

## WFWP Northeast Region's Program for Children - Supporting African Children

Olga Vakulinskaya

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Cheon Jeon Gung



I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our True Parents, our True Mother, because they created such a wonderful organization, the Women's Federation for World Peace. This organization, I feel, can substantially convey God's heart, God's love and how much God cares for people. We, as sisters and as Women's Federation members, want to challenge ourselves to emulate True Mother's heart and True Mother's love. That is our main purpose. That is all we want to do in all our activities, just to become channels of God's love and True Parents' love for people. As we understand True Mother's explanation of Vision 2020, WFWP's responsibility is to create a favorable environment. We focus on three things connected to this -- intercultural and international peace-building programs, moral and family education, and charity service projects.

We are grateful to our international president, Yeon-ah nim, for her beautiful example of dedication and filial piety and for her guidance. According to her guidance, my sisters and I focus on three things -- one is networking with organizations. In Russia, we conduct all our projects in cooperation with different NGOs and sometimes government institutions. Second is our focus on moral education for young people; we hold programs for young people. I remember that Yeon-ah nim once said it is not enough only to hold conferences. We need to do practical service for society. That is the third thing we are trying to do.



*Mrs. Vakulinskaya testified that Susan Kone is a great person to work with because she always sends back photographs that show how much Kenyan children at her Sandota Education Center appreciate what they receive from generous of donors in Russia*

**With love, serve one another**

In Russia, we started with a service project. We feel this is valuable, because it is a great way to educate

young people. We have a program for children even from kindergarten. When our own children were little and went to kindergarten, we inspired the kindergarten teachers to prepare programs and visit elderly people or go to homes for people in need, where the children can share their love. Actually, when I was their age, even when I was twelve or thirteen years old, I never thought of living for the sake of the society, living for the sake of others, but now our children have the opportunity to have a mission, even when they are young. We want to share this mission with other children in the society. That many schools support this now is encouraging. For example, sometimes schools call me and they ask, Olga, when are you planning to go to an elderly people's home or to visit disabled children? Can we also help? Can we also prepare some presents or can we also prepare a program and go with you? This is amazing and we want this increasingly to spread.

We realized that so many people in society just do not know what to do to be useful. The Women's Federation can play a role in helping them. We can coordinate projects and programs. For several years, we have been trying to invite children of different nationalities to join these programs. I feel this is precious, a lesson about peace, because when others go with us to serve society, for example caring for elderly people or children in need, how can they think these people, who come from other nationalities, are bad? They realize that Azerbaijan people, Georgian people, people of other nationalities -- good people are everywhere. They young people become friends. We hope they grow to become good leaders and good diplomats. They can take a stand for peace.

We have had this program for five years already. When I testify about this program in different venues -- in round-table discussions, conferences, even within governmental institutions -- people become inspired. Several schools in Russia now take part in this. More and more people want to join.



*WFP provides opportunities for mothers to involve their children from an early age, which is good for the children's character development and allows the mother to do her parenting work as she, too, does mission work*

### **Our reliable African partners**

We have the children collect toys and clothes for African children. We send these through the Women's Federation of Africa, through Susan Kone, to African children. Many teachers and parents have approached me to say, Olga, this is such a precious program because it teaches our children how to become more merciful, more loving people, good people. The recipients in Africa are also very responsible, so I want to inspire other countries to take part in this program, because being very responsible, they always send reports with pictures. They send letters of gratitude to all the principals of schools who took part in this.

Susan Kone testified that for many African children, these toys, sent by Russian children, were the first toys in their lives. They had never seen a toy before. We want to continue this. From one famous social organization in Russia, this project received an award, a certificate, as the best social project in 2015.

We try to teach our children to be conscious that some children are in need. They need our friendship, our care. Together with our children and children from different schools, we go to centers for disabled children or orphanages and we prepare some musical program or other programs for them. For example, we held a program in the main orthodox cathedral in Moscow and received a letter of gratitude from the main priest of the cathedral for this charity project.

We were very happy to do this. We are happy, too, that other countries are now also doing this type of charity project, such as a children's ensemble in Belarus. Their name is Almighty Kids. They started doing wonderful projects for orphanages and disabled and elderly people. In Latvia, they recently started Women's Federation activities, but they also do wonderful projects in orphanages. You can see the mission of the Women's Federation is unique. You do not need to leave your children behind. We can do everything together with our children. Even when they are little, we can still do social work. Thank you, True Parents, for this wonderful opportunity.



