



Dining for Women

***MC Preview
July 2008
East Africa
Uganda***

This month we're in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania) as we have been several times—March, June, and November 2006 and February and August 2007. We visit East Africa a lot—as well we should—because it is among the most desperately poor regions of the world. We have quite an archive of materials on East Africa. Especially if your chapter is new to DFW, I encourage you and your members to review the previous editions of MC that focus on East Africa. Please feel free to use any of the material in those back issues in your chapter meetings. If you are new to DFW since August 07, when we last supported Growth through Learning, I encourage you to use the edition of *Making Connections* from that month this time along with the new resources that GTL will provide (see below). For those of you who have been around awhile, don't worry, there's new material in this month's MC and it all focuses on Uganda. I'm suggesting that new leaders use last August's material because I'm very partial to it—knowing about the MDGs is very important and relates to all our projects. Not that this month's featured topic isn't either. But I wanted to offer you all choice and to remind you that you can always use our archived materials.

I'm repeating the ideas and info here from last August's *MC Preview* so if you are using that MC, you won't have to look it up. Some of those old ideas will still be useful to leaders using the new material as well. And there's also a lot of new information/ideas below as well. Just a reminder: You can access all past MCs and MCPs on our program schedule page: http://www.diningforwomen.org/?page_id=12/ . Please note that new information for this month below is in bold italics, hopefully making it a little easier for those of you who are veterans to sift through things more easily.

NOTE: Please see special announcements for planning ahead for August at the end.

What to Expect in This Month's MC

FYI: I wasn't going to do a new FYI this time. I'm pressed for time this month, we have so much material on East Africa already, and the FYI from last August contains such important information. And then I got a letter from Diana. Maria Goretti Diana, that is, a former GTL scholarship student. Besides telling us about her relationship with GTL and her early life, Diana chose to tell us about her work as a nurse now and especially her concerns about HIV/AIDS. I couldn't let that go. So we'll take a look at AIDS in Uganda. Some of you will recall that I did a feature on that awhile back. This will be an update. For more on Diana, see Voices.

FYI topics relevant to our focus on East Africa in past editions of MC:

1. *FYI August 2007* At the beginning of the new millennium, leaders of 191 nations, including the United States, agreed on a plan to cut extreme poverty around the world in half by 2015. They outlined eight interrelated goals necessary for that, the Millennium Development Goals or “MDGs.” Fulfilling them would mean, among other things, that 500 million people would be lifted out of extreme poverty. 300 million children would be spared the suffering of chronic hunger. 30 million children wouldn’t die from preventable disease before they turned five. And most relevant to our support of Growth for Learning this month, 35 million girls would be able to attend school. This *FYI* gives a brief overview of the MDGs, focusing especially the goals directly related to women (all of them are, of course), and on East Africa’s prospects for meeting the goals at the halfway point. We’ll also take a look at the 2007 G8 Summit, a meeting of the leaders of the 8 most developed nations in the world, which has an enormous impact on the progress of the MDGs in places like East Africa. (BTW, the 2008 G8 Summit is about to commence.)
2. *FYI March 2006* focused on Kenya and discussed customary laws and lack of property rights for women, female genital mutilation (FGM), and women and the environment.
3. *FYI June 2006* followed up on the March topics, focusing on Uganda and Tanzania (pp.3-4). See especially the role that education plays in reducing domestic violence in Tanzania. There’s also a Special Focus section (pp. 4-5) on the war in Uganda—see esp. the discussion of lost educational opportunities there.
4. *FYI November 2006* focused on the complex interconnections between environmental sustainability, women’s economic dilemmas, and the spread of HIV/AIDS.
5. *FYI February 2007* discussed HIV/AIDS in Uganda and efforts to reduce the high percentage of girls who drop out of school in Tanzania (quite relevant to our current project).

