

LIFE & STYLE

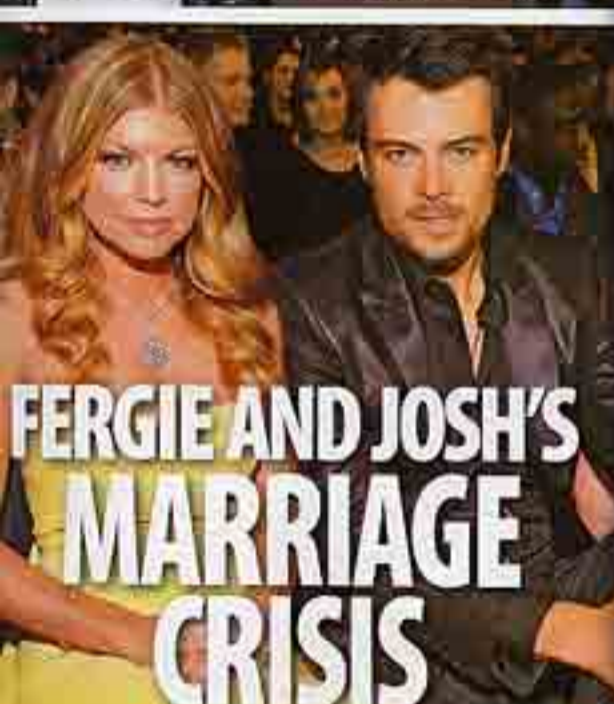
# Life & Style WEEKLY

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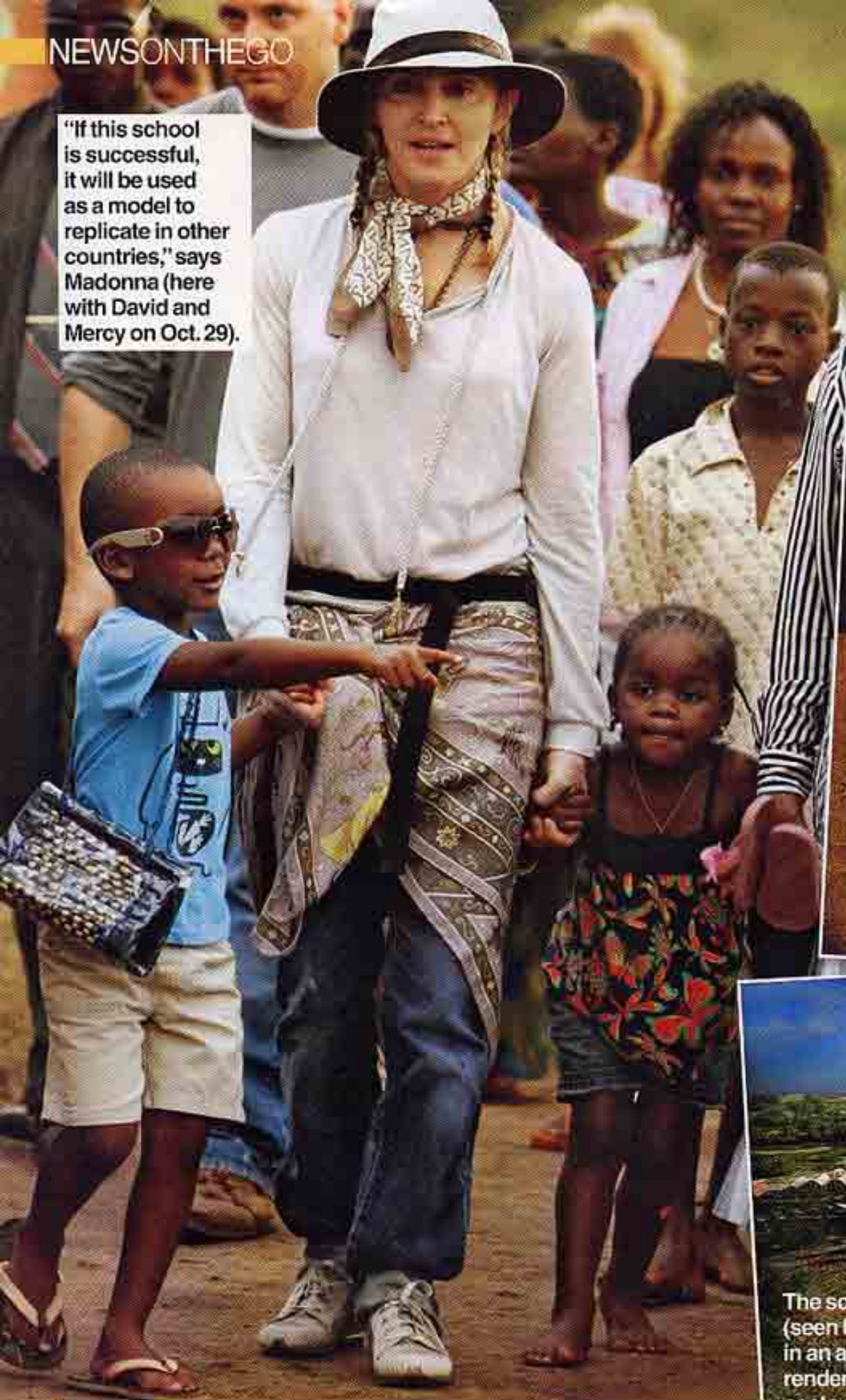
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"If this school is successful, it will be used as a model to replicate in other countries," says Madonna (here with David and Mercy on Oct. 29).



Madonna planted a Moringa tree to celebrate the new school on Oct. 26.



The school (seen here in an artist's rendering) costs an estimated \$15 million.

## FIRST LOOK: MADONNA'S DREAM VILLAGE

**M**adonna has taken a major step toward realizing her dream of helping to build the Raising Malawi Academy for Girls. On Oct. 30, plans for the school — which will educate 500 girls from the poverty-stricken nation — were revealed. "Growing up in a privileged life, I took education for granted," the star says. "But coming to Malawi has taught me a lot of things, and I have

learned to appreciate what life gives."

Madonna — whose adopted children, David and Mercy, are from Malawi — kicked off the project last year, when she urged fans to donate money to the school. "There are very few girls in Africa who are encouraged to go to secondary schools," she wrote on her Web site. "I realized one of the ways I could help was to build a girls' school."

The facilities are expected to be com-

pleted in two years using ecofriendly construction methods. "We are committed to coming up with structures that conform to modern standards but do not endanger the environment," says architect Markus Dochantschi. In addition to teaching math and science, the academy will serve as a leadership institute. The goal of the project, says Madonna, is to "build a school that will create future women leaders, doctors and surgeons."