

# SPRINGBOARD Girls' Schools Newsletter



*December 2008*

## *Achievements*

- Maintenance
- Water & electricity almost connected in all schools
- Generous contributions from donors towards school supplies, medicals needs, fences, trips, etc...
- Starting competition between all Springboard Schools
- Done with all 7 Concerts at all 125 schools in Fayoum
- Delivering the One Laptops to several Schools

## Season's Greetings – The Springboard Team

Dear Donors and Supporters,

During this special time of the year, we would like to send you ours and the girls' warmest regards and wishes.

The Schools life are going on and as time passes by, they learn every day something new, knowledge, science, or just lessons in our lives.

The schools are growing stronger and stronger every day, with the young girls growing as well, becoming fine young ladies. Each day passes gives them more confidence in who they are and what they want to be in the future. Each day passes makes them believe more in education, makes them love their school more, for which it's the path they choose to become better and to achieve higher goals.

***"A good education is another name for happiness"***

## One Laptop per Child

A small machine with a big mission. It's a learning tool designed and built especially for children in developing countries, living in some of the most remote environments. It's about the size of a small textbook.

Its mission is to "create educational opportunities for the world's poorest children by providing each child with a rugged, low-cost, low-power, connected laptop with content and software designed for collaborative, joyful, self-empowered learning. When children have access to this type of tool they get engaged in their own education. They learn, share, create, and collaborate. They become connected to each other, to the world and to a brighter future (One Laptop per Child TEAM)".

200 Laptops were purchased for our schools, 195 of them were distributed to 6 schools (girls and teachers) and 5 were available as back up units.

Girls and teachers were very excited upon receiving the laptops, they were very curious and willing to discover on their own. One of the teacher's husband works with computers; he is helping her and she is passing the knowledge on to the girls.



El Sobehy School very excited about their new Laptops

After every visit to these schools we find the girls discovering and learning new things and eager to show us their progress and new discoveries. Simply Amazing!



# Schools Maintenance

Some of our schools are now approaching their fourth year of service and it became necessary to start addressing these schools not only from the operational part but also to keep our school sustainable and make sure they are performing with maximum efficiency to eliminate any reason that might distract the learning process of the girls. We have been monitoring the schools and maintaining these schools since the initial construction.

Throughout our construction process we learned to improve our support as we continue to understand the communities more each day and with increased interaction with the communities.

During the construction process we started to add some items to the schools to make them even more durable, for example while we were building we added stone cladding to all of the unfinished schools. We also changed the outside light fixtures which despite their great look and importance to the design, they were not durable.

This year, we made more enhancements such as adding window screens and protection steel for all the windows. To prevent damage to the interior paint on the walls we installed wooden bars to hang artwork and other school teaching aids. Additionally, there are always minor touchups and repairs from just normal wear and tear.

We believe that as we go on in this process we will discover more and more issues that need to be addressed and modified in the schools to continually improve the learning environment for the girls.

When we were discussing the maintenance and follow up plans that we are now following, Glenn Joyce told us that this phase is even more difficult than constructing the schools which required us to maintain the sense of urgency because this effort requires many other obligations, including motivation of teachers and students to keep the schools at their best. At first we did not understand this statement as the construction phase was very challenging and required dedication to the project.

Timing of visits during the construction phase was critical to the success of completing the schools properly. Now we fully understand the challenges of maintaining the schools and teaching the teachers and the girls how to take care of the schools and pride in their accomplishments to keep their school at high standards for the area.

We will go on with this because we really see the change that these schools can make in others lives and the future. At the end we would like to say to you on behalf of all the girls in schools

THANK YOU FOR CHANGING OUR LIVES



*"Girls now feel ownership towards the schools by giving their maintenance remarks"*



Girls, Teachers and Community after the maintenance

*"The School looks as new"*

# Schlumberger Groups Support Springboard Schools

Schlumberger has been one of the very active donors; the Schlumberger Spouses Association (SSA) and Schlumberger Excellence in Education and Development (SEED).

SSA visited schools and delivered Ramadan Parcels to 10 Schools. It made not only the girls happy but the whole family too.

SEED has been playing a very important role to 10 of our schools. They have delivered 2 computers to each school and gave training to the teachers. They also have been presenting one of their newest programs in 2008; Health, Safety and Environment for Youth (HSE). Their aim is to mobilize employees and their families to share expertise within their communities. The program empowers young people, mainly below the age of 18, to make safe and responsible decisions concerning Health, Safety and Environmental issues.



