

# OUR VILLAGE UGANDA

## Creating strategic partnerships to fill in the gaps

Uganda's latest report, "National Strategic Programme Plan of Interventions for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children 2011/12—2015", reveals there are more orphans today in Uganda than in years prior and that more children are falling through the cracks than ever before. Here are a few startling statistics from the report:

- 73% of children with HIV cannot access life-saving ART's.
- The amount of vulnerable children has gone up to 8.1 million children. The amount of orphans in Uganda has rose to 2.43 million. This is in a country with a population of less than 35 million.
- Only 11% of the 8.1 million children in dire need of external support receive the help they need.

These numbers are staggering and at times paralyzing. Where can you start? We start with one child at a time. It is hard for most of us to really grasp 8.1 million children in need of help, but when you get to know the individual faces of these children you can address their needs on a personal basis. The 8.1 million vulnerable children in Uganda are the children that are falling through the cracks in society. They are the children that aren't getting the health care, education, nutrition, protection and love that they need. At OVU we are striving to equip a hurting community, one child at a time. The needs are so much bigger than us, but together we can do more. Together we can make sure that these children's faces are being seen, their stories are being told, and their futures are getting brighter. Thank you for partnering with us, and for helping us fill in the gaps in Iganda.



The little boy above is named Steven; he joined the OVU family in 2006 with his 3 younger siblings. His parents had both passed away from AIDs. He had been left with his grandfather, who is quite old and very poor and was struggling to care of his grandchildren. The grandfather came to OVU crying saying he was scared the children were going to starve under his care. We are so thankful that we have been able to share resources with these children. We have been able to see Steven excel in school and sports. He was able to not only have enough to eat well, but has had the opportunity to play and be a kid. Because of Steven's grandfather, the OVU family in Uganda, our partners in Canada and through the grace and love of God, Steven is not going to fall through the cracks. Today we are paving the way for a brighter tomorrow in Uganda.

# FACES BEHIND THE STATISTICS

Each year when we have children leaving to go to Secondary School (similar to Jr/Sr High in Canada), we are left with some empty beds and an opportunity to help more children in need. We specifically seek out the children who would most benefit from our help - vulnerable children whose basic needs of health care, nutrition & education are not being met. This is when the daunting statistic about vulnerable children reveals a real, hurting person behind a faceless number. The thing with statistics is that it lumps a bunch of different people into one category, which often makes solutions difficult. When you get to see the individual faces of the children, however, you can see their specific needs. We would now like to introduce you to some of the new beautiful faces at OVU, whom we are so thankful to be able to welcome into our family.

The little girl below on the left is named Unia, her father passed away and her mother left her. She was left with her grandmother who was struggling to meet her needs alone. Beside Unia is Nabirye, her father passed away and her mother is struggling with serious mental illness and therefore was not able to care for Nabirye. Next is Phiona, she lost both of her parents and didn't have the extended family support to care for all her needs. Last is Winnie. When Winnie first came to OVU, both of her parents were living but were extremely ill due to the effects of AIDs. Her father since then has passed away and her mother is still battling the illness. Each one of these children's experiences is different and their stories are diverse, but their needs are specific and real. They are totally innocent in their struggles and deserve a chance at not only a better future but to also enjoy being a kid today. We look forward to continue sharing their stories as they grow.



## Secondary Kids Update ---new beginnings---

*The marks are in and our children shone as they completed their Primary 7 exams!!! Big congratulations to our new Secondary 1 students, we are so proud of you!*

19 of the 20 children that wrote their Primary 7 exam passed! They received top marks and were ranked the highest in their area. Alex was among the successful students. He is actually the oldest student at OVU, and is a shining example of perseverance as well as a source of encouragement to the other children. Ameza wrote the Primary 7 exam for the first time and failed. Although he failed the P7 exam, Ameza has always wanted to be a mechanic and so is still able to pursue his dreams. This February, Ameza started attending a trades school while the other children started Secondary School in Iganga town.

# Our Approach to Volunteering: Seek – Learn - Partner

## **Seek**

*If you are filled with pride, then you will have no room for wisdom. ~ African proverb*

"I must admit that when I first went over to Uganda as a 20 year old I had many delusions on what volunteering meant. The longer I stayed in Uganda the more I realized the little I knew. I found that many of my ideas were a far cry from real solutions. I also got to witness people who came to volunteer that had the 'hero complex' - everyone back at home had pumped them up, patted them on the back, and unfortunately set them up. As they arrive in a country and culture they know little about, yet feel they are coming to save, you can imagine how lost this person will feel. Or worse, they may feel they are a hero and interact with the local community in such a way. The mark they leave may end up causing more problems than solutions and broadening the gap between the local community and international volunteers.

