The Kenya Gender-Based Violence Partnership continues to develop and evolve. The transition from planning to program has brought both challenges and opportunities. New partners have joined us, and our strategy has expanded to a more comprehensive approach with a heavy emphasis in Turkana. We continue to need financial support, and we need to mobilize more churches and donors to see this project to completion. Every contribution, large or small, is important; makes a difference; and is life-saving.

Women’s Center

The Turkana Wellness Center for Women will officially launch in August 2014. This partnership with UNICEF and the International Rescue Committee is a dedicated wing of the Lodwar Hospital. The center treats five new women every day, providing medical, legal and counseling services. Approximately 80 new gender-violence survivors arrive at the Women’s Center each month.

We still need $50,000 by June 30 to fully staff the Women’s Center. Without that $50,000, services will need to be reduced, including elimination of legal services. Our intent is to make this a comprehensive, one-stop center that provides beneficiaries all the services she will need. To continue this important work and realize this goal, we need your help!

The center itself is a bright facility with messages of resilience and hope. Survivors say they love the warmth and the strength of the Women’s Center. In the past two years, we have raised nearly $350,000 to support staffing, construction, training and capacity-building. You can help us over the next hurdle with a contribution toward the remaining $50,000 commitment to this project.
The Kenya Gender-Based Violence Partnership recognized that food security was crucial to the security of women and children. In partnership with the community, we have purchased 100 acres of land to be used for agricultural development. With funds from the Jetter Family Foundation and the Regional Office of the Church of the Nazarene, we installed a solar-driven water system that is providing clean drinking water and water for agricultural purposes. With technical assistance from AgroWorld, we are planting watermelon, tomatoes, onions, beans, red peppers, spider plants and fruit trees. An acre of watermelon will produce more than 30,000 pounds of fruit. This single acre can fund and support operations of the farm. In three months, we will see our first harvest of watermelon, and there is energy and excitement to make this a model farm for the government and AgroWorld.

The Kenya Gender-Based Violence Partnership will soon expand its agriculture work into Isiolo and Samburu.

The Gender Resilience Initiative

Flora, a survivor of gender violence, is spearheading a network of support groups in Machakos County with funding from the Crossroads Church of the Nazarene, NCO-Kenya and Servant Forge. The primary focus is to connect survivors of gender-based violence to resources in their local communities to combat substance-abuse, personal financial challenges, and to gain strength from other women survivors as they navigate the challenges of raising children and living in a conflict-free home.

The GRI is growing, its reach expanding. Your support has made it possible for us to provide the counseling and staffing resources to make this initiative a success. The pilot project is underway, and contributions to the GRI would allow expansion into a second year - $15,000 is all it takes to reach hundreds of women through this network of support groups.
SEMA Campaign

SEMA means ‘Speak Out’ and seeks to create policy and attitude change around gender-inclusion and violence-reduction by working with young people in Kenya’s universities and communities. SEMA grew out of the work on GBV in Lodwar during awareness training with pastors, teachers, law-enforcement and social workers. Older men had trouble acknowledging that violence against women shouldn’t be a cultural norm. As a result, the team decided it was important to reach young people early, when there is a better chance of reshaping attitudes and behaviors.

Since its launch in June 2013, we have trained 500 university students from six different universities and 20 young community members. In turn, they came up with different strategies to implement within their universities and communities. These strategies include increasing awareness and sensitivity training through on-campus clubs, facilitated by trained students; a walk to raise awareness; and concerts. Strategies also include new policies requiring equity in student leadership and elections; creating a gender-desk, manned by the Youth Rights Committee, in the slums where victims can seek assistance; and an exciting social-media campaign called SEMA-Mapenzi Bila Chuki, meaning “Love Without Hate.” PEPSI is a co-sponsor of the concerts to get the word out.

Help us drive the campaign to a new level this next year with support to include additional universities and communities. It costs $5,000 per university to make a difference. Please speak out and help us change a generation to “Love Without Hate.”

References:
http://www.youth.gov.org/main/images/youth.cdf
Wings of Hope

The Wings of Hope center is near completion. This partnership with Nazarene Compassionate Organization of Kenya, IsraAID, Tough Angels, the Crossroads Church of the Nazarene and Servant Forge is about to launch and become operational. The exterior of the facility is near completion (see picture), and the interior will be finished by June 30.

The Wings of Hope center is a place for women to meet around art, dance and music to create a safe environment for discussion about gender issues in their regions and in their families. It is a place for spiritual counseling and a setting that nurtures safety and dialogue. IsraAID will be training local leadership and counselors to work in the center. Thank you for your support of this project and the many volunteers who have made this happen. Crossroads has sent two teams to Lodwar to help complete the facility. Help is still needed to raise $50,000 to hire and train local staff to launch Wings of Hope for its first year of start-up and operation.

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KGBV Partners