

Project Have Hope

helping women in the Acholi Quarter to help themselves

Project Have Hope was founded in January 2006 by photographer, Karen Sparacio, with a group of 50 women from the Acholi Quarter in Uganda who were seeking to improve their lives by finding markets to sell the beautiful jewelry they make from paper. Now, just one year later, Project Have Hope (PHH) has grown to become so much more. With a membership of 100 women, PHH has expanded its focus significantly.

In January 2007, PHH enrolled 32 children into high quality day and boarding schools, covering the costs of both the basic school fees and the long list of requirements, including books and uniforms. To the excitement of the children and their mothers, PHH bought a supply of mattresses, blankets, towels and an assortment of other necessities for the children attending boarding school. The shrieks of joy could be heard throughout the village as the families gathered to collect the supplies, marching them proudly on their heads through the village.

PHH is working hard to develop entrepreneurial skills among the members and to help them establish ways to earn money, reducing their dependency on the US market for beads. In January, we initiated a small loans program, granting 6 women the first loans. The women used the money to start or expand existing businesses. Lillian used her loan to add new products to her vegetable stand. Judith started a small charcoal business. Alice opened a bar and cafe. PHH hopes to expand the small loans program and provide additional business training seminars to continue this entrepreneurial growth. We are currently exploring options which would enable qualified members to enroll in vocational training to further expand their earning potential.



Project Have Hope has also been developing cooperative businesses for the members, including a peanut-butter business and a chicken farm. In January, we opened the doors to the very first wholesale business in the Acholi Quarter, selling staples, such as sugar, posho, flour and soap. We hope to expand the business ventures to include a bakery and a charcoal business.



(left) A child paints a peace tile during a workshop hosted by Project Have Hope. (above) The building constructed by PHH as a gathering place for its members.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP

Bead sales continue to be the primary source of revenue for Project Have Hope's many undertakings. We are always eager to hear from people interested in hosting bead parties or selling beads at local events. In the Boston area, volunteers to man booths at spring and summer events are greatly needed. The printer cartridge recycling program has also been extremely successful. Not only have we recycled thousands of cartridges, preventing them from ending up in landfills, but we've also raised over \$5,000. We're hoping to join forces with more businesses, churches, schools and universities to expand this program. Please contact us if you'd like to learn more about how you can help make a difference.

For more information go to: www.projecthavehope.org
or email Karen at: projecthavehope@yahoo.com