Recommended Books and Films

Especially for new members, I’d like to highlight two of the books and a film recommended in past *MC*s: Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye’s novel about poor Kenyan women, *The Present Moment* (featured in *MC March 2006*); Helena Halperin’s, *I Laugh So I Won’t Cry: Kenya’s Women Tell the Stories of Their Lives* (excerpts are featured on pages 9-10 of *MC November 2006—the prototype of our “Voices” section*); and *Maangamizi*, a film about the spiritual journeys of two women, one Tanzanian and one African American (for more on it, see *MC February 2007*). *MC March 2006* has a special feature on Kenyan women’s literature.

Along with the focus on the MDGs in August 07, I recommended a film that isn’t specifically about East Africa but portrays how actions and decisions small and great in the “First World” can affect it, how understanding the big picture means seeing the smallest, and why the combination of knowledge and empathy is so vital. And it’s directly related to the MDGs. Some of you will have seen it since it played on HBO—the Emmy Award-winning, *The Girl in the Café*. I’ll say more about it in *MC*. Info at <http://www.hbo.com/films/girlinthecafe> . It’s widely available in libraries, rental stores, and via NetFlix and also sold in the usual places (remember our Amazon.com link!)

Especially for you readers who have consumed all the past recs for East Africa (and I’m really grateful to be hearing more and more from you all!), I have a new recommendation. But it doesn’t relate to east Africa. It does relate to yet another tragedy in the making in Africa—the ongoing crisis in Zimbabwe. It will probably be a long time before Zimbabwe is stable enough that we could even entertain the notion of supporting work there. In the meantime, let’s not forget it. The book is another beaut by renowned British journalist Christina Lamb (The Sewing Circles of Herat). It tells the stories—often in their own words—of Nigel and Aquí, a white farmer and his children’s black nanny, of the different and yet

same Zimbabwe they know, of a friendship that overcomes enormous odds, and of a beautiful land so tragically and unnecessarily ruined by corruption, greed, and madness. I couldn't put it down. Christina Lamb, House of Stone: The True Story of a Family Divided in War-Torn Zimbabwe (Lawrence Hill Books, 2006).

Socially Responsible Shopping

Here are a couple of old recommendations and a very interesting new one:

Ten Thousand Villages carries a number of artisanal items from Uganda and Tanzania. I'm particularly partial to the Uganda baskets. www.tenthousandvillages.com

*In tasting coffees new to me recently, I was impressed with Mirembe Kawomera from the slopes of Mount Elgon in Mbale, Uganda. Mirembe Kawomera means "delicious peace." It comes from an interfaith cooperative of 558 small scale farmers—Jews, Christians, and Muslim neighbors working to live together in peace and make great coffee. It's organic, fair trade, and kosher and available from Thanksgiving Coffee (a California company that sells many types of "just cups"). You can read more about Mirembe Kawomera and the cooperative and order it at www.thanksgivingcoffee.com. (Might be fun to serve the coffee --maybe iced coffees if your weather is at all like ours!)

*For those of us who garden particularly. Many seed companies contribute to worthy projects, so ask about your favorites. One of mine is Renee's Garden Seeds. Renee's gives seed to an education program in Uganda that helps rural families victimized by HIV/AIDS. The program, run by the Center for Environment, Technology, and Rural Development, trains families, many of whom have lost their primary breadwinners, to grow a variety of vegetables, thus providing a means to feed themselves and earn income. You can see photos of some of the women participants in the project at <http://www.reneesgarden.com/articles/donations-07.html>.

* (*New!*) If you love justice, humanity, ecology, and great colorful jewelry, you'll love this! The Paper to Pearls Project supports women in refugee camps in northern Uganda by providing them with the means to make some income from their beautiful beaded jewelry. Surprise: the beads are hand-rolled from recycled paper (you'd never know!). Check it out: <http://www.papertopearls.org/store.htm>.

