

# **Christian Women Revolving Funds in Uganda**

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Uganda is an equatorial, East African nation with a population of 30 million. The country is very poor.

## **Areas of Operations**

### **Jinja District**

Lakeside Church of Christ is located in Jinja, a city of ca. 700,000, on Lake Victoria next to the source of the Nile River, 80 km away from Kampala. After the collapse of industrial activities in Jinja as a result of President Idi Amin's dictatorial rule in the 70s, Jinja residents were impoverished. Productive activities virtually stopped. To survive, young girls become prostitutes, and young boys become thieves. We are presenting these people the precious word of God. The poverty is heart breaking.

### **Masese Zone - Jinja**

Masese zone, with a population of about 300,000, is one of the poorest slums in Jinja. Most residents of Masese were displaced from their ancestral homes in Northern and Eastern Uganda due to wars. Some come from the primitive, nomadic Karamajong tribe of Northeastern Uganda. The Karamajong walk naked and survive on milk and raw blood from their thin cows. They are warriors, without permanent homes. Many of these people came to Jinja and were settled there by town authorities without help whatsoever. Hence, they live by gambling. They are destitute, they have no food, they live in extremely poor shelters, and they do not have running water, food, clothing, education, or medication.

We have weekly classes in Masese. Prostitutes, robbers, murderers, street children, and beggars are coming to the Lord. These people find the Lord their refuge and their strength.

### **Rippon and Loco areas - Jinja**

Rippon and Loco areas, 1 km away from the Jinja town center, is where we first preached the gospel in Jinja. It has similar problems to those in Masese.

### **Tororo Christian Women**

Tororo, on the border with Kenya, has similar problems.

### **Microfinance**

Due to ignorance in Masese, there is high rate of HIV/AIDS which has claimed many lives, leaving many widows and orphans behind with no help at all even from the government.

Many men abandon their wives and children because they are not able to take care of them. A case in point is one lady called Asinde, was abandoned by her husband with 3 sets of twins and 1 set of triplets. She was abandoned by her husband immediately after she delivered the triplets. One of the triplets died of pneumonia. There are many such cases of women being abandoned by careless, poor husbands.

My sister, Rosemary Aburu, a educated Christian, was touched with this scenario. She began teaching some of these women who became Christians and have been in the church for sometime, to be self-reliant. Before these women believed the gospel, they were living by begging in the streets, being prostitutes, brewing alcohol, and engaging in other sorts of indecent activities to earn money for themselves and their children.

Rosemary and I consider it helpful to give mature Christian women small funds for small businesses to help to them begin earning in decent ways. Because of our lack of funds, the average lent has been \$30 U.S.

We are appealing to brethren and friends to help us raise the standard of living of these destitute Christian women. We cannot give them money, food, clothing, medication, shelter, ... but we can help them with capital to do business and earn money for themselves. The cost of living in Uganda is high. \$30 given as capital for business is too small. In order for these them to have a business that can give them daily bread, save, and invest, the lowest capital required is \$100 for a small business, and above \$500 for medium business.

### **Management and Administration**

I am Francis Okech, the preacher in Jinja. I have a degree in Economics and Psychology from Makere University and worked in the banking industry for 13 years (at one time a manager in charge of foreign services) before resigning from the bank in order to preach the word of God (Luke10:2). I am very well informed about financial services and economic atmosphere in Uganda.

My sister in the flesh, Rosemary Aburu, is a qualified school teacher with good experience in teaching and training. She is a mature Christian lady who was converted to Christ by her husband Daniel in 2002, and she is now able to teach the word of God to women and children.

We are very careful not to use carnal means to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have only been moved by the level of destitution of our innocent Christians. Their poverty levels are too high to ignore. We are making sure only proven saints with proven faithfulness will become beneficiaries of the Uganda Christian Women Revolving Funds.

We understand the people we are dealing with. They are illiterate and semi-illiterate, primitive, backward, and destitute. Having that in mind, we are going to help these Christian women's businesses succeed in the following ways:

- ◆ We are training them individually and in groups how to do business.

- We help identify businesses, and carefully supervise and monitor these Christian women.
- We help them do the accounting and we do the auditing.
- We participate in the purchases so that buying and selling prices are regulated and not inflated.
- We encourage and enforce saving.
- We shall make careful, practical assessments before lending any money to any Christian woman.
- We teach them the word of God and we teach them to work as the Lord directs.

### **Number of Beneficiaries**

We estimate the following needs for 2008:

- Jinja Christian women - 50
- Kampala Christian women - 30
- Tororo Christian women - 30
- **Total Christian women - 110**

### **Simple Small Budget**

In the first 12 months, we expect to lend money to 110 Christian women.

<b>Items</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>
Funds lent	110 people	\$11,000
Transport cost		\$1,000
Stationary		\$500
Communication		\$500
Miscellaneous		\$1,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$14,000</b>

### **Church and Business**

“If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit” (James 2:15-16). We are trying to obey this word of the Lord by action, carefully lest we use carnal means to preach the precious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. I, as a preacher of the word of God who has to reach 30 million Ugandans with God’s word, will

concentrate much on preaching the word of God, in conformity to the Lord's word in Acts 6:2-4. Since this has to do with Christian women, Rosemary will be fully in charge, while I will manage.

**Are You Interested?**

If you are interested in helping, e-mail me, Francis Okech, @ francisokech@yahoo.com. Brother Keith Sharp of Evans Mills, New York, who worked with us in February, 2007, can confirm the need as well as my faithfulness.