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13 February 2014

Dear Friends,

This edition of the newsflash focuses on capturing stories of individuals who have benefitted from your programs. We are all tracking beneficiary numbers and budgets, but ultimately people want to hear about the impact you have on the people you serve. We hope these tools will help you to think about new ways to gather and share stories of change.

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

*(Resource) Story Collection Tool from MACOBAO*

*(Resource) Simple tips to gather a better girl story on the ground from Nike Foundation*

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(Resource) Story Collection Tool from MACOBAO

Firelight grantee-partner Masvingo Community Based HIV and Vulnerable Children Organization (MACOBAO) in Zimbabwe has recently started adding beneficiary stories into their reports. They shared their Story Collection Tool with us, and we are sharing it with you as it is easy to use and has generated good information for MACOBAO. They write: "With a small staff establishment, we are still confident that we can capture every piece of our achievement and utilize this to monitor the impact of our efforts then communicate to our partners, stakeholders and funders. We also use this as a tool for self assessment to see if what we are doing is bringing in some change in vulnerable children's lives. Our programme team designed this guide to help us when collecting success stories and evaluating our work. We have just decided to share with you how we collect our success stories."

### **Our Story of Change interview Guide**

**Name of Project/Action:**

**Communities involved in the implementation of the Project/Action:**

**Background:** *We [Name of Organization], communities and stakeholders would like to capture stories of change that may have resulted from their work with the support from Firelight Foundation at this project site/location/area. This will help us to capture all the*

*best practices and share with other actors as well as transferring our model to other partners in the field of child programming. This will also help us to improve what we are doing, enable us to celebrate the success together as well as being accountable to our funders.*

*The stories and information gathered from you will be used for a number of purposes including:*

- *To explore what MACOBAO actions have achieved already and learn how these actions have impacted on the targeted community/beneficiaries*
- *To help MACOBAO Officers/Community groups/Stakeholders and partners to understand what people in (project site) value and support*
- *To acknowledge and publicize what has already been achieved.*

### **Confidentiality**

We will use our stories for reporting to our funders, or sharing with other people in the children's programming sector and partner ministries.

Do you (the story teller):

1. Want your name to be on the story (circle one) Yes, No
2. Consent to us use your story for publication (circle one) Yes, No

### **Contact Details**

Name of storyteller:

Name of person recording or gathering the information and details of the story:

Date of recording:

Interview start time:

Interview end time:

Title of the story:

### **Questions asked during the interviews**

1. May you please tell me when and how you (the interviewee) first became involved with MACOBAO, and what your current involvement is:
2. From your point of view, describe notable changes that have resulted from your involvement with MACOBAO and/or this action:

3. Of these notable changes, which ones do you rank as the most significant?
4. Why is this most significant to you?
5. Lessons learnt:
6. Any other comments:

*Please read back the story to the storytellers to make sure that the story captured is true reflection of what they have told you.*

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(Resource) Simple tips to gather a better girl story on the ground from Nike Foundation

Storytelling was a focus for the Grassroots Girls Initiative (<http://bit.ly/1jiXvV6>), launched by the Nike Foundation as part of its work to support the girl effect, over the past three years. Lydia Holden, as part of her work in support of the Initiative, developed several resources for use in storytelling. These tips are excerpted from “Storytelling: Simple tips to gather a better girl story on the ground.” While these techniques are targeted for girls, they could be adapted to gather stories from any beneficiary group.

### **Interviewing for the Whole Story:**

When interviewing a girl beneficiary, you want to not only understand her life now in the program, but to also uncover the road she has traveled. Ask about what her life was like when she was younger, what she thought of her community, the lessons she learned and events she will never forget. To hone in on more detail about a specific event, use the “moment of change” storytelling exercise.

### **Moment of Change:**

Our lives comprise an infinite number of moments, and some of these moments are loaded with more meaning than other. The moment of change might be the most memorable or dramatic moment, or it may have occurred without the storyteller even noticing it at the time. Whether the storyteller became aware of it at the time or in reflection, we want to help them find the moment of change that best represents the insight that they wish to convey. Often a girl’s moment of change is about encountering the grassroots organization that transformed her life.