Dining with Women

Brief overviews of East African food can be found in the editions of *MC* mentioned above. In the August 07 edition, there's a feature on a food on which both we and East Africans depend—corn—and how our dependence on it and international politics have recently exacerbated famine in Kenya, and how things might change for the better. *Since I wrote that last sentence, things have only gotten worse and the information here has only become more relevant for Kenyans and us as we all deal with ethanol, rising food prices, disastrous weather in the Midwest, and shortages.*

We've got quite a collection of East African and East African-inspired recipes by now; I'll list them below. *In the new MC, I'll have some interesting info on Ugandan food and some new recipes straight from Ugandan kitchens via a Ugandan blog.*

East African Recipes in Past MCs

Appetizers

Toasted Corn Salsa/Salad with Polenta Rounds (August 07)

Tanzanian Chutney (June 06)

Avocado Mousse with Pineapple Salsa (February 07)

Main Dishes and Sides

Ugandan Beef Stew (June 06)

Kunde (black-eyed peas with tomatoes, peanut butter, spinach) (March 06)

Mombasa Kofta Kabobs (curried lamb or beef kabobs) (March 06)

Mtuza wa Samaki (fish baked in curry sauce) (November 06)

Wali wa nazi (coconut rice) (November 06)

Grits and Greens (November 06)

Samaka wa Nazi/Kamba (coconut curry with fish, shrimp, or kidney beans) (Feb. 07)

Melon Sorbet (Aug. 07)

Almond/Fig Biscuits (Nov. 06)

Mango-Papaya Kulfi (Feb. 07)

Drink

The Best-Easiest Lemonade (Aug. 07)

Voices

Maria Goretti Diana's letter and a poem she wrote about HIV/AIDS. A note on her name: Maria Goretti is a popular Italian Catholic saint. Her holiness became manifest when she was just 11, so naming girls after her is quite popular in some places. You'll notice two GTL students with her name followed by a third name that is their own.

Chapter Program Ideas and Resources

1.If you'd like to feature one country this month rather than East Africa in general, Uganda should be it since the new MC focuses on it. If you didn't use it before (or even if you did), the on-line Ugandan women's art exhibit is a great vehicle for adding images to your meeting. Some of our chapter leaders have made posters for their meetings using some of the images. (URL is listed in MC Preview Feb 07).

2. Growth Through Learning should be sending dvds and written info to new chapter leaders (since August 07) automatically. If you didn't receive a dvd last time and want one, let Marsha or me know asap.

3. On the Program Schedule Page of the DFW website, under August 07, you'll find a PDF file that contains profiles and photos of some of the GTL scholarship students we support. Many of you may have used this in your meetings last time. This time, we have more profiles with photos (see under July 08 on the Program Schedule). Print some or all of these files and ask members to read them aloud in your meeting. It can be very powerful to sit or stand in a circle, perhaps with a focal point in the middle, and listen to the stories as a member reads each one. A focal point might simply be a lit candle, an object that East African women use or have made, or something symbolic of the educational mission we are supporting this month. Take some time for discussion afterwards—you might ask members to imagine being able to speak to these young women and what they might want to say to them or ask them.

4. You might also read Diana's letter and poem aloud in your meeting and some of the statistics and facts on HIV/AIDS in FYI. It's also important to underline a point made in FYI: the connection between educating women and reducing HIV/AIDS. Maria Goretti Diana is a good example of that connection.

For those of you using MC August 07, here are 3 ideas related to discussing the MDGs in your meeting:

5. Encourage members to read about the MDGs and consider how they can help—obviously, through projects supported by DFW! But there are other ways.. Some members may already be involved (many religious communities have MDG-related projects, for example) and you might give them the opportunity to briefly share their experiences. Charts sometimes help; there are two documents available at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> that you might want to download and make available at your meeting: the Progress Chart (1 page multi-color chart) that lists each goal and shows where each region now stands on it and the 2007 Africa and the Millennium Development Goals Update (four pages with good color images and charts). Both can be accessed on the above website, on the right side under “News Flash” and “UN Action.”

