

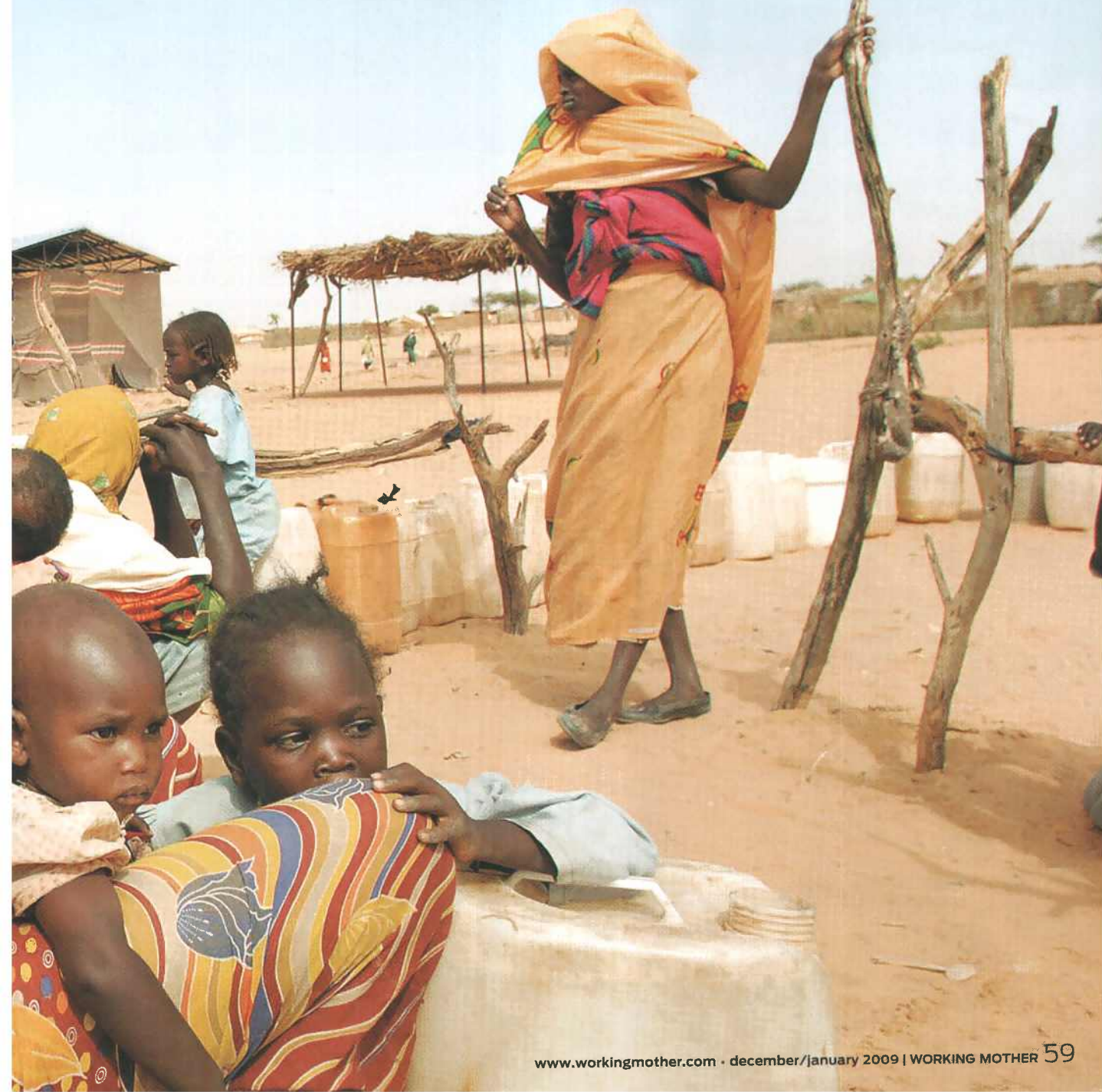
DIVERSITY IN ACTION

WOMEN *for*
WOMEN



Women who do groundbreaking work on behalf of other women and their families amaze and inspire us. We've honored many of them at our Multicultural Women's National Conferences and Town Halls with our Legacy Award. Here are three whose stories of hope remind us that one person can change the lives of so many.

BY BARBARA TURVETT



“THE
WORLD
NEEDS TO
HEAR
WOMEN’S
VOICES.”



WAR SURVIVOR CHAMPION

Zainab Salbi

Founder and CEO, Women for Women International, Washington, DC

Five years ago, when Zainab Salbi was working in Africa, a Congolese woman named Nebitu told her that during the war she and her two daughters, at ages 9 and 17, watched one another being raped. Nebitu had been afraid to tell her story to anyone, but she was sharing it now so that Zainab would tell it for her and other women might be helped. Zainab heard another tale of courage from an Afghan woman whose husband beat her regularly. She finally told him to stop hurting her—that he should just talk to her, that she didn’t deserve to be hurt. “Moments like these reinforce my belief that what we try to do is absolutely possible,” says Zainab. “Things can get done.”

As the founder and CEO of Women for Women International, Zainab strives to support some of the hundreds of thousands of global war victims by talking about women’s rights, offering training and linking them with financial sponsors. She also helps give a voice to women whose stories need to be told. “I was afraid to tell my own story for so long,” says Zainab. “But these women are my best teachers. When they told their truths, I knew I had to tell mine.”

Zainab grew up in Iraq. “My father

was Saddam Hussein’s pilot. We were his ‘friends,’ and I called him Uncle.” Her mother told her not to look him in the eye because he could read eyes. “If he knew what I was thinking about injustice in my country—that people were shot on the street for next to nothing—he’d kill me. I was petrified of that.” Zainab eventually came to the United States through a marriage her mother arranged to get her out of Iraq. “He was abusive and raped me, but I left him after three months. I was still afraid and vowed to never tell my story.” But, of course, she finally did—and does, and says she’s an optimist at heart.

Zainab was led to her work with war-damaged women when she learned about rape camps in Bosnia while a student at George Mason University in Virginia. “The stories were on the front pages of newspapers and magazines, so how could I sit still?” she says. She founded her organization in 1993. Today, the group works with some 53,000 women on a monthly basis. Zainab, who has received multiple honors for her work, says she can’t wait for the day Women for Women goes out of business. That’ll be the day “when all women stand up and speak out and are included in all decisions made for this world.” ■



CHARITABLE GIVER

Carla Harris

Managing Director, Strategic Client Advisory Team, Morgan Stanley, New York City

She’s known as a powerhouse financial strategist at Morgan Stanley, where she serves clients from corporate hotshots to foundation fund managers. As an investment banker she’s been deemed “most influential,” “most powerful,” one of “15 corporate women at the top” and more by national publications. But Carla Harris has a whole other life—helping the hungry, supporting education and advancing the arts.

Straight out of Harvard with an