To help find the true meaning of her story, ask the girl: “What’s the story you want to tell?” and then “What do you think your story means?” We want to hear not just what the story is about in the obvious sense, but what it’s really about: the storyteller, as the person who lived through the story.

### **Finding the moment of change:**

What change happened?

What were you like before the change?

What were you like after?  
What did you learn?

You will also want to ask girls questions about other parts of their lives to set them at ease and gain a fuller picture of the girl and her life. Some of these questions could include:

- How long does it take you to walk to school?
  - What do you think about when you walk?
  - What chores do you do at home in the evening?
  - What do you and your family or friends gossip or chat about?
  - What have you learned about yourself and the world?
  - What is a memory, good or bad, you have that you think about often?
  - Did your parents or grandparents tell you stories when you were younger? Can you tell me one of those stories?
  - What or who makes you feel powerful?
  - Is there anything you would like to ask me?
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(Resource) Great Questions from StoryCorps

StoryCorps is an American radio program that records interviews between people, usually family members or loved ones. The conversations they facilitate are very heartfelt and the stories are later played on the radio and stored in a national archive.

Sometimes to get a good conversation going, you need some good questions to start off from. StoryCorps has developed some lists of great questions to get great conversations started. Here are some of our favorites. You can find a complete list at <http://bit.ly/1ivDdoj>.

- Who has been the most important person in your life? Can you tell me about him or her?
- What was the happiest moment of your life? The saddest?
- Who has been the biggest influence on your life? What lessons did that person teach you?
- Who has been the kindest to you in your life?
- What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?
- What is your earliest memory?
- What are the funniest or most embarrassing stories your family tells about you?
- If you could hold on to just one memory from your life forever, what would that be?
- If this was to be our very last conversation, what words of wisdom would you want to pass on to me?
- What are you proudest of in your life?
- When in life have you felt most alone?
- What are your hopes and dreams for what the future holds for your children?
- How has your life been different than what you'd imagined?

- How would you like to be remembered?
  - Do you have any regrets?
  - What does your future hold?
  - Is there any message you want to give or anything you would want to say to your great-great-great grandchildren if they were listening to this?
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## (Call for Nominations) EQUATOR PRIZE 2014 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Equator Initiative is pleased to announce its call for nominations for the Equator Prize 2014, which will recognize twenty-five (25) local sustainable development solutions for people, nature and resilient communities.

All winning initiatives will receive US \$5,000, with several selected for “special recognition” and a total of US \$20,000 each. Representatives of all winning communities will be supported to participate in events during the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Summit and the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in New York in September 2014.

The Equator Initiative aims to shine a spotlight on outstanding **local efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity**. We take our inspiration from local and indigenous communities on the frontlines of the global poverty, environment and climate challenges and are searching for grassroots stories that can change the world. Nominations are open to organizations from 145 countries.

The **theme of the Equator Prize 2014 is local climate action**. We are looking for leading examples of communities that are managing biodiversity and ecosystems in a way that is reducing vulnerability, creating sustainable livelihoods, and advancing natural solutions to address the climate crisis. ‘Special recognition’ prizes will be awarded in: smallholder agriculture and food security, forest management (including REDD+), sustainable land management, ecosystem restoration, sustainable energy, water security, and disaster risk reduction.

### Equator Prize 2014 Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible for the Equator Prize 2014, nominees must:

- Have been in operation for at least 3 years
- Be a community-based or local group, operating in a rural area
- Be located within a country receiving support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), excluding countries with a high level of development (see list of eligible countries below)

Eligible Initiatives:

- Community-based organizations
- Community-based enterprises and cooperatives
- Indigenous groups

- Non-governmental organizations
- Community-based initiatives associated with conserved areas or other biological reserves
- Women's groups
- Youth groups

Equator Prize 2014 winners will be selected by a Technical Advisory Committee of leading international environment and development experts based on the following **criteria**:

**Impact:** Initiatives that have improved community wellbeing and local livelihoods through sustainable natural resource management and/or environmental conservation of land-based and/or marine resources.

**Sustainability:** Initiatives that can demonstrate enduring institutional, operational and financial sustainability.

**Innovation and Transferability:** Initiatives demonstrating new approaches that overcome prevailing constraints and offer knowledge, experience and lessons of potential relevance to other communities.

