

SPRINGBOARD~Girls' Schools Newsletter

December 2007

Successes

- Final building handovers
- Water & electricity almost connected in all schools
- Opening of several schools
- Arts project run in over 30 schools
- Medical glasses and hearing aids provided
- Generous contributions from donors towards fences, gardens & water wells
- Contributions to send girls on field trips
- The schools achieving highest grades compared to public schools
- Computers donated with training for teachers

"Building the schools was easy! Nourishing the schools is; "another story!" "



Soheir never left her village in Saff, Giza. Going to the Zoo was her first experience of the city of Cairo, nevertheless, was confident and sure of her self



Girls from Fayoum, excited about their future prospects, getting an opportunity for education, one that doesn't come to many....

Happy holidays from the Springboard girls

Wow, what a year 2007 has been!! Between the countless events that have taken place in the schools, challenges of support, maintenance, utilities getting connected, endless needs, be it, medical, financial, psychological or emotional, looking back, one can only realize what a privilege it has been to be part of something so meaningful, impact-full and life changing for thousands of girls and their communities, in some of Egypt's most remote and neglected areas.

Never the less, we, the Apache school team, feel that we have only just

begun! Building the schools was easy! Nourishing the schools is; "another story"! Now that the girls are in school, how do we make sure that they are getting good education, that their schools are sustained, secure and are worth the investment by donors, Apache, Springboard and the Egyptian Government? How do we encourage and support the structure sustaining the schools? Do we continue to stay closely connected, or do we leave it completely on its own? How do we keep focused on the fact that; at the end of the day, its all about the Little Girls of rural Egypt.

Girls dream of being Engineers & Doctors!

By Haytham Gamal

As we are writing our second newsletter at this special time of the year, I hope you all had a Merry Christmas and may 2008 be a happy and successful year for you.

Throughout 2007, I noticed a lot of development happening in all aspects of the Girl' schools, there has been countless visits to the schools, activities done with the girls and the teachers, delivering supplies and many gifts to the girls, first year warranty checks of the school buildings and a lot of maintenance activities, enhancements to some of the schools and our communication with our donors to keep them informed about the great

impact this project has made. But, the most important and rewarding side of the development that has taken place, is the development of the girls' personalities, as I now get more requests from girls to have computers connected to their schools, they also ask for explanation on what is it like to be an engineer, a doctor or a lawyer. I even discussed with a girl once her wish to become a tour guide, and how she wants to help foreigners know more about her country and its history. It is an awesome thing that I is happening its been great being a part of this project.

Providing basic rights will change lives, forever – By Salma Zaky

It's been a whole year now for me since I started going to the schools, and I discovered that as much as these schools were needed in these unprivileged, rural areas, what remains to be needed is still a hundred fold. I'm very involved with the girls, their needs, dreams and hopes, these girls are really poor and to me, poverty means a significant lack of the basic needs and rights required for healthy physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual development; a lack of opportunities, a lack of control over one's life, due to social isolation and discrimination by others who are more powerful. I categorize poverty as a lack of food, education and medical resources. Springboard, through its 200 schools, has been able to insure a basic right for education to over 6000 girls, and would like to insure that these girls will continue being in school.

In 2007, with the help of various parties, some schools have done exceptionally well, like the Maadi British School who hired a mentor to support its donated school plus seven other Springboard schools in the

same area, providing needed supplies and support, and some other donors provided needed supplies for their schools making a huge difference in the progress and development of their girls and schools.

But when it comes to medical care its more of a challenge! I often go to a school to find a girl not able to perform well because of eye sight issue and simply needs eyeglasses, or another that needs a hearing aid, or has a certain disease that is not diagnosed at the age of 6 years because of ignorance and poverty! This is one of our biggest challenges, educating the girls on prevention to minimize future medical problems, and meeting some of their immediate medical needs.

Springboard has received some money donated by several different amazing and generous people and through their contributions we will be able to provide about 50 pairs of eyeglasses and 10 hearing aids. Isn't that amazing! The life of these girls will change; they are now receiving education and medical care! Basic,

but life transforming. But we hope to be able to do more as we continue to care and help nourish the Springboard schools to become the success we hope for it to be.



Manal and Mona, cousins who joined the first school, are now going to 4th year, they are flourishing and performing excellent grades according to their teachers.

Where do we go from here? – By Nancy Mina

"So, now that you have built these 200 beautiful schools with your names on them, what are you going to do with them?"