The most common response I hear from people who come and volunteer is that 'I was expecting to teach Ugandans, but they were the ones who taught me so much'. Imagine how much easier it would be if we went in with that expectation, that we were going to learn from Ugandans and also we were going to work WITH them." – Terra Lorenz

Seeking out information on Africa, Uganda, Iganga, and our project at OVU is the first step in coming alongside us and joining in this important work.

## **Learn**

*Wealth, if you use it, comes to an end; learning, if you use it, increases. ~ Swahili proverb*

Any wise investor would say that, at the very least, you should know the basics about that which you are investing in. There are many ideas that work within the framework of our own 'set' culture but when transferred into a different culture they may fail. As we seek solutions for the many struggles in Uganda, it is important that first we learn about the people, their cultural framework, their ideas, and the socioeconomic factors that are relevant to the area.

Even more, as we open ourselves up to learn, we are able to receive the blessing of broadening our own understanding and taking points away from the many beautiful aspects of Ugandan culture.

## **Partner**

*If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. ~ African proverb*

As different cultures partner together in seeking out real solutions, this is when we can go farther. When we stop seeing just a problem to be solved and start seeing people to learn from, we are able to join hands and make real progress.

We aren't looking for heroes. We are looking for real people to come alongside us.

## Want to come Seek-Learn-Partner with us in Uganda?

**Join one of our SLP Teams!!!!**

**In November 2013 and Spring 2014 we are having 2-3 week team volunteer opportunities.**

**To learn more about joining one of our SLP Teams and coming to Uganda, or any other volunteering inquiries, go to the**

**volunteer page on our website  
[www.ourvillageuganda.org](http://www.ourvillageuganda.org)**

*Do you want to experience another culture and learn about Uganda first-hand? To take in all of the tastes, sights and smells, and to meet the very people you have been partnering with across the globe? This experience will enable you to better understand the culture and better represent the need and beauty in Uganda, as together we work towards a better future.*





# Calling All Canadians

## The Well—Acoustic Cafe

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, we had some great local music and yummy treats in Yorkton, with 100% of the proceeds going towards digging a well on our new land in rural Iganga, the future home of OVU. We raised \$3200 at this event, and at the time of printing this newsletter we have raised \$5000 towards the \$8800 needed for building the water well! If you couldn't make it out but would still like to support the first project on our new land, donations can still be made towards the water well. Go to our "Get Involved" page @ [www.ourvillageuganda.org](http://www.ourvillageuganda.org)



## Diamond Jubilee Recipient

Terra Lorenz was honored with the Diamond Jubilee Medal for her work with OVU in Uganda. She received it on behalf of all of the people who have come along in this journey. And on behalf of all those who have sacrificed something to make a difference for the beautiful children at OVU, whose love and joy defies the circumstances they have been through.

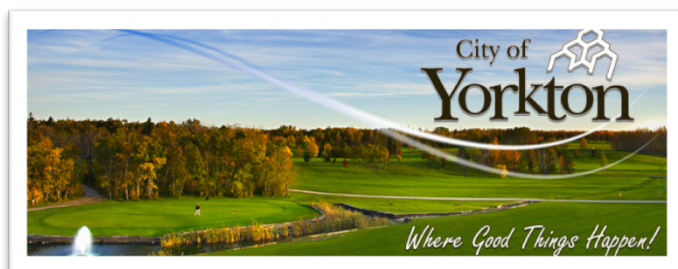


## Canadian Office Director

Linda Moore, or "Mama Linda" as the OVU children know her, is our volunteer Office Director. She is our go-to gal in Canada and is always in-the-know with OVU events and people. Her job description is broad, from overseeing budgets to advocating and speaking about our future goals. Most of all, we are so thankful for her love, support, and prayers as well as how she has passionately invested in the lives of the children at OVU.



## Blessing from Yorkton, Saskatchewan



Our Canada office is located in Yorkton, Saskatchewan and we have been so blessed by our community there. Recently our MLA, Greg Ottenbreit, spoke about OVU in the Saskatchewan Legislature. Also, Prairie Harvest Christian Life Centre has brought OVU on as one of their supported ministries. We are so thankful to have the support of our community. Thank you Yorkton!!!



# Building for the Future, Building Towards Sustainability

We are excited to announce that we are planning to start building homes on our land this fall. This is an important step for us at Our Village Uganda. It is necessary and important to invest in the needs of today, but we believe it is equally important to invest in the future and to work towards restoration and sustainability. We know the road is long, but we can't think of a road we would rather travel down.

We are starting this process in faith, as our daily needs are many. These include food, healthcare and education for the children at OVU. We are trusting that we will be able to build upon these resources in the future. How are we going to do this? Partnership. This partnership is multi-faceted.

