

Education & Development Opportunity - Uganda

The Dream Newsletter Issue No.1 February, 2011

21 children and families smile



An opportunity to smile, to go to school

It was all smiles for EDOU children and families when we visited them in January. It was that time of the year when children go back to school. Our beneficiaries come from very deprived families where children lack basic necessities of life from clothes to education. So we bought them school uniforms, books, pens and pencils and we're able to pay their school fees, thanks to our faithful partners! "I am so happy for what you have done," exclaimed 78-year old Mzee Benjamin Bukonya guardian to three of our children. "I have always looked at my grandsons missing out on education in despair but now you have paid all their school dues, I can't believe what I see." Every child received a new piece of school uniform, books for the whole term, pens, black and coloured pencils.

21 children shall go to school this year in new pieces of garment plus where to write. Many of these children are orphans staying with their guardians who are widows while others stay with

their physically handicapped parents with hardly any incomes to sustain their families. Job said, "Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, because I rescued the poor who cried for help and the father who had none to assist him. I made a widow's heart sing. I took up the case of the stranger." (Job29:11-16). This is our inspiration. "We thank God for we were able to do this. And we hope we shall be able to tackle healthcare and household livelihood improvement as well," said Mr. Brian Mutebi, EDOU's Executive Director.

This is how donations from our partners can transform lives. In Uganda, over a million children are out of school. They drop out for what would be simple items like lack of a pen or book or to fend for their families. EDOU is committed to building a society where every child attains an education as a means of fighting illiteracy, poverty and disease. Come, find with us who and where our neighbours are!

Word from the Executive Director

ON behalf of EDOU and on my own behalf, I welcome you to issue No.1 of The Dream Newsletter. This historical issue comes when we have celebrated our first birthday as EDOU that came on 1st of December.

We have chosen to call this Newsletter "The Dream" because everything we're was a dream to me.

On Saturday December 31, 2005 God spoke to me about the need to 'touch' lives of people at the time when I was more or less like the people whose lives God was telling me to transform.

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God told me to use what I had to reach out. A pen and paper I had. So like Habakkuk, I wrote down my dream, my vision: to reach out to the needy, poor and vulnerable people. It was a joyful burden God had put on my heart as I didn't know how it would be transformed into a life-impacting reality that I saw in the vision.

After fervent prayers I sensed we would begin with the young people for with they you can change a generation. I also knew that through the children programmes, we can end up 'touching' families and hence communities. This is what we have committed our lives to since 2009. Our listed development programme areas include Education, HIV/AIDS, Water & sanitation and Capacity building. For all the work we do, our inspiration comes from the word of God as in Job.29:11-16 and I Corrinthians 13:1-3.

In this issue, you will read about the smiles of 21 children we're supporting, why we started in Kikandwa, explaining the name EDOU, the churches we work with and how domestic violence is affecting the lives of children. You will be inspired on how the Church can cause social transformation, and discover volunteering opportunities. We're glad, too, to share with you our plans and prayer needs.

I take this opportunity to invite you to come, partner and support us in this noble cause. I also ask you to tell a friend or your church about our work. Your partnership with us will help advance this mission further. To support us or comments regarding this issue, please don't hesitate to contact us on the address given below. We'd love to hear from you.

Once again we're glad to bring to you this first issue. We hope, by the grace of God, to make this Newsletter biannual.

Enjoy your reading
Brian Mutebi

Why Kikandwa is our Seed Village



EDOU signpost at Kikandwa

KIKANDWA that's found in Mityana district was at the centre of the 1980s guerrilla war that brought the current regime in Uganda to power. The war devastated lives in Uganda and especially in this part of the country referred to as the Luweero Triangle.

The Luweero Triangle comprises of districts of Mityana, Luweero, Nakaseke, Nakasongola, Kiboga, parts of Mubende and Wakiso districts. It was in Luweero Triangle that plans for the war were hatched. It was the centre for all war activities serving as the military base for the guerrillas. It was in Luweero Triangle that the first bullet was shot at Kabamba military barracks sparking

off the devastating bush war activities.

In his book; "Sowing the mustard seed" president Museveni notes that "mwoto" happened in Kikandwa. "Mwoto" is Kiswahili word for "fire." Sowing the mustard seed narrates the bush war story. Luweero Triangle registered most destruction as a result of the war than any other part of the country. The war scars are still evident to date.

