

## **President & Founder of Firelight Grantee Girl Child Network Honored as 'CNN Hero'**

**June 8, 2009**—A few days ago, CNN, CNN Headline News, CNN International, and CNN en Español premiered a feature story naming Betty Makoni—founder and president of Firelight grantee, Girl Child Network (GCN) in Zimbabwe—a 'CNN Hero' and drawing attention to her work "protecting the powerless". Ms. Makoni also appeared as a guest on the 'Larry King Live' show. A former high school teacher and abuse survivor, Betty established GCN in 1999 to protect girls from abuse and to empower them to stay in school despite overwhelming marginalization and violence in their communities.

Giving its first grant to the organization in 2001, the Firelight Foundation was one of GCN's earliest supporters. Nearly a decade later, GCN works through a network of 500 clubs with some 35,000 members to advocate for girls' rights; provide emergency services to abused girls; and train girls in HIV prevention, human rights, and income generation.

To view Betty's 'Heroes' page on CNN.com and watch her appearances on CNN News and 'Larry King Live,' go to:  
<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cnn.heroes/archive09/betty.makoni.html>.