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By Rohan Stritch, VIDEA.

A 2012 Visit to Osopet

In May 2012, I travelled with the people of Osopet to the outlying communities where they work. The committee took me to the homes of recipients of the pediatric and family healthcare funds, through which positively AFRICA supports families in receiving essential medical assistance.

The living conditions of the people I met receiving this support were very minimal, but the benefits of having medical support gave them the hope and strength to continue. The man pictured here expressed his deep thanks for the care Osopet was able to deliver.

During this visit, the mother was away selling charcoal in a local market, while the father was minding three children. Within this one family, they are living with HIV/AIDS, as well as Malaria and Typhoid. After receiving one goat through Osopet, the father has successfully reared several more goats, the income from which is enabling one child to attend school.

I also travelled with Osopet's water truck to deliver water to one of the seven rural communities they serve. The women came from far distances to collect the water we brought that day, and I had the fortune of spending some time with them, discussing how the water deliveries have impacted their

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Osopet story continued from p. 1....

lives. Having the water truck deliveries means they do not have to drink from the river anymore, alongside the cows and other animals.

While expressing their great appreciation for the water truck, they explained the real need for more holding tanks. Having holding tanks means less distance travelled, and resolves several logistical difficulties around storing and supplying more people with fresh water. Sometimes, they explained, they walk 30 kilometers in a day with 20 litres on their backs.



It is excellent news that, since this visit, a generous donation from the Garth Homer Society of four additional tanks has been made, which will have a significant impact on these communities.

positively AFRICA has also begun ordering traditional Maasai beadwork from women in the Osopet communities, which will provide them with a direct source of income for paying their childrens' school fees.

We invite you to view this beautiful beadwork at VIDEA's upcoming Fair Trade Fair on November 24th (see page 4 for details).

Osopet also has a brand new website! Check it out: www.osopet.weebly.com



Soweto Junior Update

By Kayla Woodruff

Soweto Junior is a primary school located in Kibera, Kenya - a place also known for being the largest slum in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Children from all over the Kibera community attend the school and can count on at least one daily meal courtesy of the positively AFRICA-sponsored lunch program.

Jeff, the principal at Soweto Junior, was kind enough to give us a tour when we visited in July 2012—and we can report that the school is doing well! The children are enthusiastic with their studies and are especially enjoying their Phys. Ed. classes.

Through the ingenuity of the staff, the school has been able to produce a few income-generating activities, which they use to sustain the school and improve it for future generations. They have a small water shop that sells clean drinking water, and every once in awhile are able to sell handicrafts at local markets on the weekends.

Some of these crafts are available for sale through positively AFRICA as well. If you're interested, email us for details at info@positivelyafrica.org

Thanks for reading!

Nissi Orphange News

By Rohan Stritch, VIDEO.

Nissi is the home of approximately 55 children, and a handful of adults who look after the children. The orphanage is a blue building with a collection of bunk beds draped in mosquito nets. Space is tight, and comforts few. Here, a visitor finds a situation where the challenges seem immense.

Amidst complicated conditions and through contributions from Canadians, positively AFRICA has been able to provide important inputs (such as beds, chickens, and farming support) and secure nutritional meals for Nissi's children and those attending the school, helping meet the essential medical needs of Nissi's caregivers and children. But many needs remain. The teachers in particular, who run a dishevelled school for the orphanage children, told me they could not carry on much longer. They are volunteer teachers, but not by choice.



My visit to Nissi coincided with a chance meeting of an American couple who have since built a new home for Nissi's children. By relocating, the children will no longer have to cross a large highway each day to reach their makeshift school. This development has been met with great excitement, and spirits at Nissi are high. This is a positive step forward in Nissi's attempt at sheltering these children, although the new home is a temporary building, and the needs of the 60+ inhabitants are ongoing.

Alleviating the suffering of individual children and Nissi caregivers, through improved nutrition and healthcare, does aid their circumstances, but changes at the state-level are also much needed. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states, "A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to a special protection and assistance provided by the state." Most of the time, governments are accountable to people and to the international community in terms of what they do to protect and deliver human rights in their countries. But when they are not, a rights-based approach to development also recognizes that other non-government organizations can be duty bearers.

Building the capacity of the adults managing Nissi, to advocate for their own rights under the state, will take commitment, education, and solidarity; but this process is vital for positive change.

Interested in Volunteering?

We love our volunteers! You can become part of a team that works to make a difference. Whether you have just an occasional hour to spare or want to dedicate more time, positively AFRICA welcomes new volunteers!

For more information, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Sabine Laubental at sabine@positivelyafrica.com or call 250-598-0708.

It's a party!

positively AFRICA would like you to consider inviting us to your party to sell jewelry and other crafts. It's a great way to add a new dimension to your party and give to a fabulous cause at the same time. The jewelry is very affordable and makes a unique, treasured gift.

We have numerous styles of necklaces, bracelets and earrings. We also carry colourful bags, wooden bowls, spoons and other curios. For some examples, please check out the positively AFRICA website at <http://www.positivelyafrica.org/store.htm>

Where does the money go?

Many of the fair trade crafts we carry are made by parents who cannot afford the tuition for their children to go to school. In lieu of payment, they donate the crafts to the school, which, in turn, sends them to us for sale. We work with two schools in Kibera, Kenya. The money from sales is returned to the schools to cover tuition costs.

We also carry beautiful beadwork items made by a group of women from the Osopet project in rural Kenya. This is a new income-generating initiative and we're excited to show off these high quality items. The small income the women receive allows them to send their children to school.

What do I need to do?

It's easy! Just email Sabine Laubental at sabine@positivelyafrica.org to arrange your date. Volunteers from positively AFRICA will bring everything to your home and set it up. They will stay at your party for a couple of hours selling the jewelry and then pack up and leave. They will also tell you how much your party raised to benefit women and children in Africa.

Please consider inviting us to your already-scheduled party -- or even have a party in our honour!

Donations

Donations to positively AFRICA are vital to the continued work we undertake with our African partners.

If you wish to make a donation, please visit our website at www.positivelyafrica.org.

If you click on the Donate & Shop menu, you will find our Donation Form.

Thank you – your support is appreciated!

VIDEA Fair Trade Fair

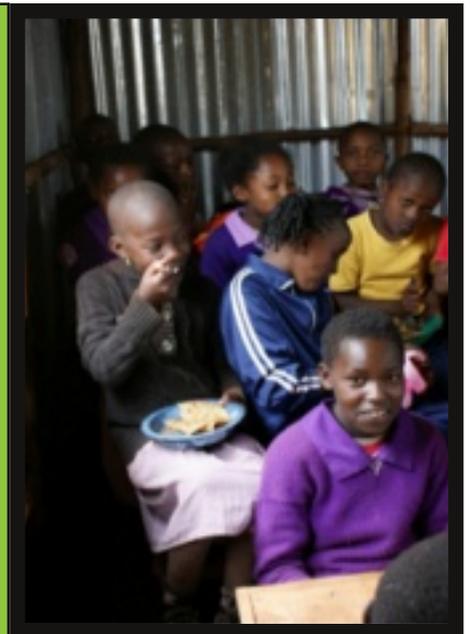


Join us at the VIDEA FAIR TRADE FAIR!

When? Saturday Nov. 24. From 10 am - 4 pm

Where? First Metropolitan United Church Hall
(932 Balmoral Road, Victoria)

Visit us at the positively AFRICA table, where we will have an enticing display of bone jewelry, carvings and beadwork for sale.



A special thanks to Lana Popham, MLA for Saanich-South, for printing this newsletter!