



UGANDA

hands for hope

# News from the third quarter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

OCTOBER 2009

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **New Adult Literacy programme started!**
- **Holiday Programme fun in the pool!!**
- **HIV awareness day a success!**
- **Odongo gets a sponsor!!**

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## An Overview

Once again we are probably long overdue for a newsletter...so here it goes....As mentioned in the previous newsletter we have taken on a second building as of a few months ago that has allowed us to expand our services to the community of Namuwongo. The second building is now fully functional thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers that contributed a significant amount of time in getting it ready for us to move in. Hannah and Francesca, two volunteers from the UK contributed funds for supplying the playground equipment, as well the painting of a beautiful mural on the wall. We have now added two nursery classes that run Monday-Friday in the mornings at the new building, and we have also shifted our

tailoring programme to the new location giving the women a lot more space to do their work . Our new space has given us a lot of room which will allow us to



**One of our brightly painted rooms in our new building**

expand even further in the future if we need to. We still continue to use the original building where we house our offices, two nursery classes, as well as carry

out our Youth Programme and Adult Literacy Programme.

The rains have started yet again, and as a result have brought on a cholera outbreak in the slum which has reminded us of the importance of educating our children and families about the importance of sanitation and cleanliness.

We continue to be thankful for the generous donations we receive from BA and KLM crew members. Just the other day a young girl came to school with literally no soles on the bottom of her shoes, thankfully we had a pair that fit her that she was able to take home!

As well during this last period, a we have a number of new children that are now sponsored!

## Adult Literacy Now Started!

Whenever we receive volunteers we always encourage them to do some fundraising before they come out, and when they are here they can see the money that they raised go towards a project that they have been personally involved with. This past July Craig Tucker and Tom Evans

came to volunteer for several weeks and decided they would put their funds towards an adult literacy programme, something we've always wanted to do, but never had the capacity to. Thanks to Craig and Tom we now have 5 of the moms coming twice a week for literacy lessons!

The guys were able to raise enough funds to hire a qualified and experienced teacher to come twice a week. It is encouraging to see how eager these five women are to learn something new and challenging!

## Child Sponsorship Programme



A group of the girls goofing around in the pool!

In the last issue we mentioned that we have taken on a second building to accommodate the growing number of children coming under our sponsorship programme. We are pleased to say that the new building is now in full use with two classes of 20 each, bringing the total number of children in our nursery to 80! Thanks to sponsorship, we have been able to send a few more kids to primary school this term as well! Early this past September

we had one of the best Holiday Programmes yet, as we were able to take the kids on more outings than in previous programmes! During this period the youth in our programmes were able to participate in several events and outings that were coordinated by our staff and volunteers. This time around the children were able to visit the Wildlife Refuge Centre in Entebbe where they were able to see and learn about many of animals such as lions, rhinos,

crocodiles and snakes that most of them had never seen in person before! The children also participated in a sports day with children from other organizations and schools. However, the highlight for many of them was the day of swimming at the local pool! It was a pleasure to see the children thoroughly enjoying themselves and just simply being kids leaving the worries of the slum behind if even for a moment.

## Income Generating Activities

*“All five women have been paying back their loans successfully and on time...”*

This past July we added another 5 women onto our small-loans programme. Since our last set of loans that we distributed we have adjusted our scheme to include a savings plan for the women. Going forward, a portion of their monthly payment will automatically go into a savings that will act as a safety net that our clients can access should

they run into challenges or emergency situations such as any medical problems or being unable to make a full payment on a particular month. Thus far, this new adjustment seems to be working well, and all 5 women have been paying back their loans successfully and on time....give or take a day or two :) However, the vulnerability of our small

business clients remains a reality as a recent outbreak of cholera in the slum has affected food vendors, as the city council has put restrictions on the sale of food within the slum until the cholera situation has subsided. We will continue to monitor this and provide extra support where needed to the women that are affected by this.

