



## COMMUNITY GRANTS – FALL 2010

As Southern Sudan completes week-long voting in a referendum on independence, the war torn country faces the possibility of the partition of Africa's largest country.

Calgary is one of just two Canadian cities where southern Sudanese refugees were able to cast their vote. Our city is host to over 10,000 Sudanese expatriates living in the Calgary area and has seen the development of many organizations created to service the needs of the Sudanese community.



Through its Community Grants program, The Calgary Foundation has been able to provide funding to various projects within the Sudanese community. Most recently, The Calgary Foundation granted \$56,584 to the Coalition for Equal Access to Education to fund an afterschool education and homework help program for Sudanese children.

Sudanese parents found that their children were falling behind in their classrooms, and were faced with difficulties in literacy and the need for additional help with homework. The Coalition for Equal Access to Education worked with members of the Sudanese community to develop a plan:

1. Provide children in the Sudanese community with literacy and homework support
2. Build the leadership capacity of the Sudanese community to encourage them to continue supporting their children

Using the funds received through The Calgary Foundation's Community Grant, the Coalition worked in partnership with existing organizations and services in Calgary to draw resources to the education centre and develop a curriculum for the students. Two classrooms were set up to provide one-on-one support to students and volunteer tutors at the afterschool program were overwhelmed with the turnout of 35 – 40 children each day.

Not only did the education centre support children with high learning needs, but it also helped parents develop a sense of ownership and belonging within the Sudanese community. Mothers began to build relationships with other mothers while waiting for their children, and to seek guidance on how they could become active participants in their child's education. A program called *Helping Children Learn at Home* was created as a practical and hands-on tool to provide in-home support for Sudanese parents to continue working with their children's educational needs.

*The Calgary Foundation's Community Grants is one of many granting programs which promote a healthy, vibrant and diverse community. Community Grants harness the generosity of a broad range of donors to collectively support the emerging needs and innovations of the community. The Community Grants follow a volunteer-led review process and see a semi-annual intake in February and September.*