I get asked this question all the time, and, I don't really have an exact answer! So, what are we going to do with the 200 beautiful schools that we built? Are we going to forget about them? Are we going to continue to care and support them? If yes, how? What are the resources we are willing to provide? How much time and effort are we willing to spend? And what are the practical steps we can take to insure that the schools are developing, succeeding and truly transforming the girls and their communities?

After the construction frenzy of 2005-06, we started visiting the schools, got involved in the lives of the girls, teachers and the amazing teams of supervisors who are responsible to visit, support and encourage the schools in their remote locations. A visitor can immediately distinguish

between a schools that has been visited and cared for, and another which is completely left out on its own, which no one is showing any care or value towards! The schools visited regularly by donors and others, are doing significantly well!! Some donors have donated money towards fences and gardens, creating a space of privacy for the girls do out door activities! Others have paid to dig water wells in remote desert areas lacking utilities! Several donors donated the equivalent of no more than US\$170 to send a whole school on a field trip, others took a step further and asked that the girls would go and each buy a new pair of shoes! There were also those who donated towards medical needs, clothes, supplies, toys and learning aids, personal items for the girls, teaching English and arts...etc.. 2007 has been a year full of activities, but, it is only the beginning! We dream of sending every school on a field trip once or even twice a year,

we hope to meet urgent medical needs, support the supervision team in any way possible because they are the backbone to the school's success! But, how do we do it? Are we willing to do it? Are we willing to continue our support knowing that the Government is not able to do it single handedly! These are urgent questions I hope we can find answers to before its too late!



Now that we have built 200 beautiful schools, what do we do with them?

What fences and simple additions do to a School - By Youssef Youssef

For the past year we have been following up on the one year construction warranty for all the schools. In addition, we have been enhancing the schools with fences, water wells and gardens.

Generally, the first request from the girls or the teachers at any school is a fence to surround the school and to protect them from the public around the school.

They ask for a garden, a playground and simply for a place to enjoy the sun and use it for outdoor activities - to be like any other public school in Egypt.

After the fence is added to the school and the garden is planted, it was amazing to see the girls playing in the garden and enjoying some of their school activities in the outdoors. The most amazing thing for the girls was to feel that someone listened to them, and did what they asked for, and that when you want something in life and work at it, you can achieve it.

Adding a fence to the school gave it more credibility and respect in the community.

Digging a water well at a school in a village that didn't have running water connected, added huge benefits, not just to the school, but to the whole village. Imagine having to buy water transported in containers for daily life! and then, someone comes in, and drills a water well for you! It made a very precious commodity more readily available and the community was able to save money too. The school became the center of the community and gained much respect, admiration and support from the community.

All of the enhancements that were done were due to the individual school

donor's care and contributions.

Finally, as we are visiting the schools on your behalf, we do what we can to make the girls benefit the most from the school. We are happy to provide support to your schools and be the link between the girls of your school and yourself.

So what do you think of the difference a basic fence has made? Such a little thing for such a huge impact.

See before and after pictures.

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www.springboarded.org

www.schoolsforegyptsgirls.com



Happy 2008 - Glenn Joyce

I am excited about the progress made by Springboard and the Girls' School Project. It excites me every time that I get to visit the schools and the young girls. I never get to go out as much as I would like, but my infrequent trips allow me to recognize and appreciate the growth and progress made at the schools since the prior visit.

Our Springboard staff of Haytham, Nancy, Salma and Youssef are committed to this project and the young underprivileged girls of Egypt. Their never tiring efforts and continued persistence to accomplish the goal of insuring the schools are visited regularly, school maintenance is being handled, teachers are trained and dedicated, etc. inspires and encourages me.

We hope that with our newsletters, that you too can feel a part of the success and excitement of this project! Should you have any questions about the project or Springboard, don't hesitate to write us a note or call. If you are fortunate enough to travel to the Land of

the Pharaoh's, please let us know so that we can work a school visit into your schedule.

Happy 2008!



**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR GENEROSITY**

**BEST WISHES FOR
2008 FROM THE
SPRINGBOARD
GIRLS AND THE
APACHE SCHOOLS
TEAM**

Dear Donor,

Thank you for your support of this project. Please feel free to contact us if you are planning a trip to Egypt and want to visit your school. Also, please feel free to communicate with us regarding any information you may need regarding your school.

The underprivileged girls of Egypt thank you for your support and for enabling their dreams to become reality.

The Girls' Schools Team