



Foundation for Development of Needy Communities

"Improving the Social-Economic Status & quality of life of the underserved people in Uganda"



Volume 1, Issue 1

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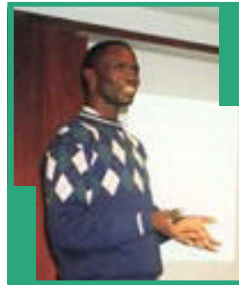
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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

On behalf of the FDNC – Uganda Board of Directors, staff and beneficiaries of our services, I welcome you to the first quarterly FDNC newsletter.

I am proud to have had the chance to originate an idea, see it grow, and effectively reach intended beneficiaries. In nine years, we've succeeded in bulding staff capacity, finding efficiencies, improving coordination and delivery of services, and expanding programs to serve more clients. Vital to our efforts, we've established many valuable international partnerships aimed at bridging gaps. These partnerships are built with the objective of creating systems that work for both underserved populations and development workers dedicated to caring for them.

I'd like to especially acknowledge the support of our partners including: American Jewish World Service, Church World Service, Global Fund for Children, Operation Crossroads Africa, Foundation for Sustainable Development, Camberly Youth Wind Orchestra, Care and Share Foundation, Pontypridd Overseas Networking Trust, Kimbuta Rural Development Program, Embassy of Japan, World Food Program. I too recognize valuable support of various individuals: Deborah Printz and family, Allison Aldridge, Tim Vanderbilt, Rachel Yassky, Phil Monk.



Primarily, FDNC has achieved success through our determination to understand the value of partnerships

- working together to ensure that the poor have access to the most comprehensive community programs/services possible. We are committed to continue building our relationships with our development partners and beneficiary communities. Fortunately, we also gain tremendous support from both local and international interns, volunteers, and consultants.

As FDNC plans for the future, through this newsletter you will learn how we intend to improve services, expand facilities, and build capacity among staff in order to meet future challenges and serve needs of our clients. The year ahead promises to be exciting. As CEO, I look forward to working with FDNC leadership, community groups, and partners to ensure that our work succeeds in *making poverty history*.

I remain enthusiastic about the possibilities that will emerge as we create a shared vision for the advancement of our people and communities living in abject poverty. I encourage you to share your findings and help build a collective body of wisdom from which all can benefit.

Samuel W. Watulatsu, Founder and CEO

NEW CLASSROOM CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

FDNC has received a grant of US\$43,550 from the Japanese Embassy in Kampala to construct a new classroom block for the vocational school. The new building will double the size of the school and provide opportunity for program expansion. Construction began in late June and is expected to be completed by September, in time for the beginning of the new school year in January 2006. (See photo next page)

The L-shaped building will include five new classrooms and four smaller rooms to be utilized as offices and store rooms. Space behind and alongside the new building will be designated for practicals (carpentry, masonry, etc.).

To complement the construction of additional classrooms, FDNC management and school staff have formalized plans for program expansion, which will include four new areas of instruction: (1) Arts and Crafts, (2) Sustainable Agriculture; (3) Electronic Repair; and (4) Entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship shall also become a component of all other programs in order to promote self-sufficiency. More detailed information about these new programs will be available in the next FDNC quarterly newsletter.

FDNC thanks the Japanese Embassy for their generous contribution to the needy youth of the Mbale district.

PROGRAM UPDATES

VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

The FDNC Innovative Talents Vocational Skills Training Centre has matured substantially in recent months. As the school grows, there is greater need to formalize policies and procedures. School staff has worked with an educational consultant and the FDNC Board to develop a discipline policy, fees payment policy, master schedule, 2-year school calendar, student ID cards, and work-study program. They have also computerized record-keeping procedures and established an Internet connection.

The Work-Study Program assists those students who cannot afford to pay fees by allowing them to complete work assignments around the school compound in exchange for fees payment. Some work-study students have begun clearing newly acquired land to plant and harvest vegetables that will supplement the students' diet of *posho* and beans. Others will make bricks for use in new construction. By wisely

implementing this program, FDNC meets mutual needs – cutting costs of construction and maintenance, providing students practical work experience, and offering a means for very needy students to pursue their educational and career goals. ■

GIRL CHILD EMPOWERMENT

The Girl-Child Empowerment Programme, funded by the Church World Service (CWS), aims to break the stigmatization of girls and women who traditionally have not been expected to attend school nor become wage earners. Currently, the programme supports payment of school fees for 30 girls and young women, (11 in primary school, 13 in secondary school, and 6 in tertiary/vocational schools). Each participant is required to meet several criteria (i.e., are orphaned or vulnerable, are school-aged, live below the poverty line, have inadequate food, are abused, etc.). Their level of need is reassessed annually.

