Sydney gran leads mission to lift African children out of poverty

Kids in Kenya charity distributes vital school materials, aims to build area library

Sydney, 16 June, 2010 Leichhardt grandmother Paule Browne-Cooper will visit Africa next month to deliver urgently needed school materials and other provisions to the children of Siaya in western Kenya. It will be her third aid trip to the impoverished region since she founded the charity Kids in Kenya following a safari holiday in 2004. Run by a small group of committed volunteers in Sydney, Kids in Kenya raises money in Australia, then uses it to buy pens, paper and books, thong sandals and sports equipment in Nairobi. Aussie volunteers transport the donated items personally to ensure that they arrive intact and are distributed to the children most in need. The charity supports more than 5,000 children studying in six locations."This is a shockingly poor part of Kenya, where few kids have shoes and the only toilets are holes in the ground," said Browne-Cooper. "The local teachers are very dedicated but working with almost no resources. After meeting them when I was on safari, I returned to Australia determined to do something about the poverty I'd witnessed."Since then I have raised funds, flown to Nairobi, purchased school supplies and other essentials, hired drivers, vans and camp hands and personally delivered the materials to the village schools."Kids in Kenya raises money through school, church, Rotary and community events, including barbecues, concerts, and fairs selling African artifacts and jewellery. "Running a charity single-handed from my spare room can be a bit of a slog at times, and I know Kids in Kenya cant save the world," said Browne-Cooper. "But if it can make a difference to one child, or one school, or one villager and it already has to many then I know it is all worthwhile."NOTE TO EDITORSPaule Browne-Cooper is available to talk about her July trip and the longer-term aims of Kids in Kenya, and its achievements to date. She can be contacted on 0416 754 111 and paule@kidsinkenya.net. More photos and feedback from the schools which have already benefited from KiKs work are also available.Kids in Kenya is a registered charity (CFN 21049, ABN 44241876636). It is not sponsored or endorsed by any religious or political organisation and relies entirely on donations to fund its projects. Further information can be found on the Kids in Kenya website, http://www.kidsinkenya.net