



PHOTO & CAPTION

First Lady Spices Up Education



Photo: Faya Gerwin, U.S. Embassy

A schoolgirl spoke to U.S. First Lady Laura Bush, Zanzibar First Lady Shadya Karume and Education Minister Haroun Ali Suleiman at the library inauguration.

In Zanzibar — Tanzania's predominantly Muslim, semiautonomous spice islands — educational resources are lacking. Access to schools is limited, and enrolment is low, particularly in rural areas and among girls and children with special needs. Schools can average 80 children to a classroom. Standardized tests return low scores in English, math and science, and teachers have neither the resources nor the training they need to properly instruct their students.

These were some of the critical issues that U.S. First Lady Laura Bush focused on during her July 2005 tour of Tanzania. At the USAID-supported Kiembe Samaki

Teacher Training Center, Mrs. Bush and Zanzibar First Lady Shadya Karume inaugurated a new library that was built as part of USAID's program to improve the quality of learning in Zanzibar. Targeting groups that have lagged in educational achievement — especially girls and students with disabilities — USAID seeks to enhance education from pre-school through secondary school by improving the quality of instruction, encouraging inclusiveness, promoting early childhood development and improving school management.

As a former teacher and librarian, Mrs. Bush said she was "especially pleased to visit the Kiembe Samaki Teacher's Center." She handed over a gift of 20 books as a prelude to the 20,000 books that the U.S. government is donating to Zanzibar. The Center provides a variety of services to more than 1,500 teachers at 36 schools on Zanzibar, including workshop facilities, teacher-to-teacher conversations, a library, computers, curriculum materials and subject matter advisors, all to help teachers improve their competence and confidence. USAID has donated bicycles, scooters, computers, a VCR, printers, books and lab equipment to stock the Center.

Seventeen-year-old Yusra Saleh voiced her gratitude to Mrs. Bush, saying, "Madam Laura your Excellency, Zanzibar appreciates your assistance and aid from United States."