Social services such as education and healthcare were affected, tremendous loss of lives and trauma so much to the suffering of several residents. In fact the mass grave for thousands of skulls for people killed during the war is at Kikandwa.

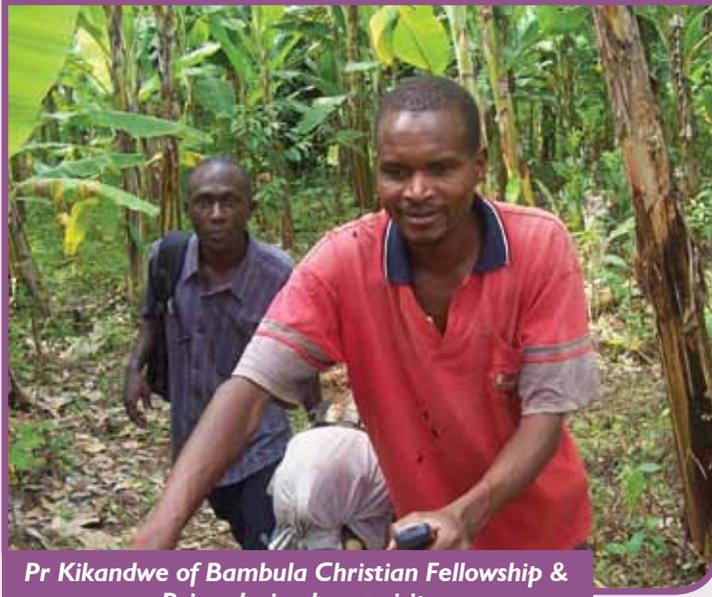
However despite this apparent need for intervention, Kikandwa and generally the whole of Luweero Triangle has not attracted as many development agencies to carry out social reconstruction of lives and communities. Kikandwa is in the apparent need for social and spiritual transformation. EDOU started its development work in Kikandwa with its mission to *Transform Lives* by fighting illiteracy, poverty and disease

The name "EDOU" explained

WHEN Brian conceived the vision to transform the quality of lives of people, at the time he didn't know how that would transform into a life-impacting reality. He was later to know that the best way was to begin with the children for with them, you can change a generation. The focus was on EDUCATION for just as education has transformed societies the world over the lack of it here undermines what would be successful lives. So in a population where over million children are unable to attend school not by choice but by circumstances, we purpose to give an OPPORTUNITY

to several young people to attain an education. In doing so, our partners and us here at EDOU have the opportunity to love and demonstrate the love of Christ in the community. And we work in communities where access to clean and safe water is severely lacking and young people are at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and despite its great potential to influence and impact society, the Church is not duly engaged in social action. So we're convicted to carry out several DEVELOPMENT initiatives in UGANDA hence the name Education & Development Opportunity – Uganda (EDOU).

Working with local churches



Pr Kikandwe of Bambula Christian Fellowship & Brian during home visit.

As a Christian based organisation, EDOU works through and with local churches to implement its development programmes. We believe the Church is God's divine institution to cause social and economic development. In Kikandwa Sub County, our seed village, the organisation has established relationships with five local churches across all denominations. We currently work with three (3) Pentecostal churches, one (1) Anglican Church and one (1) Roman Catholic Church. These churches have been instrumental in the commencement of our seed project there – the Programme for Comprehensive Education Support to Orphaned and Vulnerable children (PROCEEDS-OVC).

The children beneficiaries under this project have all been identified and selected by the churches. EDOU facilitated the process. Volunteers from these churches have also helped in home visits. For instance volunteers from Kikandwa Dove Life Church helped in the treatment of jiggers that had affected Fred, Moses and Jeremiah when we started supporting the boys.

There is however need for more training of volunteers to build their capacity to provide comprehensive care to OVCs.

Domestic violence affecting children

DOMESTIC violence against women has been identified as one factor affecting children's life in Kikandwa. This unfortunate revelation was noted through a series of household visits carried out by EDOU volunteers in the process of identifying and selecting children beneficiaries for the PROCEEDS-OVC project being implemented in the area.

All women in the households visited reported some case of domestic violence of a sort against them administered by their husbands. Some women had been forced out of home by their husbands and left to live with their children without any form of support. This affected the livelihood of children. Some children have dropped out of school, forced into hard and child labour while others due to lack of counselling and guidance have acquired unwanted teenage pregnancies. To acerbate the matter such teenagers have been forced into marriages by their parents or guardians.