A new proposal recently submitted to CWS, if funded, would allow FDNC to establish a youth centre, at which girls and young women could receive counselling and pursue opportunities in health education, nutrition, drama, arts and craft, and sports. In addition, the new programme components would teach Income-Generating Activities, such as piggery and goat keeping, as well as entrepreneurship and business skills. ■

BRASS BAND

Members of the FDNC Brass Band have reason to be energized as they toot their horns. The Care and Share Foundation is sponsoring 18 members and two supervisors to tour and perform in the United Kingdom for two weeks in November. In addition to coordinating logistics (passports, visas, travel arrangements, etc.), the band has been exceptionally busy expanding their repertoire of music. While in the U.K., they will perform march music, typical of a brass band, as well as traditional African music and dance. It's hoped that this will be simply the first of many overseas bookings, as other members of the band (which is now 72 members strong) hope to have an opportunity to voyage beyond East African borders.

Thanks to the generosity of Phil Monk (U.K.) and the Chicago delegation from the American Jewish World Service, the band's old instruments are gradually being replaced with ones in better condition. FDNC has also added two large wooden xylophones to their collection of traditional African instruments. This dream that started in 1996 with no instruments and a handful of street children has now matured into a proper brass band with international bookings. For good reason, FDNC is very proud. ■

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Fifteen of the 25 FDNC Community Health Workers recently participated in a malaria survey sponsored by the Mbale – Pontypridd Partnership Initiative. They collected comprehensive health information from 100 extended families. Once the data are analyzed, our Welsh partners will be able to more clearly determine the most cost-effective use of limited resources in order to promote health and prevent disease.

Another expanding partnership is growing between FDNC and the AIDS Information Centre (AIC). As it is too expensive and/or inconvenient for many villagers to go to Mbale town for HIV/AIDS testing, the health workers have coordinated village visits by AIC technical personnel. When clients test positive, they are immediately referred to The AIDS Service Organization (TASO) for treatment. ■

APPRECIATION
 FDNC is grateful to the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) and Church World Service (CWS) for the funding that enables the creation, printing, and distribution of these quarterly newsletters.



Construction of New Classroom Block



JENNIPHER NASIKE, TAILORING PROGRAMME GRADUATE

In January 2004, Jennipher Nasike, along with her husband and two small children, lived in a tiny 1-room mud hut with a leaky roof of iron sheets. Her husband was a volunteer pastor, a position that caused them to move several hours from their families' villages near the Kenyan border. By doing odd jobs, they somehow managed to afford their monthly rent of US\$ 5,000 (US \$3) and provide for themselves.

In a desperate attempt to develop a viable livelihood, Jennipher enrolled in the yearlong tailoring programme of the FDNC Innovative Talents Vocational Skills Training Centre. Leaving her 2-month old infant behind, she dedicated herself to her studies, becoming skilled in fashion sketching, pattern cutting, pedal sewing machine operation, machine maintenance, stitching, and much more. Under the able supervision of instructor Pore Phen, she learned to make several styles of shirts, pants, dresses, skirts, shorts, and even the elaborate *Gomese*, the traditional formal gown for Ugandan women.

After graduation, she struggled to establish herself, renting an old sewing machine and working from her hut. Through business generated from the AJWS delegation in April, she earned enough to purchase the sewing machine for US\$ 50,000 (US \$30). She has now established a small workshop on the main road in Nauyo Trading Centre. Her family has improved their living conditions. She and her husband can even afford school fees for her older child, now 4 years. The FDNC family is proud of Jennipher.



Jennipher in her small workshop

BETTY MUTUWA, TEENAGE GIRL WITH MASSIVE GROWTH

Since birth, Betty Mutuwa (age 15) has been physically and emotionally bothered by a growth the size of a tennis ball protruding from the back of her head. Not only has it been a source of embarrassment and ridicule, but it has retarded her development and, on occasion, leaked a milky substance that burned her skin.