**Leadership and Community Empowerment:** Initiatives demonstrating leadership that has inspired action and change consistent with the vision of the Equator Initiative, including policy and/or institutional change, the empowerment of local people, and the community management of protected areas.

**Empowerment of Women and Social Inclusion:** Initiatives that promote the equality and empowerment of women and/or marginalized groups.

**Resilience, Adaptability, and Self-Sufficiency:** Initiatives demonstrating adaptability to environmental, social and economic change, resilience in the face of external pressures, and improved capacity for local self-sufficiency.

Nominations may be submitted in the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Haitian, Creole, Hindi, Indonesian, Malay, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese.

Nominations must be submitted by March 22nd, 2014. Click here for the online nomination form: <http://bit.ly/1jiXEb6>

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(Call for Nominations) Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life from WWSF

Awarded since 1994 by WWSF Women's World Summit Foundation (<http://bit.ly/1IDTmwF>) - an international, non-profit, humanitarian NGO, serving the

implementation of women's and children's rights and the UN development agenda - the Prize (\$ 1000 per laureate and \$ 3000 for specific African women's organisations), honors women and women's groups around the world exhibiting exceptional creativity, courage and commitment for the improvement of the quality of life in rural communities (395 prizes awarded so far). The Prize aims to draw international attention to laureates' contributions to sustainable development, household food security and peace, thus generating recognition and support for their projects. While rural women are vital in providing examples of sound practice in their communities, they still do not have full access to tools needed for development, such as education, credit, land rights and participation in decision making. By highlighting and awarding creative development models, innovations and experiences enhancing the quality of rural life, WWSF participates in addressing the eradication of rural poverty, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment.

### **Eligibility:**

- Nominees should be women and women's groups currently active in rural life whose efforts have not yet been acknowledged by other awards. They may not nominate themselves.
- The nominating organization or individual must have direct experience of the nominee's work. The nominator may not nominate a family member, be a member of the nominated organization, nor can an organization nominate its senior officer (i.e. founder, president etc.). No more than 3 nominees may be presented by the same person/organization in the same year. The nominator commits to organize an award ceremony if the candidate is selected for the Prize and invite the media.

### **Nominations must include the following items:**

- Original signed letter of nomination indicating how the nominator knows the nominee and for how long.
- Biographical data on the nominee (full name, age, education, place of work, background) and a detailed history of the nominee's creative project (written by the nominator) including her motivation, innovative aspects, any obstacles overcome, and the impact in the community. Nominations must specify whether the nominee has received or is currently being nominated for other awards.
- Two original and signed endorsement letters from organizations or individuals other than the nominator and, if possible, additional supporting materials such as newspaper articles or publications.
- A few labeled photographs clearly showing the nominee(s) for possible publication.

### **Criteria:**

The long-term impact of the Prize depends on the integrity of the nominators and the quality of their nominations. The Prize is an award for successful accomplishments rather than a fund for future projects. The nominee's history (2-3 pages) should demonstrate the creativity, courage and sometimes sacrifice in her efforts at the grass roots to improve life

in rural communities. Descriptions should be as specific as possible.  
Any of the following elements should be emphasized:

- Exceptional courage and perseverance in improving rural life
- Creativity in the approach
- Preservation of and respect for the environment
- Continuing impact on the community

Laureates are selected by an international Jury composed of WWSF Board of Directors; are announced officially in September and celebrated in their countries on 15 October – International Day of Rural Women. WWSF has a commitment to award annually 5 to 10 creative rural women and women's groups around the world.

WWSF Women's World Summit Foundation  
11 avenue de la Paix  
1202 Geneva, Switzerland  
E-mail: [wwsf@wwsf.ch](mailto:wwsf@wwsf.ch)

Nomination materials should arrive no later than 30 April 2014 through the post. E-mail nominations are not accepted.

You can download the nomination form in Pdf format here: <http://bit.ly/1dtHp2v>

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As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website:

<http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash>

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at [newsletter@firelightfoundation.org](mailto:newsletter@firelightfoundation.org)

**For more information contact:**

Firelight Foundation  
740 Front Street, Suite 380  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA  
[www.firelightfoundation.org](http://www.firelightfoundation.org)  
+1 831-429- 8750