Raising children alone as mothers in difficult

EDOU is considering a comprehensive study to enable relevant programming to improve the livelihood of children and women in the area.

EDOU founder commits full time



Brian distributing scholastic materials to children

EDOU founder and Executive Director; Mr. Brian Mutebi since February 2011 committed full time at the organisation. Brian gracefully resigned his job at A Rocha Uganda ending his successful and amazing career with the organisation he served as a volunteer rising to the position of administrator. At A Rocha Uganda Brian was in charge of finance and projects management. "I sensed it was the right season for me to leave. At EDOU we have

developed an ambitious programme that I want to focus my attention to and see the organisation grow," he said. Brian previously worked in the printing media as a magazine editor and with The New Vision newspaper where he had established a niche in writing edifying Christian articles and social transformation features. He also worked with MTN, Uganda's biggest telecommunication company. Brian is a writer, development worker and consultant.

Our community development projects

1. Education Sponsorship for OVCs

In a country where over a million children are not schooling not by choice but circumstances, due to lack of lack of a pen or book, our Programme for Comprehensive Education Support to Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (PROCEEDS-OVC Project) pays school fees, buys scholastic materials, discipleship, healthcare and household livelihood improvement to beneficiaries. Our ultimate goal is to build primary, secondary and vocational schools so we can support more children and spur further community development.

2. Access-Water Project

With the advent of accelerated climate change, Kikandwa receives one unpredictable rainfall season. Community wells have dried up and the community depend on the highly contaminated muddy and algae-filled ponds for water. Women and children walk over two kilometres to collect water from these community ponds. Diarrhoea cases in the Sub County have increased by 700%. The project shall provide access to clean and safe water through building community wells, promote proper sanitation & hygiene and rain water harvesting.

3. The Lets-Know HIV/AIDS Project

The 2010 UNAids report noted the rate of HIV infections in Uganda to be on the rise due to complacency. After reducing HIV prevalence from over 18% in the early 1990s to 5% in 2000, prevalence has crept higher to between 6-7% in 2009. 110,000 new people including young people are infected with the virus each year. The project shall thus empower teenagers to safeguard themselves against contracting HIV through access to appropriate information and building capacity of peer-led school clubs. Peers will sensitize their fellow peers on the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS to their lives and society. They will be educated on alternative and affordable ways of HIV/AIDS prevention and reproductive health. Awareness messages shall emphasize behaviour change; stopping complacency, abstinence including saying "No" to Cross Generational Sex, fight stigma and discrimination.

4. Church in the community project

The Church is God's divine institution to cause social and economic development. It has the potential to influence and impact communities. The Church is the answer to the world problems. However the Church in our

communities lacks the capacity and founded knowledge for this mandate. This Integral Mission project thus aims at building the capacity of the Church to not only proclaim but effectively get engaged in social action. It helps the church develop a vision for the community. It shall envision church leaders to mobilise their communities to carry out community transformation initiatives using own resources with minimal external support.

Volunteering opportunities

- Visiting beneficiaries' homes and interacting with them – the Uganda experience
- Conducting discipleship sessions to our children

Our prayer needs

- Spiritual transformation of children and their families
- Reading materials such as Bibles
- Support to sustain and expand the children education support
- Funds to pay employees and facilitate volunteers work and other administration costs
- Purchase of a vehicle and fuel to help in the mobility of staff and volunteers at work
- Funding for our community development projects

About us

EDOU is a Christian based organisation founded in 2009 with a mission to fight illiteracy, poverty and disease in Uganda. Our programmes mainly focus on the young people – children, teenagers or youths and their communities. We aim at being strong partners in the development of our communities and country by providing and or supporting the provision of the needed social services. This, we do in pursuit of our Mission and mindful of our Core values of Love, Care, Innovation, Self discipline, Integrity and Accountability.

Vision

Transforming lives of people by tackling life realities and obstacles that undermine their abilities and God-given potential

Mission Statement

We shall work to ensure sustainable community development through fighting illiteracy, poverty and disease. We shall touch the hearts of orphans and vulnerable young people, and communities with practical love and care through life-changing and transforming programmes to affect a wider spectrum of individual and community life for the glory of God.

Contact us

Education & Development Opportunity – Uganda
 P.O Box 21984 Kampala Uganda Tel: +256 782 378 219, +256 701 378 219
 Email: admin@edou.ug, b.mutebi@edou.ug. Website: www.edou.ug