



# Seeds of Progress

May 28, 2004

## Deep Roots Continues to Grow

As DR marks its five-year anniversary, leadership within the organization is changing. During the May Board of Directors meeting, Helga Schaffrin was officially elected Chairperson of Deep Roots. In January, founder Mike Graglia stepped down as Chairperson and Schaffrin filled in as acting chair. As she takes on the new role she says, "As DR is emerging from the transition from a one-country to a multi-country organization, we are facing a period of tremendous growth. That naturally brings challenges with it, but I am confident that the solid team of dedicated volunteers running Deep Roots will meet them." Graglia now serves as Treasurer, a position left open when Michelle Rubesch resigned from the role in April. She now joins DR's extensive Advisory Board. DR has also named Oliver Sabot as Development Committee chair (see article below).

DR has streamlined the organization by creating the positions of Deputy Managing Director for Country Programs (Heather Brauer) and Deputy Managing Director for Operations (Ronna Belinky). Now all country chairs, including our new addition, Zambia Chairperson Stacey Hannah, report directly to Heather. For a full list of volunteers and their biographies, go to <http://www.deeproofs.org/staff>.

We are also creating a new website to be launched Summer 2004. Soon all DR programs will be hosted on one webpage. The site will feature a new design and easier navigational tools to help access a wealth of information on what DR is doing around the world to help kids receive the education they deserve.

## New Development Chair Oliver Sabot Envisions Change, Challenge and Generous Checkbooks

Deep Roots recently welcomed a new Development Chair, Oliver Sabot.

As a WorldTeach volunteer in northern Namibia, Oliver Sabot spent 2003 teaching in a rural school and living with a local host family. Like many volunteers, Oliver experienced the disappointment of seeing many motivated students drop out of the education system because they lacked the financial resources to continue. Upon his return from Namibia, he approached Deep Roots with the idea of setting up a scholarship for such students in honor of his revered host father, school principal Mauritius Niipare. Next, in his words, "I was so impressed with the organization that I jumped on board."

### Oliver has three main goals for the 2004-5 DR development program:

- ✳ Increase individual contribution size. Oliver is actively seeking private foundation grants as large as \$100,000. He acknowledges that it may be a challenge to convince foundations that Deep Roots can administer such large amounts; however, he believes donors will recognize that DR is a rapidly expanding organization with the capacity to rise to the task.
- ✳ Leverage the fundraising potential of personal connections through alumni networks. "I would really like to have as many of our staff featured in alumni magazines as possible," Oliver says. "Every one of us has interesting stories of service, plus the Deep Roots virtual NGO model should be intriguing to alumni readers." The challenge here is to create an organized approach for contacting alumni magazines.
- ✳ Consolidate all Deep Roots fundraising activity to ensure a consistent message and an efficient process.

Oliver believes this will be a milestone year for the growth of Deep Roots. Although it can be difficult to forge a team in cyberspace, he sees the virtual nature of DR as a powerful advantage in reaching donors around the world. He sums up, "We have a lot of work ahead of us, especially if some of these large grants come through, but with a lot of creative thinking we can ultimately deliver so much more funding where it matters—to the students we all care so much about."



## Founder's Note

**Q:** How can DR get 93+% of donations to hundreds of children in remote areas of four countries?

**A:** Talented and creative people giving immense amounts of time. DR should realize that their generous financial contributions are matched at least dollar for dollar with the valuable time and energy of our volunteers.

In this issue, I would like to acknowledge one such individual who retires from the Executive Committee to the Advisory Board, without whom DR would never have made it this far. I convinced Michelle Rubesch to help DR over email from my Peace Corps village in 1999. Five years later, after giving many hours to conference calls, Quick Books, meetings and IRS documents (as well as raising considerable funds!) Michelle's term is complete and she is moving on to new challenges. Replacing her technical aptitude and rigorous thinking will be difficult, but what I will miss more is her unfailing optimism, boundless energy and inspiring dedication to service. I speak for the whole board when I say that Michelle will be dearly missed and we are grateful that her wise counsel will remain available to use via the advisory board.

Every charitable corporation applies for 501(c)(3) status and at first receives a provisional ruling for 3-5 years. Then their financials and documents are reviewed and they are given permanent 501(c)(3) status. Earlier this year, DR received that ruling, which allows us to do the good work that we do and mobilize funds from private foundations. We are very proud of this milestone. Michelle should be too, without her it may have never happened.