## Tailoring Programme

A pair of oven gloves made by one of the ladies in our tailoring programme



The Tailoring Programme is now 5 months old and still going strong. Within that time the women in the programme have learned how to make several items from scrap pieces of fabric. In June they

started with learning how to make placemats. Once they mastered the placemats the women moved on to making oven-mitts, then change purses, and they are now making reusable cloth shopping bags! The next step in the programme is to assist the women in finding markets for

them to sell their products and begin earning an income from their work. The women have also expressed an interest in learning how to make clothing which we are looking at starting after they've mastered the shopping bag and we have begun marketing the products.

# Youth Programme



This past October the children who participate in our Afternoon Programme were invited by the Link Association Network of which we are a member to prepare and perform a drama in front of their

**The youth doing actions to a song they performed**

peers from other organizations and schools. Our kids performed a drama on the issue of domestic abuse. The idea of the event was to allow kids to express themselves through drama while relaying a message of an important social issue that they have also learned about. Domestic abuse remains an issue of concern for many Ugandan families particularly those living in the slum

where these acts of violence seem to happen more frequently. It is inspiring to see the children get involved with something like this. As some of you may know, our Afternoon Youth Programme consists of children on our sponsorship waiting list that come two times a week for various programmes. We are happy to say that as of late we have been able to find sponsors for several of these children who have transitioned into our sponsorship programme and are now attending school!

# HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

This past August one of our volunteers had the great idea of putting on an HIV/AIDS awareness day here in Namuwongo slum. In partnership with Touch Namuwongo project at the International Hospital Kampala we were able to host a very powerful and significant event. After a march through the slum with staff and volunteers holding banners

encouraging people to come out to the event, things kicked off at a local community meeting place within the slum. It was a great day for our staff and volunteers to bond with the people of the community that we aim to serve. Although educational, the day was also filled with local musicians and dancers whose message was on the importance of getting tested and

knowing your status. By the end of the day 400 people from the community were tested including many of the families and children whom we assist! This was a significantly higher number than was expected to turn up. Counseling and medicine for those who require are being provided by the Touch Namuwongo Project on an ongoing basis.

*“By the end of the day 400 people were tested including many of the families and children whom we assist!”*

# Volunteers

We still continue to receive volunteers on a regular basis. As of late volunteers have assisted us in a number of areas. For those volunteers wishing to help out with the children they can always lend a hand in the nursery helping with those children who might be struggling to keep up. Others might want to come out during our Holiday Programme which runs

three times a year when the children are on their break from school. We encourage volunteers to send us their CV before they come out so that we can do our best to utilize their skills and interests while they are here. Most recently we had one volunteer with an accounting background who helped us out with bookkeeping while also being able to spend time

with the children during the Holiday Programme. However, we believe that so long as you come with the right attitude, willingness and passion to get involved we are sure that your time here will benefit not only us, but yourself as well!



**Hannah, Francesca and Craig pose for a quick photo with Olive from our office.**



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**Helping Uganda poorest to help themselves**



## Sponsorship Update!

In our June newsletter we introduced you to a young boy named Odongo. Odongo's family came to Namuwongo slum after fleeing civil war in northern Uganda. Being blind and coming from a single parent family with 6 children, Odongo's vulnerability made him a priority for sponsorship. Today we are happy to announce that a group of people have come together and raised enough money to pay for Odongo's school fees!!!! Odongo is currently attending Sure Prospects School! Sure Prospects is a unique school in that it has a wide variety of children, from those with mental or physical disabilities to those with no disabilities. This school encourages their students to interact with others despite the differences between them. We strongly support this

approach and believe that such initiatives will help eliminate any stigmas and discrimination that so many people with disabilities face here in Uganda. Words cannot express our thanks for providing Odongo with an opportunity to have



a brighter future and a chance to rise above what seems like a hopeless cycle of poverty. Odongo will always have many challenges throughout his life because of his disability, but it is our hope that schooling will provide Odongo with the necessary skills and tools to be able to face those challenges with confidence and give him the ability to succeed in all that he does. We would also like to acknowledge and say thank you to St. John the Baptist School in the UK for their tireless efforts in raising funds for many of our various projects. It was the use of some of these funds that initially provided the support for Odongo to go to school before we could find him a permanent sponsor. Thank you to all those involved in supporting Odongo, you have truly put a smile on his face!!