



'Mamas Day' fundraiser aimed at helping mothers in Kenya

By Aimee Cook O'Brien



Proceeds from the OFDC "Mamas Day" fundraiser will benefit mothers and their children in Kenya.

The Opportunity Fund for Developing Countries, a local charity based in Murray, is hosting a fundraising event to raise money for women and children in Kenya. "Mamas Day" will take place on Saturday, May 1 at South Valley Unitarian Universalist Society, 6876 South Highland Drive, from 5 to 8 p.m.

The event will feature an African market, raffle and live African dancers and drum performances. Admission is a \$5 donation for adults, with all proceeds going directly to the OFDC programs.

"The purpose of the Mama's Day Fundraiser and African Market is to not only raise funds for our programs, but to also increase awareness of humanitarian issues in Kenya and help the community gain an appreciation and understanding of African culture," Sarah Berry, OFDC director, said. "We want to give people the opportunity to connect with African communities here in Utah in a celebration of motherhood, as well as give African refugees a unique venue to showcase their talents. The \$5 cost of attendance is enough to buy one mosquito net, protecting 2-4 children from malaria."

The focus of OFDC is on woman, children and health in rural communities in Kenya. The organization gives funds to build clean latrines for school children, mosquito nets, water wells, water catchments and uniforms for children to attend school. OFDC hires local builders to construct the latrines and wells, thus fueling the local economy.

Berry says that OFDC is not interested in changing any of the culture in Kenya, but instead wants to educate and provide the women with microcredit loans so that they may learn a skill, manage their money and give back to their communities while also repaying the loans. They also will continue to provide uniforms for children, primarily girls who would otherwise be married off at the age of 13.