



Suubi Teen MOPS

HELPING MOMS ESCAPE POVERTY

Kampala Uganda | Update | November 2021

The challenges

2021 began with Covid lockdowns and restrictions. These restrictions lasted until August. During this time, we continued to provide support for rent and food for over - 50 women and their children (over -100 people). The schools in Uganda have been closed since March of 2020. But Suubi has -41 child sponsorship families. The kids in our program received 4 hours of private tutoring every weekday. We have helped to employ ten schoolteachers. These teachers would otherwise be unemployed. Sadly only 2 % of Uganda's children have had a regular education since the original lockdown in 2020 (source: UNICEF). Thanks to our child sponsors our kids have not lost any ground and actually thrive.



There is a thing called the crab mentality. If you put a crab in a bucket, it can climb out of that bucket. If you place that crab in a bucket with other crabs, the other crabs will always pull it down. We experienced this reality in 2021. One of our kids named Junior was poisoned by a jealous woman. Junior would visit the refugee camp with his mother. She was making and selling soap. Junior would try to instruct the kids in the camp everything he learned in his tutoring. A jealous mother in the camp put rat poison in meat and fed it to Junior on purpose. And Junior nearly died. But after 6 weeks in the hospital and weeks of dialysis he has recovered. Escaping poverty is more difficult than you might realize. It takes skills and opportunity. It also

requires overcoming those in society that would drag you down. We believe God has special plans for Junior. He is an incredibly special kid.



We had dental problems in 2021. One of our kids needed IV antibiotics for 10 days before they could pull two teeth that had rotted in his mouth. One of the teen moms, Sarah had to receive sixteen root canals to save her teeth. Sarah is only 18 years old. You might think they have rotten teeth because they live on sugar. You would be wrong. The teeth can become weak from a vitamin poor diet. In fact, without vitamin C your teeth can just fall out of your mouth. So, we did two things to help prevent future problems. We provided toothbrushes and toothpaste. These are luxuries no one in the group could afford. And we improved their diet by adding moringa powder. Moringa is a tree that grows well in Africa. The leaves of the tree provide a powder that is extremely high in vitamins, minerals and even protein. They give moringa to victims of famine. Our women add it to the beans and sauces they make. It's been a cheap and effective solution to improve their health.

POSITIVE THINGS



One of the positive things that happened this year is the graduation of ten more women from our sewing program. We had to have the women meet in two separate groups in two locations because of Covid. We had the classes run by two of our students that graduated before, and our regular sewing teacher who traveled between groups. After graduation, the women received their own sewing machine. They are all earning money from their skill.



Suubi was able to run a few weeks of vacation Bible school in August. Again, they had serious Covid restrictions to follow. The kids met in very small groups, they could not sing or run and play. They used a video curriculum provided to us by a local church. And a supporter in Australia sent balloons and stickers and beautiful t-shirts to make the time extremely special for them. The kids loved it. It's our hope that restrictions will be lifted and Suubi can run larger vacation Bible schools for our kids, and many other children in the slums.



Our women were kept remarkably busy in the lock downs making baskets, sewing dolls, aprons, and facemasks, and making soap. Suubi gave away thousands of bars of soap this year. They also exported dolls and aprons to Fairtrade shops. And we provided one MOPS group in Uganda with 500 washable facemasks and soap. In December Suubi plans to give away 1000's of bars of soap in the Kampala slums.



I should also mention our goats. We began with 12 goats 2 years ago. Now Suubi has over 100 goats. And most of these goats are pregnant. Long term, this will be a constant source of income and one step close to sustainability.



BIG NEWS

We have big news to share. In September we received a large donation so we could buy the land to build a vocational school for teenage moms. We have been able to find property, 5 acres, about 1 hour North of Kampala. It is 1 km away from a small town and 10 from a bigger town. With the help of lawyers, the property is already purchased and fully titled to Suubi Teen MOPS. And the land is being developed thanks to two additional donations.

We first had to clear the land from all the 'jungle plants', tree stumps and termite hills. The entire perimeter of the land now has a fence and has been planted with giant bamboo plants all around. In 5 years, the mature bamboo will provide an additional fence for security, and renewable material for building and fuel.

We are building a large kitchen and dining area first. This building will provide temporary shelter for brick makers and anyone else working on the property. This is the state of the building a few days ago (Nov 15th). It will hopefully be done within a week.



