



Komo Learning Centres

A Noerine Kaleeba Initiative

2010 Annual Report

THE MPOMA COMMUNITY HIV / AIDS INITIATIVE and

THE JOHNSON NKOSI SCHOOL

The Mpoma Community HIV/AIDS Initiative was founded in 1999 by a group of people infected and affected by HIV/ AIDS. What began as a small group of sick caretakers concerned about their children's futures has blossomed into a dynamic, motivated, healthier, and, most especially, hopeful community of positive living. The principal activity undertaken thus far has been the creation of a community primary school - The Johnson Nkosi Memorial Primary School in 2002.

KLC support for the Mpoma Community

The main objective of KLC is to empower members of the Mpoma community to improve their own well-being through education and healthcare initiatives.

During 2010, KLC and its fellow Mpoma patrons supported the Community to implement a number of activities to this end. An even more aggressive campaign will be conducted in 2011, including an income-generating organic agriculture program that will:

- Enable the Johnson Nkosi School to achieve financial self-sufficiency by 2013
- Improve food security & financial stability for community households

This plan will be achieved with the support of other NGO partners on the ground in Uganda. Support will continue beyond 2011, with the creation of several large-scale community development projects.

2010 ACHIEVEMENTS

Agriculture and food security project: Phase 1

Phase 1 was implemented, entailing the completion of the school demonstration gardens, which already provide plenty of fresh vegetables to the students as well as providing them with valuable vocational training. Goats were bought for milk and meat consumption and a mushroom house was built and generates extra revenue for the school.

Audit

An independent audit firm performed a professional review of Community's accounts.

Community outreach

32 community health workers were trained, reaching households in 10 different villages. To date, a total of 1,200 people have been sensitized on HIV/AIDS awareness, nutrition, and sanitation.

Health and sanitation

Water sanitation projects were carried out by a local NGO using a loan revolving fund growing bananas to ultimately finance the building of toilets for households.

Interventions in immunizations, deworming and clean water initiatives were also implemented thanks to other Mpoma supporters.

Microfinance project

The Nkosi Parents and Orphan-Caretakers Saving Scheme continues to provide capital, financial management training, and ideas for income-generation to its members.

Membership increased from 22 to 38 as members realize increased income from their small businesses for school fees, emergencies, and better nutrition.

Solar power installation

The entire school was equipped with solar power providing savings on utility costs, eliminating the school's reliance on the national electricity grid, and enabling the kids to do their homework at night.

Training of Mpoma Community leadership

Funds were allocated to each of the five committees of the Mpoma Initiative for training specific to their task, especially in the following areas: accounting, record keeping, budgeting, and funds' allocation for each activity.

KLC also financed the operational budget gap of the school, by financing the salaries of the teachers.

2011 PLAN

In 2011, KLC will support continuation of the activities conducted previously, as well as funding implementation of new initiatives.

Agriculture and food security project: Phase 2

Phase 2 will commence with the drilling of a well, equipped with a solar pump, that will irrigate both the school gardens and nearby community-owned cropland. Chickens will be acquired at the school to provide extra revenue through the sale of eggs and improving

the students' diet with extra protein. A high-nutrient menu will be developed at Nkosi School and used as the guide for agricultural production in the fields. By the end of 2011, school food needs will be entirely met by produce from the fields and livestock projects.

There will also be a comprehensive workshop program for community farmers to teach them innovative agriculture techniques for use on their own plots.

Community outreach

Community health workers will continue to be trained regarding HIV/AIDS awareness, but also with a program of malaria prevention to address the prime causes of sickness in Mpoma.

Health and sanitation

The Nkosi School's dispensary will be overhauled under the direction of a new full time nurse who will relieve untrained Nkosi staff for provision of medical care. Additionally, the nurse will conduct health and wellness training at the school, as well as providing outreach home visits to households within the community

Microfinance project

The revolving loan fund for the Savings Scheme will be increased commensurate with the capital needs of the growing membership. Financial and small business management trainings will continue to be provided in order to grow the capacity of members to take care of their households.

School infrastructure

Several structures will be built including: a new playground, a kitchen, a dining room, extra teachers' housing, and renovation of several classrooms. A pick-up truck for transport of the kids as well as of agriculture products should also generate extra revenue to the school.

