



February 2023

“The opposite of poverty is not wealth .

The opposite of poverty is enough” (Dr. Wess Stafford)

Hello,

We are well into the New Year with the first signs of Spring now appearing .

For Just Small Change , it has been a time of positive transition which has been possible , as ever, through your continued generous support.

So now we’d like to bring you up to date with our work and also let you know how your hard earned money will be spent.

Our last update to you was in October 2022, when we informed you that we were investigating a variety of livelihood support interventions in and around Mbale , Uganda.

During our visit there in November (at our own expense, not the charity’s !) , we were able to see and meet some of the beneficiaries .

Goat livelihood programme



Our Goat livelihood programme is aimed at widows and orphan – headed households chosen by their community but checked by our partner. The first scheme was established in October 2022 and the 30 beneficiaries received their female goats during our visit to their village. Training was given to the

recipients and the goat keeper is providing continued support , oversight and the services of two rams.



The first kid from the female goats is returned to the project and given to a further women beneficiary. Any other offsprings from the original female goat are kept by the first beneficiary from which they can generate an income / use the milk to feed their families, pay school fees etc.

While there we agreed that 3 more villages would receive the same goat programme .

By April 2023 , you would then have 4 groups totalling 120 beneficiaries / women members.



Village Savings & Loan Scheme



4 groups ,each comprising of 30 people / members ,were established in October prior to our visit.

Groups meet weekly and each group member saves a regular amount , however small, in a joint fund. Once the group has sufficient funds , then a group members will borrow money from it at an agreed rate of interest and repay the loan (with interest) over an agreed time. After 12 months, the accumulated savings are distributed back to the members in proportion to the total savings each person puts in.

Some may use their savings for school fees, improving household diets, or enhancing or starting a micro business. After this “share out” the group can start a new savings cycle. A social fund will also be created by members which can be used in emergencies for any member ‘s household in difficulties.

Some groups will be composed of women only and some will be mixed groups. However, every goat programme will also have a Village Savings & Loan Scheme attached to it to create cohesion and empower the female participants in their livelihoods.

Each group were given full training including record keeping, money management, appointment of officers (Chairperson , secretary , treasurers etc) and during the first year the activity of the group will be overseen by the trainers who will facilitate proceedings.

Ongoing training and oversight will be given In the second year .Thereafter each group will be able to manage and take responsibility for that particular Village Savings & Loan Scheme .

We agreed a further 4 schemes while on our visit , resulting in 8 groups totalling 240 members being in operation by April 2023.

Community Health Programme



An important step on the road to improving livelihoods is improving people's basic health and the most effective way of reaching and educating communities in good healthcare practices is through their own people.

The Ugandan healthcare system is sparse, and has three levels: there are some hospitals but the bulk of healthcare is provided by local health clinics and, at grass roots level by volunteer community health promoters, who support their neighbours and families in their villages with basic healthcare and advice.

Among other things, they will learn about the importance of personal hygiene and clean water and how to prevent the transmission and spread of common diseases. They will share their knowledge within their villages. Evidence from similar projects shows that this should lead to a significant drop in sickness and disease, which minimises absenteeism from school and increases the possibility of strengthening household livelihoods.

In late February 2023, we will be starting the training for 66 people from 33 villages as Community Health Promoters.

We attended an informative meeting at a local clinic where we were introduced to some of the volunteers and to the clinic staff who will provide the ongoing training for the Community Health Promoters.



So encouraging !

We will shortly update you on the plans from April 2023 to March 2024

As ever with our best wishes and thank you for your generous support.

Peter and Jane