

April 2005

“Sylvia Namagembe inspired me to never give up on a dream. Despite having vision in only one eye, she persevered for three days before finishing her first project without one complaint or show of attitude. Her example of strength and determination helped me jump a few hurdles I was facing, too” – Bette Holleman.

Dear Friends:

It is so wonderful to be part of what God is doing through World Harvest Mission in Uganda. We stand amazed at what was accomplished in 2004, and we are very excited as we move into 2005. We've heard it said, "Those people are hurting; I wish somebody could do something to make a difference." WHM is making that difference. Among our accomplishments in 2004 were: The construction of a primary school, launching of a center where women are now self-reliant with skills in knitting and sewing. We also preached in schools, churches and lunch hour meetings, donated 54 bicycles to local Church Pastors, and we continued to support students with tuition, essential books and teaching materials. It is a privilege to be involved in serving others and changing destinies. We know that your commitment will continue to make a difference in tomorrow's world . . . a difference that your children and grandchildren will see and feel.

2004 in Review

A Mission Trip to Uganda

The 35 person WHM team was in Uganda from September 10th through September 24th. As on previous trips, the team comprised Christians from different churches and cities in the United States. The mission trip and projects were featured in newspapers and television stations in Sacramento, Ceres, Modesto and in Kampala. Thanks to Frank Nankunda of Scripture Union, we also had the privilege of being interviewed by a BBC journalist who in conjunction with TEAR FUND,UK was filming a life-skills documentary.

In Uganda, team members were assigned to one of 3 teams: A construction team, a ministry team and a knitting team; each with a specific assignment. The construction team was assigned to build a primary school at Kyaggwe. The ministry team was assigned to preach in schools, lunch hours, and in churches and the knitting team was assigned to train 21 women at Mpala hand and machine knitting.

The first night in Uganda, the team stayed with our friends at Lweza conference center. The rest of our stay was at a campsite in Kyaggwe, which required a 45 minute daily boat ride across lake Victoria from the campsite to Gabba, from where the teams were dispersed to schools, lunch hour meetings, and the knitting center.



2004 WHM team at Kyaggwe

“Experiences like this come along once in a lifetime.”

- Bette Holleman
Modesto, California

The Construction Team

The WHM team along with volunteers from Gabba Community Church worked hard, and in 10 days completed the construction of Bethany primary school. Before the new school was built, many of the children studied under trees. Today, the new four-room school building accommodates over 100 students and is the only primary school in the village.

The Women's Knitting Team

2004 saw the launch of *Mpala Women's Enterprise Center* at Entebbe. In December 2003, the leader of Mpala had approached World Harvest Mission requesting support for their group. These women had been meeting faithfully once a week for several months. They had two sewing machines, but no chairs or tables at the place where they met. Their vision was to establish a center where women and girls would come together and learn practical skills such as sewing and knitting. This vision was later expanded to include a computer training and resource center.



Mpala Enterprise Center

For 10 days, the instructors braved a 45 minute daily boat ride from Kyaggwe to Gabba, and then a 30 minute car ride to the training center. When the team arrived at the center, they would find the ladies already working hard on their projects.

Their eagerness and enthusiasm to learn was very inspiring. The last day at the center provided a surprise we would never forget. The team was expected at the center at 10:00 am on that day, but we were very late. As the team drove into the compound around 3:30 pm, we found all the ladies still waiting, many were dressed in busuuti's; the house, the trees and shrubs in the compound were all neatly decorated with scarves, pot holders, sweaters and other projects the ladies had worked on. There was singing, speeches and exchange of gifts, taking of pictures; even the media people were present to witness the occasion. Only God could have arranged such a moment. It was incredible, that women who seemed so unaccomplished, could achieve so much, in such a short period of time. What they needed were the tools, some knowledge, and a little training to become self-reliant and productive in their community. We left that day, knowing that Mpala was a vision whose time had come. We were to return to America more determined than ever to see this vision through to the finish, to let others know about these women, their dreams and their aspirations.

Bette Holleman from Modesto, California taught machine knitting and she described her experience as follows: "The first two days in Uganda, we faced several obstacles: a damaged machine, missing tools, and the usual cultural faux pas. I will never forget Sylvia, one very special lady who had lost her vision in one eye. Sylvia showed more perseverance and patience than I had ever witnessed before, but was unable to complete a daily project on the machine. I wept for her on the third day many times, because she wanted this knowledge and skill so badly, yet it continued to elude her. But on the fourth day, things started to click, and the project took off like a force of nature. Sylvia finished her first piece to thunderous applause from the rest of the students, and completed her first baby sweater two days later."

"I know now that there is nothing standing between these ladies and success except the span of about one year or less. It was not our teaching abilities, but their openness to learn that has blessed them. It was a miraculous event with life changing results. Experiences like this come along once in a lifetime. I have never experienced something that so totally challenged and changed my perceptions and priorities. I have come away from this a better person, with renewed identity and purpose. Hopefully because I captured a glimpse of these ladies' spirit and determination, this will not be my last trip. I am humbled and grateful to have been chosen to participate in such a profound and wonderful project."

The Ministry and Schools Team

The ministry and school teams preached in 6 churches, 48 schools and at several lunch hour meetings. The teams were well received with 750 students and 12 teachers committing their lives to the Lord. The team donated computers to Scripture Union, and Gospel Mission to Uganda as well as clothing, books, dolls and toothbrushes to schools. The team also donated much needed baby items to Sanyu Babies Home, which caters for the needs of the 26 -32 orphaned, or abandoned, babies who are accommodated at the home at any one time.

Donations in Cash and Kind

Apart from support from several local businesses in Sacramento, WHM also received donations especially for Mpala from individuals in different States. British Airways also donated vouchers which were used to transport the donations to Uganda free of charge. Donations in 2004 included among others: Bibles, 20 computers and printers, 20 sewing machines, 10 knitting machines, school supplies, scanners, yarn, over 400 pounds of clothing, a projector, 60 soccer balls donated by Nike, construction tools, and microwaves. In all, the WHM team took over 70 boxes of supplies, materials and donations for the people of Uganda, each box weighed about 70 lbs. In addition, WHM donated bicycles to Gospel Mission to Uganda pastors from each of the 54 districts in Uganda.

Plans for 2005

A Mission Trip to Uganda

By the time you receive this newsletter, a team will be about ready to leave for the 2005 mission trip. This year, the team will be in Uganda from June 10th through June 22nd, and will comprise individuals from churches in Delaware, California, and Michigan.

In Uganda, the team will be split into three ministry teams: A ministry team at Entebbe, which will be teaching advanced classes in knitting, design, sewing and business management at Mpala women's enterprise center. A ministry team in Kampala, which will be working closely with Scripture Union to renovate their headquarter offices, service computers, preach in schools and churches, and a ministry team which will teach at a women's conference in Jinja near the source of the Nile.

A New Water Well

Early in 2005, WHM received a matching grant from the Sacramento Rotary club to help in the construction of a water well at Bunyiro primary school in Iganga Uganda. This 35 year old school with a student population of over 900 students has never had a source of clean drinking water at the school campus. The team will also participate in functions at the water well that was drilled at Nakigo senior secondary school. These water wells are estimated to serve clean water to over 3,000 people.

A Need for Partners

We thank God for what has been achieved through this ministry. Will you consider joining a mission team to Uganda and Rwanda next year, or volunteering your time? If you feel led to support any of the projects, or to be a formal part of the prayer team, simply contact us at (916) 339-2684 for further details or apply online at www.worldharvestmission.org

Sincerely,

William Kasirye
World Harvest Mission