For the other buildings, we want to make interlocking stabilized soil blocks (ISSB) from soil on the property. The ISSB bricks require little concrete, and they cure in the sun. They

don't need to be baked in a stove - this saves trees - and they don't require much concrete mortar in-between because they stack like Lego bricks. Suubi will be buying a brick machine and employing a few men to make our bricks. The men will be given the machines after our bricks are finished. This helps them to launch a business. And the soil will be taken from one spot on the land. Eventually that spot will be made into a fishpond. 1 and ½ acers of the land will have banana and avocado trees. ½ acer will have coffee and passion fruit. These crops will provide income to help the program become self-sustaining.

We also had compost toilets built. There is already a 10,000-liter water tank on site. For now we need to get it filled by a water truck. Eventually this water tank will be used to capture water for the vegetable gardens. And we are raising funds to build a deep well for drinking water.



Eventually we hope to build 6 classrooms, 3 staff houses and 10 student homes. 11 families plan to move to the small town near our land in January of 2022. They will help with the development of the land and the school. The goal is to develop the land in 2022, and have local women attend the school in 2023. The first residential class will come in 2024. This gives us time to build the student homes. The school will provide vocational and parenting skills for teenage and single mothers. They will live rent free /cost free for 9 months. Once they graduate, we will help them launch some kind of business.

Over 20 of our women plan to remain in Kampala. For them we are opening two consignment stores to help them to become self-sustained too. These stores are going to be called "*Lilly Avenue new and used clothes*". Each store will have 10 of our women

sewing new clothes and also renovating old clothes. These stores will be run as Community Based Organization, nonprofit social businesses. Right now, our women



renovate cloths and sell them door to door. It's very tiring work. Now they can concentrate on sewing. We are giving them the first 6 months of rent, and half of the 2nd six months' rent. After a year they need to pay 100% of the rent. We are also providing small things like mannequins and mirrors, and shelves for the stores. We have a temporary logo but a 'professional one' will be designed soon.

Lilly Avenue is the street my parents live on. Its where I grew up. It is for me “home.” I was praying about a name for the stores. I thought of the verse in Matthew where Jesus says King Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as well as a Lilly. I thought the name should have Lilly in its name. Then I thought of Lilly Avenue. Not only is it a place to buy fine cloths, but it's also a home for our women. We are launching two Lilly Avenue stores, but eventually we might start more stores.

WHAT WE NEED

Suubi needs 5 new child sponsorship families. You can find more information about sponsoring a child on our website. This is a long-term commitment. We just got our 42nd child sponsorship family. But our babies in the group grow up. And 5 more will start kindergarten in January.

For Christmas we want to give our moms new water filters. These have prevented sickness since we purchased them 2 years ago. But they only last two years. It's time to buy them again. We need 50 new water filters, and they cost 50 euros each. We want to give the older kids jump ropes and soccer balls. We hope to give the smallest kids stuffed animals. The toys need 10 euros each. We have 50 kids to buy toys for.

We have 11 families moving from Kampala to the center. We need a grant of 150 Euros for each family. This money will help cover the rental deposit. We can also use an additional donation of 500 Euros to pay for the moving truck and transportation.

We will need thousands of euros more to fully develop the center. At the moment we have enough to build the school buildings. We will need 20,000 euros more to cover the staff and student houses.

The water well will cost 4000 euros.

The property is off grid, so we also need solar panels. They will cost 2000 Euros.

Juergen and Nicole plan to travel to Uganda in January to evaluate the progress, and maybe even build a student house. We are trying to organize several missions / building trips with some large churches that would send people to Uganda in 2022 to work with the local people on foundations, plastering, and building.

This is only a brief overview of the year. We had a lot of sickness. We also fed many children and moms not officially in the program during the hard lockdown times. We just cannot turn away people that are hungry. Buying food actually took a lot of our budget but there was no way around it. The majority of the group had Covid. There were many ups and downs.

I want to close this by thanking everyone who helped us not only survive but thrive during this year in spite of all the adversity. Your prayers and financial gifts are the lifeline we needed. Thank you so much for your generosity and goodness. We hope you enjoy a beautiful Christmas season and experience wonderful health and joy in the year ahead.

Amy and Juergen

web: <https://www.teenmopsuganda.com>

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