



HOME & COUNTRY is published quarterly by the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO). This newsletter has two objectives:

1. To provide educational material which cultivates more knowledgeable and responsible citizens and promotes good family life skills, leadership development and community action.
2. To provide a "communications link" among all members of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario and other related organizations.

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#### Points to Ponder:

A lot of money is tainted. 'Taint yours and 'taint mine!



## Forging an ACWW Link in Malawi

**M**y husband was posted to Malawi, Southern Africa, for a six month World Bank Project in November 2001. Before leaving Canada, I contacted the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) in London to find out if there was a WI affiliate group in Malawi. The reply stated that there were no such groups and no ACWW projects in that country.

Upon my arrival in Malawi, I made further inquiries and was given a contact name. A member of the group called the African Women's Association, Sipiwe Savala, called me and invited me to their next meeting. Twenty members from five other countries – the Sudan, Gambia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia – were present at this meeting at a member's home. I was asked to speak about the aims, objectives and activities of our WI organization.

During the business discussions, the subject was fundraising. The group's objectives were similar in this regard, providing financial assistance to those in need in their community. Their focus was an orphanage run by the St. Theresa Nuns, where they had donated milk, soap, detergent and cots. At the local hospital they had provided much needed items such as sheets, gowns, curtains and mattresses.

The group was very friendly and keen to learn how to improve their organization. They felt they would benefit from an affiliation with ACWW. After several emails and phone calls, and unfortunately after my return home to Canada, I was able to put them in touch with Anna Boshoff, the Area President for Southern Africa.

For my efforts, I was extended an invitation to the Area Conference for the countries of the Southern African Region. I passed the invitation on to the President of the African Women's Association. Due to illness, the President was unable to attend, so the Past President, my friend Sipiwe, went in her place. My husband and I personally sponsored her trip.

Afterwards, Sipiwe wrote to say she was excited to have met so many women from other African countries. She said she received a standing ovation when she told the gathering that she is training young women in her own home to be homemakers so they can find gainful employment. Malawi is a poor country and the society being male dominated offers few opportunities to women. So far, Sipiwe has trained and found jobs for over 100 young women, which has a ripple effect in that they are able to feed their immediate and extended families in their home village.

I am hoping that by forging this link, Malawi women will be able to participate in ACWW's many worthwhile programs. It is also my hope that through my contact with the women of Malawi, the Franktown-Numogate Branch can maintain this link with this dedicated group.

Flora Knight

Franktown-Numogate WI,  
Lanark South



Flora Knight (centre back row, in white blouse) with members from the African Women's Association.