GOING FORWARD beyond 2011

2011 will also be a year for critical thinking and planning of several large projects that will be implemented in 2012:

Agriculture and food security project: Phase 3

A third site will be developed with new infrastructure (water and solar-powered electricity) to produce vegetables, fruit and medicinal plants for commercialization that will generate sufficient revenue to make the Nkosi School financially self-sufficient.

The community supported agriculture initiative will have two main components:

- *Household kitchen gardens:* The purpose of this program will be to train agriculture outreach workers to help households create their own gardens to ensure food security for their own family; it will mirror our health outreach initiatives
- *Commercialization:* The agriculture project will assist community farmers to form a cooperative to commercialize their own produce for the urban market distribution

Vocational training institute

The construction plan will be done for a vocational school to mentor, train, educate and seed these kids to develop their own business once they get out of school. Linkages will be sought with a local partner for assistance in curriculum design.

THE KOMO CENTRE FOR UNDERSTANDING AUTISM

In June 2006, Noerine Kaleeba's daughter, Elizabeth, whose son is autistic, established the Komo Centre For Understanding Autism in Entebbe. While there is increasing awareness of autism in the industrialized world, there is hardly any in developing countries. Autistic children in Uganda face a dearth of educational opportunities, and near-total ignorance by society about both their disadvantages and their capacities.

KLC support for the Komo Centre for Understanding Autism

The school is currently run on a "mainstreaming model," with 8 autistic children and 21 non autistic pre-school children with the objective of stimulating integration and avoiding isolation of autistic kids.

During 2010, KLC and its fellow patrons supported the Centre to provide a number of services for families with autistic children in Uganda. Despite operational and financial challenges, the Centre continues to expand and will offer new and broader programming in 2011.

2010 ACHIEVEMENTS

Children's behavior & interaction

Some of the autistic children are able to regularly communicate verbally for the first time in years.

Community support

Community members are gradually understanding and accepting autistic children in their homes and schools. Many have requested a spot for their non-autistic children at the Centre.

Home visits

Over fifteen holiday home visits were conducted to provide practical guidance for parents and siblings of autistic children. The children also took four field trips to expose them to the world outside of their homes and the Centre.

Publicity

Centre staff held seven sensitization discussions at local schools, trade shows, and community centers. Elizabeth also did one newspaper interview, in addition to a television interview for visitors from the Segal Family Foundation. An open house was held to demonstrate the Centre's unique curriculum, as well as the work of the children.

Staff

Several additions were made to the Centre's staff, including a second full-time special needs teacher and a second nanny for the nursery-age children.

Visitors

Over 40 local and expatriate volunteers, health professionals, and supporters visited the Centre in 2010. Some came for hours and some stayed for months to teach, play with, and help care for the children.

2011 PLAN

In 2011, KLC will support continuation of the activities conducted previously, as well as funding implementation of new initiatives.

Increase awareness & sensitization

Beyond the communities immediately surrounding the Centre, there remains a stark lack of understanding of autism and a dearth of qualified care providers. The staff will continue pro-actively raising awareness by attending conferences, engaging the media, and meeting with community leaders.

Infrastructure improvements

New kitchen, vocational skills classroom, and security structures will be built if funds are made available.

Volunteers

Additional skilled volunteers will be sought locally and internationally to support the care for the children, and to design appropriate teaching approaches. The Centre will strive to be a top-notch service provider in order to continue to attract fee-paying non-autistic children.

EDUCATION SPONSORSHIPS

The main objective of the scholarship fund is to provide vulnerable children the opportunity to receive their primary and secondary education as well as beyond at top-notch Ugandan education institutions.

2010 ACHIEVEMENTS

Sponsored students

9 secondary and 2 university students.

Holistic support

Students are provided with tuition fees, school materials & uniforms, transport to and from their schools, and room & board when applicable.

2011 PLAN

Increasing sponsored students

Because there are an increasing number of high-performing students from the Nkosi School and other community primary schools, the fund will be expanded to provide support to a minimum of 2 primary school, 40 secondary school and 3 university students in 2011.

