



## Rift Valley Province Visits

From October 7-9, Susan Driano, accompanied by Deputy Political Counselor Rachel Meyers, visited Rift Valley province to gain a better understanding of issues on the ground. As Kenya Desk Officer, Ms. Driano is the primary Washington expert on Kenya policy and is the first point of contact for both the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi and for the Kenyan Embassy in Washington. She plays an important role in advising senior State Department policy makers on Kenya as well as in engaging with other U.S. government agencies with programs in Kenya.

Ms. Driano began her trip in the provincial capital of Nakuru, where she met with members of the District Peace Committee to discuss local peacebuilding efforts and integration of both returned internally displaced persons (IDPs) and of persons not originally from the Nakuru area who have chosen to settle there instead of returning to where they lived before the post-election violence. Since the post-election violence, Committee members reported, Nakuru has experienced an influx of 400,000 new residents, for a total population of approximately 1 million, and is struggling to provide adequate municipal and other services.

On October 8, Ms. Driano visited Kocholwo Secondary School in rural Keiyo district. The students, who come mostly from the surrounding area, are challenged by the school's lack of resources. Ms. Meyers and Ms. Driano spoke to the school's 100 students about U.S. history and the civil rights and women's suffrage movements, and encouraged them to persevere with their preparations for the upcoming Kenya Comprehensive Secondary Examination (KCSE).

In Eldoret, the visitors met with representatives from local non-governmental organization the Emo Foundation and visited a local inter-ethnic peacebuilding and income generation project in nearby Chepkanga. Local residents there who were seriously affected by the post-election violence have formed grassroots community organizations to assist each other in rebuilding their livelihoods and to bring their communities closer together through dialogue and shared initiatives. Ms. Driano also met with representatives of the local business community to discuss the business environment in Eldoret, as well as ways that the business community might assist grassroots development initiatives and assist local youth in gaining work experience.