*WFWP and the Angels of Peace perform for children at the Lobnensky Social and Rehabilitation Center for Minors*

### **Peacemakers, children of God**

We also hold intercultural and international peace-building programs. For Russia, this is important because even Moscow is multicultural. They have people of different nationalities living together whom we encourage to come together to try to understand one another and do good things together. I came to realize that this kind of project is also an amazing way of witnessing, because through these projects, people see our hearts and they can feel True Parents' hearts. They often ask, Who created this? Tell us about your founders.

Sharing about True Parents and sharing True Father's autobiography becomes easy. For example, after we have developed a relationship of trust, couples are willing to go to the blessing. True Father and True Mother initiated a type of women's UN, which we call the Global Women's Peace Network. We have been trying to initiate this in Russia. In October 2016, we held a successful conference and many people - - many new angels -- even from government institutions came and testified that they felt an amazing, high spiritual atmosphere. What was happening moved them. We were grateful to have had Dr. Pak No-hi and Dr. Moon Lan-young there, because they conveyed True Parents' hearts and love to people. Our people, too, clearly could sense that it was something special. We had special guests from Italy, Gabriella Mieli and her husband and Mrs. Gavituro from Austria. I wanted to testify to a woman who is very famous in Russia in the area of family education and in the area of moral values. I invited her to an event, but I discovered that she had been very negative toward our movement for many years, actually for ten years. She was determined never to cooperate with our movement, but when she came to our event, she completely changed her attitude. She told us, "This deeply moved me and I want to cooperate with you." After that, the vice-president of her college invited me to teach moral education to their students.

### **Starting young**

In Belarus, they have been holding an international conference for four years and it has been very successful. This Intercultural Children's Festival has become an annual program. We invite children from different nationalities and we give awards to children as youth peace ambassador for having set a good example by taking part in charity projects and in peacemaking projects. They deeply value this validation of their effort and gain determination to do more and to cooperate more. An increasing number of partners join this project every year.

### **Bridge of Peace**

An activity most of our members are aware of is the Bridge of Peace project, which gives opportunities to develop heart-to-heart bonds between people. After this program, women often feel we are all real sisters.

For example, whenever I visit those in the Azerbaijan diaspora, they introduce me by saying, "This is my real sister and I want to do everything together with her."

That children of different nationalities take part in this kind of project and become real friends is very important and the next step is to go and to do charity work together. We have beautiful cooperation with Europe. We want to continue this cooperation. We are grateful to all the European nations, with whom we could have wonderful and important projects, because in the history shared between our nations is so much pain. Unfortunately, the history of Russia was not easy, involving so much agony. Still much resentment remains in many countries, but they do heal.

We are not just taking pictures; we are not doing this project for the sake of a project. This project heals people's hearts. At this program, for example, in Poland, the whole delegation could stand and we could bow down together, They were not members that came from Russia but eminent figures in society. This was amazing act of witnessing for these important people, because after they come back to Russia, they started testifying about us and specially -- It's amazing -- even about True Parents. They do not hesitate; they do not have any fear. Often, they testify to one another. They do not actually have much to do. Sometimes at the round table discussions, they take out the autobiography and say, "Now I will quote something important for you," and they quote True Father.

### **A new avenue**

WFWP in the Czech Republic held an amazing, deep, heartistic program. Our ensemble, Angels of Peace, took part in it. The dance troupe was not our idea; it was True Parents' idea. After our children were born, we could not just make them part of Little Angels, which had been our dream. We had to create something to follow the Little Angels' example. We feel that children can move the hearts of people and heal many wounds. After this kind of program, one Austrian men came up to me. He was crying and crying; he said it was because he really wanted to repent.

Just one last point, moral education: What is our strategy now? We started giving master classes on moral education in a famous governmental institution, called the Moscow House of Ventures. Because of this, the Moscow House of Ventures recommended our organization to become part of the Committee of Education in the civil chamber of Russia, which is a very important governmental institution. Based on this, we received a certificate of higher qualification in this field, a more official certificate. I feel that this can be the way to work in many countries, because in some countries, we cannot just start a chapter of the Women's Federation and receive permission to do our programs, but if it becomes professional and qualifies for a governmental certificate, the way is clear and we can do many things. One professional organization outside of our movement made a professional video on Pure Love activities. Many people watched it. That is what we are trying to do, what we are focusing on. I want to testify in front of True Parents that I could keep my purity only because of True Parents, so this is my passion; this is what I want to do.