Schlumberger Team with El-Segla and El-Moaskar Girls and Teachers



Girls wearing the Safe Hand which teaches them mastering risks

“Schlumberger’s trained HSE for Youth team decided to start its first Injury Prevention session in Sakkara - joining 51 girls from Segla and El-Moaskar Schools - on Monday November 17th. The aim of the full day session was to teach participants how to stay safe and avoid risky situations that could get them injured. The team depends on various games and practical techniques to make sure the children understand the basic idea and adhere to it in the future. The participants were divided into two groups according to their age. In the classroom, they had to watch an interactive presentation and learn how to think and react when a risky situation comes up. Afterwards, they went out to the garden to practically learn the basic body control techniques such as stepping, handling and lifting. Since working in the fields and helping with the harvest is a task for young people in the Egyptian countryside, our team made sure the children learned how to properly lift weights. It is an important lesson that could save them for injuring their bodies, especially their backs, for the rest of their lives.

Schlumberger’s team visited these schools with the intention of making a difference in the lives of these children but soon found out that the day was not just about a safety lesson. These girls enjoy the attention and appreciate the care they are given by their visitors. We all came back with a sweet sense of satisfaction, not just because we have accomplished our mission, but because we have built up a relationship that would definitely urge us to go back with more themes.”

Azza Abdel Aziz  
SSA Middle East Area  
Coordinator

**Schlumberger**



## A Donor's Note – By Heather Plank

Visiting a Springboard School for Girls is always a Special Experience.

Recently I went to visit the Amer Abdulla School in the Fayoum Governorate. I go every chance I get to see how the girls are doing, at least once a year, sometimes two or three times a year. The school is in its fourth year now. The teachers have lost their shyness; they wear bright colors and winning smiles. We exchange warm greetings.

I pass through the entrance into the classroom and think many of the girls I knew must have transitioned out and new ones had come in. No longer did I receive the screaming, "Welcome, welcome!" with giggles. This time it was a calm, open hello with a play about the difference between living things and inanimate objects. The animal characters portrayed by full-head masks swooped, hopped and lumbered through their discussion.

I looked around the room and tried to identify the girls one by one. I was at a loss. We went through the day's newspaper I had brought and tried a Sudoku puzzle on the board. I started to see that some of



the younger girls had just gotten a little older. Then it was time for their annual photos. One by one they came out to a chair in the entrance and sat for their portrait, nervous but brave and forthright. I quickly came to understand that those I had met when they were unruly and boisterous at 10 or 11 were still there only now they are endowed with quiet womanly beauty at 14 and 15 and wearing it with dignity and grace.

They love to draw and do math and study Arabic and religion and read and write in English but mostly they love learning. They love their school and more than a third of them want to be teachers. I understand. If I were a child again I would want to go to a school like that and I'd be pleased to have any one of them be my teacher.

Heather Plank during her art project that took place last year at several schools





*"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself"*



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*"Thank You"*

Dear Donor and Supporter,

Your initial support and contribution to build a school has made an impact on Egypt! The young girls of Egypt attending these schools now have an opportunity for education - the opportunity to read and write, the ability to add numbers when purchasing basic supplies, things that most of us take for granted, but was impossible and only a dream for these girls until your school was built in their community.

These young girls truly appreciate your contribution and interest in supporting them and their school. The smiles on their faces tell it all! Their transformation from shy little girls that stood off from the group with their heads down have now been turned into girls with smiling faces and outgoing personalities, faces that have hopes and dreams. If you have not been fortunate enough to visit one of the schools, I think the newsletter articles from others involved can provide you insights and enable you to feel the appreciation the girls have for their schools and the support of donors around the world. The girls, their parents and the community that houses the schools say THANKS!

Building the schools within budget and on time was a challenge, but now we face a greater challenge – sustainability of the schools. We have adopted the Apache culture and philosophy and these schools are “built to last”. This requires numerous visits to the schools and interaction with the students, teachers and community on an ongoing basis. Funds are required to help support the schools with building maintenance, educational supplies, achievement awards, fences, water wells, educational trips, minor medical needs (hearing aids, glasses, etc.).

Your contribution, no matter how large or small, can and does make a difference in the lives of these young girls!

Please consider a contribution to Springboard.  
You can send a check to

Springboard – Educating the Future  
2000 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 100  
Huston, Texas 77056

Or can wire funds to

Bank Name: JPMorgan Chase Bank  
Bank Address: JPMorgan Chase Bank  
Manhattan  
1 Chase Plaza  
New York, New York 10005  
SWIFT: CHASUS33  
ABA: 021000021  
Account name: Springboard – Educating the Future  
Account Number: 662634781

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

**The Girls' Schools Team**

\*Special Thanks to Springboard's Egyptian Partners: The National Council of Childhood and Motherhood and Sawiris Foundation