Betty's father has died and her mother is extremely ill, in the final stages of AIDS. She and her two younger siblings are cared for by their aging mother-in-law. They live in a 1-room mud hut with a roof of old iron sheets in the village of Namwenula, about 35 km from Mbale town. Prior to her father's death, the family sold their land in order to pay for medication and treatment. Betty and her sisters were struggling

to survive, with no land or source of income. They were mal-nourished and could not afford the costs for school uniforms and books. Betty had no hope of treatment.

Enter FDNC and Church World Service (CWS). FDNC Community Health Worker Richard Mangali had built a relationship with Betty and her family. With FDNC staff, he searched for ways to help. After a couple of failed attempts, a few generous individual donors from CWS, stepped up and contributed 750,000 US\$ (\$440) for Betty's surgery. Betty spent a week in the hospital. On June 4, she was discharged. This previously sad and deformed girl, who was ashamed to go to school, now beams with joy, laughing. She has returned to school and FDNC has promised her a new school uniform and school books.



Betty elated after successful surgery

Before Surgery



After Surgery



DELEGATIONS & VISITORS

DELEGATIONS IMPRESSED WITH WORK OF FDNC

Over the past few months, several delegations have visited FDNC. In April, a delegation of 17 professionals from the **American Jewish World Service (AJWS)** spent one full week in Natondome village. During their stay, they toured to learn about the hardships of village life, but also put on their work gloves to assist with several manual labour projects around the FDNC compound.

AJWS regularly sends delegations to visit its funded partners in order to learn firsthand about grassroots development work.

Seth Appel, director of service programs for AJWS, said they chose to sponsor a trip to Natondome because FDNC "is doing exceptional work. It's truly a model of the kind of sustainable development we want to support."

One member of the delegation, Robert Isrealite, a banking professional, was astounded by "how much the people we met all had a lot of hope and faith in the future. They don't have electricity, they don't have running water, they have extreme poverty, a low education level, a high rate of HIV, but their attitude is, 'we're still going to get up in the morning and make a difference.'"

Deb Wolen, a nurse practitioner who has worked with HIV/AIDS patients in Chicago for 14 years, echoed a similar sentiment after visiting some patients at an HIV/AIDS clinic. She said, "The patients there told us how hopeful they feel because they are now getting treatment. Here they live in mud houses, they have

no water, no latrines, no garbage pickup - it brought me to tears."

In late May, another delegation of 18 from Wales spent a week visiting FDNC and the local communities. They have formed the **Mbale - Pontypridd Overseas Networking Trust**, a twinning program that seeks to "make poverty history." They have established ongoing partnerships between schools, churches, businesses, and NGOs in Mbale and their home town of Pontypridd, Wales.

Also in May, the regional representative for **Church World Service (CWS)** visited from Nairobi, Kenya. He spent a few days meeting with staff and learning about several areas in which FDNC is growing. A few weeks later, CWS sent a small delegation from Kenya as part of their Peer Learning Programme. The four visitors, representing two different NGOs, came to learn from FDNC. Immediately following, the FDNC Board Chair and two FDNC staff members returned with them to Kenya to learn about their organizations and programmes. The team returned with several new ideas, some of which are already being planned and/or implemented.

Through the **Foundation for Sustainable Development (FSD)**, a group of American university students arrived in the Mbale area in early June. Each is volunteering with a different NGO for eight weeks. FDNC has welcomed one of them, Ben Wilson from Notre Dame University, who is assisting with several programmes, including the establishment of a student canteen/store at the vocational school site.

Finally, FDNC staff and board would like to thank Phil Monk who visited for one week from the U.K. and contributed significantly to several FDNC programmes, particularly the brass band. ■



AJWS Delegation from Chicago (April '05)

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FDNC News

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- July 8** Arrival of Hunger Lunch delegation from University of North Carolina to build Nutrition Centre
- July 10** Board of Directors quarterly meeting
- July 29** Arrival of Jessica Rosenberg, AJWS volunteer who will develop the FDNC Nutrition Programme
- Aug 18** Free eye clinic and dental check-ups in Natondome village
- Aug 19** End of 2nd term for FDNC vocational school
- Sept 19** Start of 3rd term for FDNC vocational school
- Last Friday of each month** Monthly meeting of FDNC Community Health Workers