue our work by assisting us to obtain further funding, to make a donation, or to volunteer—please contact us at:

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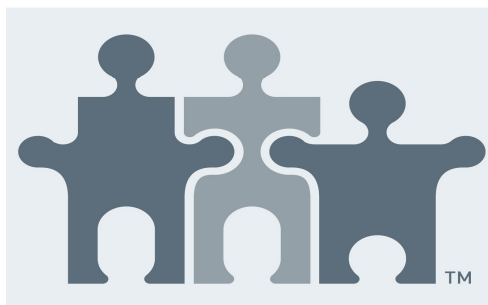
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**FAMiLiES OF
THE MiSSiNG**
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