



Message from the Board

Dr. Dalton Reimer, Board Chair

Greetings from Mama Makeka House of Hope,

Life is good at the House of Mama Makeka, and getting even better. So I wish to share with you some exciting recent developments at our House.

First, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the House, I am pleased to announce that Pakisa Tshimika, our heretofore part-time executive director, has now moved to fulltime director beginning this month of January.

Pakisa recently resigned from his position as Associate General Secretary of Mennonite World Conference in order to give his full attention to the activities of the House. We, the Board, believe that the timing is right for this, and that this move augurs well for the future of our House.

Part-time building goes slowly, yet the years of part-time building have served the House well. Visions have been sharpened, partnerships have been developed, program activities clarified, a beginning support base developed, and priorities established. Mama Makeka is now well positioned to move forward into the future.

We are pleased also to announce the appointment of Dennis Becker as part-time administrative assistant to Pakisa. Pakisa and Dennis have worked together the past years under Mennonite World Conference, and so we are pleased that this partnership can continue now under Mama Makeka. They form a strong team.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo our administrative staff is assisted by a local Mama Makeka Committee and a strong partnership with Pascal Kulungu, Director of the Centre for Peacebuilding, Leadership and Good Governance in the capital of Kinshasa. Pakisa and Pascal were once classmates, and since have risen to become key lay leaders of their generation in the Mennonite Brethren Church in Congo and beyond. Now they are Mama Makeka mates, both fully committed to serving the church and people of Congo.

As a Board we are looking forward to a strong future under this new leadership arrangement. Our mission remains the same – to address the critical health, educational, community development and peacebuilding needs of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and more selectively needs in the community of our Fresno home.

We live in a time when traditional mission and service organizations are seeking to reposition themselves in relationship to national churches and global organizations. In this mix, we see Mama Makeka being able to mediate and facilitate between and among churches and agencies free of much of the historical baggage others bring to the table. Simultaneously, our commitment to the church is strong, and we see ourselves facilitating new initiatives and partnerships that will serve to enhance not only the church, but also the institutions of the church and the communities

in which they reside. So we see a bright future for Mama Makeka under the very capable leadership of our combined staff in Congo and North America.

Finally, we invite you to consider helping us build the House of Mama Makeka. Securing the staff base of the House is a first priority for the Board. Projects, of course, are already on the table, but to begin with we need to enlarge the support base to assure that our staff can give their full attention to the primary mission of the House.

Enclosed you will find a personal statement of vision and commitment of our Executive Director. As a Board, we affirm this statement, and commit ourselves to working with our executive director to realize it. We would be most pleased if you also would join with us in realizing this vision of the House.

Blessings,

Enclosures:

- (a) Executive Director Statement of Vision and Commitment
- (b) Mama Makeka House of Hope Brochure
- (c) How You Can Become a Partner