Partnership started first on the ground in Iganga, where we have gained the respect of our community. The people of Iganga have offered their hands to help build with their own money. Though the amount of money may not be much in Canadian standards, many of the relatives of the children and the community near OVU gave all they had at the time. Our community has said they are ready to help build. We have been warmly welcomed to the village where our new land is and the villagers have been eagerly asking when we will be moving as they have such a

great need for a school. We are so thankful to have a community that supports us and who has partnered with us.

Partnerships are also growing in Canada with people who have supported us through donations, time, talents, advocacy, fundraising, and prayer. We have been so blessed to have communities support us in this journey. Marwayne United Church came behind us in a big way early on, which allowed us to grow and partner with even more people. Many of you have already made a big difference in the lives of the children at OVU from your home in Canada. We are so thankful for our Canadian partners. We invite everyone in Canada to consider volunteering and visiting OVU in Iganga, to share skills, trades, labor, and friendship with the people of Iganga. All areas are so important and necessary, and we are excited about the upcoming life-changing opportunities for our Canadian partners.

The 23 acres of land that we are going to be building on is an investment in a better future. Our goal is to be a resource to our community in many areas: careers, education, faith, agriculture, and healthy living. We envision a time when OVU will be able to support itself financially and sustain all of its own needs. This is our ultimate goal.

## Building Cost Estimates and Initial Building Plan

### Phase 1 – May to July 2012

- Drill water well. In the future, the well will have a submersible electric pump put in to it.

\$8,800

- Dig/build latrines, using “made to last” design

\$9,600

### Phase 2 – August 2012 to April 2013

- Build 8 children's homes, using traditional brick building style

\$6,000 per home

We are also exploring other building techniques, such as earthbag homes. We are planning to do a sample home using this technique in August. We are very expectant with the potential of earthbag homes, as they are an inexpensive alternative that leaves a smaller footprint on the local environment. Earthbag homes could bring about a long-lasting affordable housing solution not only for OVU but also for the Iganga area.

### Phase 3 – April to August 2014

- Build the first 5 classroom blocks for Primary and Nursery School

\$15,000 per block

### Phase 4 – August 2014 and beyond

- Build remaining 7 building blocks for storage, dining hall, paying-student dormitories, administration, library, computer room, and a kitchen.

\$15,000 per block

### Phase 5

Staff lodging also needs to be built. This phase is very important but can be delayed as we hope to find temporary places to rent for staff until we can build permanent staff lodging. Staff lodging is common in Uganda as many people work away from their home. We are hoping to use earthbag buildings for this.



## Stories worth telling, lives worth partnering with



### **There are many ways to get involved with OVU. Here are a few:**

- Advocate for us — spread the word! You can request our brochure template to print off and share with others. Print out our newsletters and share them with others. Share our website with others and use your Facebook page as a way to be a voice for children in Uganda. You can also share stories from our “Ekyaro Kyaife – Our Village” Facebook page.
- Become a monthly donor. By doing this you are joining us on the front lines each month and ensuring that orphans and vulnerable children are getting the education, healthcare, food and love they deserve.
- Sponsor one of our projects. We currently are doing many development projects on our land. You will be investing in something that will impact the local people and economy of Iganga.
- Plan a fundraiser/awareness event. We encourage all events to have a strong “awareness” element. Awareness is key to understanding the struggles faced by Ugandan children, and by planting a seed of knowledge you never know what may come.
- Come visit us in Uganda!! We are having a team in November this year and then in spring 2014. Join one of our teams to come seek, learn & partner with us in Iganga. We also are flexible with setting up other opportunities to come visit us. Send us an email to discuss joining a team or other options. Check out our volunteer page on the website to learn more.
- Become a prayer partner with us; prayer is central to all that we do at OVU. The children at OVU have seen prayers answered and are a living testimony of God’s restoration and love. Join our Facebook page to hear about current prayer needs.

We send out regular update letters preferably by email, as the cost of postage is equal to a meal in Uganda. Send us your email or mailing address to the contact info below:

Contact us at [info@ourvillageuganda.org](mailto:info@ourvillageuganda.org)

Or by phone at (306) 728-2691

Like “Ekyaro Kyaife – Our Village” on FB

Check out our website to learn more about our programs, projects, history, watch our informational video, and more.

[www.ourvillageuganda.org](http://www.ourvillageuganda.org)

To donate to OVU through TGCF you can go directly to their website at [www.tgcf.org](http://www.tgcf.org), or call them at 1-855-488-7020.

*TGCF's mailing address is:*

The Great Commission Foundation  
#3 T/C Plaza 1335 Trans Canada Way SE  
Medicine Hat, Alberta,  
Canada T1B 1J1

\*\*\* All donations through TGCF are to be made out to “Our Village Uganda” \*\*\*