Thank you, Michelle, for everything. The DR we are all so proud of today would not exist without you.

Michael J. Graglia, Founder

I met Risto when he was in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. He was inquisitive and hungry, literally and intellectually. When Risto was only 8 years old Namibia won the independence struggle and English became the official language. Literally overnight, teachers and students were expected to use what was for them a second, third, or totally unknown language. This context makes Risto's letter even more remarkable.

I was honored to be living in Namibia on March 21, 2000, the 10<sup>th</sup> Independence Day. So much more progress has been made in the 4 years since, on both the micro and macro levels. Risto sat out of school for over 2 years before starting at IUM. In a recent email, he told me that he was elected president of his college SRC (Student Representative Council.)

I saw him for the last time in December 2000. I wondered what he would do about college, after his Deep Roots scholarship ended. Although I gave him cheery advice about "things working out," I had a sense of dread. Things usually don't "just work out" for kids in his situation. I thought of paying for his college, but all the warnings about creating dependency rang in my head. That's the beauty of Africa, though. Just when you think your heart has been irrevocably broken, a miracle happens.

Deep Roots is now in our 5<sup>th</sup> year. It is my privilege to be one small cog in the machine that gives children the opportunity to change their lives.

Kirsten Logan

Denver, Colorado, May 2004

I am Risto Mbangula; I have one brother, one half brother and two half sisters. My father died in 1987 when I was 5 year old, we were only 2 at that time, my brother and me. Our extended family agree to separate us they want me to stay with my father's parents while Lukas (my brother) to go stay with mom. I started school there. In between there when I was in grade 7 grandma who have been paying for my education couldn't afford to pay, my grandfather was like neglecting us all other grand children dropped out of school. I continue till I change from Nakele primary secondary school to Onampira combined school, grandma went there to talk to the school principal for me to start attending she promised to pay when she get money. I attend grade 9 and 10 at this school in 1999.



*"...education can never be a bad thing, it can only make you a better person..."*

Miss Kirsten Logan came to teach at our school from USA, we were so very lucky to have a teacher from abroad, she teach us English and Geography, we started friendship I told her how I wanted to drop if I pass or fail grade 10, she advised me not to drop, but to be strong I still have her words she use to say "Risto, education will never be a bad thing, it only makes you a better person." She assisted me financially till I passed grade 10. She gave me some money for secondary school and advised me to try some bursaries. One day she called me and gave me a form to fill, it was Deep Roots children trust fund; after some time they (Deep Roots) wrote me a letter that I have succeeded. My grandma was very happy to hear that it was a dream come true. Deep Roots paid all fee till I complete grade 12.

Risto Mbangula

Nakele, Namibia, May 2004

**Snapshot Namibia:** Namibia is among Africa's newest countries, having gained its independence from South Africa in 1990. Home to many different peoples and cultures, Namibia's vast arid landscapes include a portion of the Kalahari desert, the giant sand dunes of the Namib desert and the legendary Skeleton Coast. Only the far north contains green farmland and wooded areas, and two thirds of the country's 1.9 million people live in this region. Namibia was the first country in the world to incorporate protection of the environment into its constitution. Some 14% of the land is protected, and Etosha National Park is considered one of the world's great conservation areas. Half of Namibia's people depend on subsistence agriculture for their livelihood and nearly one-third of the population has an annual income of less than \$US1400. As elsewhere in southern Africa, it is an ongoing source of tension that a small white minority controls at least half of Namibia's land. Namibia is rich in mineral resources and mining accounts for 20% of the GDP, but it provides employment for only 3% of the population. It is important to note that even though many Namibians live in poverty, 84% of the population over age fifteen can read and write, and the country ranks second worldwide for educational spending as a percent of GNP. This mixture of respect for education and profound economic need has provided a natural environment for Deep Roots to grow.

**DR Namibia:** For US\$200, an academically gifted child in rural Namibia can go to Secondary School (grades 11 and 12) for two years, pay for hostel fees, required textbooks, the school uniform, and join the school meal plan. Two-thirds of all Deep Roots scholarships go to young women. Deep Roots partners with the University of Namibia Foundation (UNAMF) to administer the program in country. UNAMF is responsible for sending out mailings, tracking current DR scholars, disbursing scholarship money to schools and maintaining accurate reports. Currently, DR sponsors 145 students in Namibia.