6. To generate discussion, you might narrow the focus to the MDGs related to our project this month—the goals of primary education and women’s equality. Info in MC and the charts mentioned above will give you plenty of material for discussion. You might start with a broad question, “Why is women’s education so important?” Members can apply their own experiences to that one as well as information they’re learning in MC and through other resources.

7. Still on the millennium goals, consider listening to the voices of East African women from the *Eight Women One Voice* project discussed in the Voices section of MC, August 07. The link is <http://www.guardian.co.uk/africa8>. It’s a good thing to hear their voices even if you can’t quite understand everything they are saying. I suggest printing out the written statements (they’re very short) so that members can read those as well as hear the women’s voices. If you’re doing other things in your program (like reading the student stories) you might consider listening to just one or two of the women. Annet, the Ugandan teacher, might be most appropriate given our project this month. Listening to her students singing with joy about getting a free education is pretty moving too. I also found the plea from Justine, a Ugandan coffee farmer, to the G8 very moving—hearing her, you’ll never be able to drink anything other than fair trade coffee again and feel good about it.

LOOKING AHEAD TO AUGUST:

We’ll be supporting the work of Women for Women International in August again. This is a very special group for us—the first group that DFW supported. And my how it has grown. This time, we’re supporting WfWI’s new project in DR Congo—a new place for us. Marsha has blogged— and many if not all of us have read or heard with horror —about the use of rape as a weapon of war in DRC. WfWI is working with victims, helping them put their lives back together. The resources, as typical for WfWI, are excellent. Go ahead, check them out at <http://www.womenforwomen.org/congo.htm>

New chapter leaders (since we last supported WfWI in Nov. 08) will receive a copy of the WfWI dvd about its work in general. If you are a chapter leader who was already around in Nov. 08 but don’t have that dvd (look hard!), you can contact Patti Pina at WfWI to get a copy: PPina@womenforwomen.org But if you’ve covered WfWI before, you may prefer to use something more specific to DR Congo—see below....

Two other videos, specific to the DRC work of WfWI, you may want to know about or purchase:

A segment from 60 Minutes in streaming video at

http://www.cbsnews.com/sections/i_video/main500251.shtml?id=3706833n

Plan ahead if you'd like to show this in your meeting. You can purchase cables to link most TVs (except my eternal 1986 model) to your computer at most of those tech-elec box stores.

ALSO

The Great Silence, a documentary by Lisa Jackson featured on the WfWI site. It's long for our usual meeting format (76 minutes), but some of you may want to consider having a viewing of it for your group or sponsoring it for a community event. You can purchase the dvd for private use (our meetings) for around \$30. Or convince your public library or local college to purchase it quickly if they haven't already:

<http://www.wmm.com/filmcatalog/pages/c709.shtml>

AND PLEASE NOTE: I NEED YOUR HELP FOR AUGUST

- 1) If you, your group, or members of your group sponsored a woman through WfWI in the past, please let me know. I'd love to share your experience in *Making Connections* in August. I know of one chapter leader who has received 3 letters from the Bosnian woman she sponsored after last November's meeting. I hope to hear other stories like that from you all. Please email me about this as soon as possible just to let me know what to plan for. I'll probably ask you to write a short paragraph in an email to me about it that I'd need by July 20.
- 2) CALLING ALL COOKS! We'll be doing another round of the "best of DFW recipes" featuring ingredients we share in common with women in DR Congo for August. Any style, any course, send us things you love using any of the following (and note how many will be in season in August): tomatoes, peppers (chiles and sweet), melon, sweet potatoes, millet, cassava, plaintain, okra, peanuts or peanut butter, field peas (black-eyed or other), green beans, cucumber, eggplant, mango, banana, pineapple, corn (cornmeal or fresh corn), citrus, ... and Coca Cola (sad but true). You can include meat, poultry, fish dishes with one or more of the above ingredients as well. I'll need these by July 20. Please ask your members to contribute their favorites.

Questions or comments: corrienorman1959@yahoo.com