

Ugandakids – the 2012 trip

After 36 hours including three flights, layovers at Bangkok and Addis Ababa airports, and 3 hours in the car over Ugandan roads we arrived safely in Masaka, Southern Uganda on Wednesday 27 June. Over the next 8 days we spent time in the local community of Ssaza.

Kids

We spent time with the kids in three schools. We received warm welcomes and gifts including fruit, vegetables and chickens. During the welcome ceremony at St Joseph's primary, (a school we have been supporting for over a year), the principal asked the kids who had been helped by Ugandakids with uniforms, food and school fees to step forward. About 200 kids from the total population of over 800 moved en masse and stood in front of us. Pretty emotional. This has happened as a result of a simple idea we had and the support of many friends, family and work colleagues and people we don't even know. We were personally thanked by many parents who made time to be there to welcome us.



Some of the kids who have been supported



Pigs

Since Christmas 2011, as a result of donations received, our Pig Breeding Committee in Uganda has placed in excess of 100 piglets with poor families. This gives recipients the opportunity of creating an income producing breeding program. When they have their first litters they are to give back the proceeds of the sale of one piglet. We visited the homes of more than thirty people to inspect their new pigs. We met some very happy people!



The Pig Breeding committee includes the chairperson, Lucy, who is a nurse; Charles a local vet, John a school teacher, and Monica, a book keeper. We met with them and listened to their detailed report and went over their records. We were then presented with a proposal for the future. They have proposed, with our help, to build a Pig Breeding Centre which will guarantee the quality of the progeny which was an issue when buying piglets on the open market. Land has been sourced and the operation will be overseen by Charles, the vet. Piglets will be given to those who are in need and are able to feed them. The same rule re giving back the proceeds of the sale of one piglet will apply.

After some discussion and realising that there are significant benefits, we agreed to the proposal and asked for plans and costings to be provided. The committee now has 3,900,000 Ugandan Shillings (\$1,600) in the bank to start the program. Most of this was raised at Paul's work prior to leaving.



Uniforms

We also ordered 100 uniforms for kids who were in extreme need at 2 schools. These were funded by donations, from Paul's work as well. A good friend of ours, local seamstress Rose, was asked to put in a quote and decided to provide her services at cost. When we asked why, she said when she was a teenager she had some problems and members of the local community helped her out. She said she was "paying it forward". The delight expressed by some of the kids when they realised they were getting new uniforms was humbling.



This was our 3rd trip to Uganda and I suspect not our last. We are now getting a better understanding of the country, how things work, and how we can make a difference from the other side of the world.

Why?

Our two main reasons for this trip were to check up on things on the ground and to roll out Ugandakids support to another two schools. We examined the budget and other financial records of St Josephs while meeting with the Principal, bursar and P&F treasurer. Funds provided so far have been professionally recorded and used in accordance with our directions.

We met with the Principals and staff of the other two schools and since our return to Australia they have provided copies of their budgets and other documents showing school income.

St Bruno's secondary school has a major problem in that it receives no government funding at all. The reasons for this are being looked into as most schools in Uganda have their teachers paid by the Education Department. Madam Justine, the acting principal, is struggling to keep the school running due to the low number of kids who can pay fees. She doesn't take a wage herself and can only afford to pay her teachers \$20 per month instead of \$100. 90 of the 180 kids enrolled were going to be "let go" at the beginning of Term 3 in September for non-payment of fees.

We are going to ensure that this doesn't happen and will provide funds to keep the school operating for the rest of the year.

**Madam Justine and some kids
from St Bruno's Secondary**



Since our last trip in 2010 we have created a registered charity, Ugandakids, www.ugandakids.org.au and entered a partnership with Catholic Mission that means donations can be tax deductible.

Our vision is "kids finish school". We believe that without an education in Uganda it is impossible to break the poverty cycle. With an education, kids will have a chance.

\$5 per fortnight guarantees payment of school fees and lunch at school for one child. If you are interested in guaranteeing a child's education please go to our website and look under the "donate" tab.

For those who are supporting Ugandakids already, rest assured that you are making an incredible difference in the lives of kids who otherwise wouldn't get much of a chance. Uganda is changing and needs smart educated young people to help. Thanks!

Local kids



Paul & Sue

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