

THE BEAD

News and Stories from BeadforLife

November 2008

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Sometimes

Sometimes things don't go, after all,
from bad to worse. Some years,
green thrives, the crops don't fail.
Sometimes a woman aims high, and all goes well.

A people sometimes will step back from war,
elect an honest man, decide they care
enough, that they can't leave some stranger poor.
Some women become what they were born for.

Sometimes our best efforts do not go
amiss, sometimes we do as we meant to.
The sun will sometimes melt a field of sorrow
that seemed hard frozen: may it happen for you.
—*Sheenagh Pugh*

Why Women Matter A letter from Torkin Wakefield

"It is ever on just one woman, the woman to dig in the fields, and take care of the children. It is the children who are the ones to help with the digging. My husband goes in the morning. He does not tell me where. He may not return at night. I cannot ask him where he goes. It is for me to do everything or my children will starve," says an animated Collins.



Sylvia agrees. "Out of a hundred men, two might support their woman. And even then he has conditions. You must always be there for him. You do not visit anyone. You must stay in the house and be ready for him for sex. They will have to force you if you say 'no.' They do beating also. If they ask for sex and you say no, they can even refuse to buy you food."

"It's different in Uganda. Men contribute little," says Phillip. "I was raised by my mother. She did everything. It is our culture. It can be a miracle to find a man who helps."

I am listening to a conversation that the BeadforLife staff is having at lunchtime and thinking how it reflects what is known about the role of women in developing countries. Women are often looked on as inferior and mistreated while they raise the children, till the soil, and work from early morning until bedtime. Now research worldwide shows that investing in women is a most effective development strategy. If women get a chance to make money, they will nourish and educate their children as their first priority.

1. 70% of the world's 1.3 billion poor are women living on less than a dollar a day.
2. Women do 60% of the world's work and earn 10% of the world's income.
3. Women produce 70-75% of the world's food crops.
4. It takes 15 times more expenditure to achieve a similar level in child



nutrition when income is earned by the father than when it is earned by the mother.

Healing Ripple Effect

1. When a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later and has 2.2 fewer children.
2. An extra year of primary school boosts girls' eventual wages by 10 to 20 percent. An extra year of secondary school, it grows to 15 to 25 percent.
3. When women and girls earn income, they reinvest 90 percent of it into their families, as compared to only 30 to 40 percent for a man.

Sources: United Nations, CIA Fact Sheet, World Indies Bank, Inter Press Service

It is for all these reasons that BeadforLife focuses on the education and empowerment of girls and women. It is a direct strategy to end extreme poverty. The Ugandan women we are honored to partner with have our deepest respect: for their strength and resolve, and their capacity to experience both sorrow and joy as two parts of life that often come together.

To see more about the importance of women in development, check out <http://www.girleffect.org/>, an innovative collaboration between Nike Foundation and many other groups to focus interventions on women.

In this time of Thanksgiving we want to acknowledge each of you in the BeadCircle for supporting our work by buying and wearing beads, hosting BeadParties, and spreading the "buzz" about BeadforLife. We appreciate everything that you do. We tell the beaders about you and how you support them. They always "holler" and "uulate" when they hear about you and your support. Women are on the rise out of poverty. Let's keep going.

A happy and peaceful Thanksgiving for you and your loved ones.

Torkin Wakefield
Co-Executive Director

Maggie Meets Patricia and the World Get a Tiny Bit Better

Sometimes, people come into our lives and we know from the first second we see them that they will mean something special to us. For me, Patricia is one of those people.

The first time I saw Patricia, she was sitting apart from the other children in the Namwongo slum, drawing pictures in the dirt with a stick. At one point, she turned towards me and gave me a shy, beautiful smile then went back to her drawing. Not being able to forget her or her smile, I asked the headmaster of the local primary school if he could find out who she was. She was not hard to locate: Her skin condition -- bright white pigment creating large splotches on her beautiful ebony skin -- made her stand out in a crowd. She scares people with her appearance, and is alone and avoided.



The headmaster brought her to the BeadforLife office where I discovered what a



bright, loving child Patricia truly is. She is nine years old, but has never been to school or seen a doctor about her skin disease.

Now that we are connected, she is enrolled in the Kisugu Primary Boarding School where she's getting healthier, learning to read and write, and making friends. We are also taking her to a specialist to see what can be done for her skin condition.

See how beautiful Patricia is!

Maggie Tidwell is the Deputy Director of BeadforLife Uganda and Patricia's new best friend.

Moving On, Getting Started: Photo Essay

October was a special month at BeadforLife. Our dear friends, the beaders in the Nsambya group, graduated from our organization. Sixty-five empowered women, most of whom now are running their own businesses, said their goodbyes with lots of speeches, dancing and entertainment. Here is an excerpt from the farewell speech of Tassy Tusiime.

"We are now empowered women, moving forward, not backward. Nsambya group, remember where you were picked from, the down, down place where our days were counted and our families had chased us away due to AIDS. No shelter, no food, children at home with no school fees. We are now standing on our two legs with open heart and smiling mouth. We are creating a bright future for our children."

Tassy Tusiime
BeadforLife Graduation Speech

Nsambya Group Graduation - October 2008





The day after the graduation we welcomed our new group, Suubi, which means "Hope." It was their first bead sale. This group is particularly diverse, with many difficulties. The women include those who are disabled, young women who had been forced into sex work, acid survivors, and HIV affected individuals. One woman, on receiving her first money, had to sit down, tears streaming from her eyes. "I never hold so much money in my life. Is this really all mine? Will I have to give it back?" She had made \$58.

Welcome Suubi on their journey out of poverty!

Suubi Group Begins - October 2008





Holiday Shopping is Giving





The holiday season is here and it's time to start thinking about affordable and meaningful gifts for your family and friends. BeadforLife offers a wide range of fair trade gifts that are beautiful and a great buy in these constrained economic times!

This holiday season, we are offering a one-time special on Weave Bracelets. From now until the end of December, all Weave Bracelets will be Buy One Get One Free!

Ideal Holiday Shopping:

Weave Bracelet: Beautiful when worn in multiples, all Weave Bracelets are now **Buy One for \$10 Get One Free!**

5-Strand Necklace: Elegant and classy, this necklace makes a statement and is still very affordable at only \$30.

BeadforLife Jewelry Bag: Made from organic cotton with stunning African prints, this is perfect for storing your entire BeadforLife collection, or as a treasure bag for a girl. \$15 – great bargain!

Check out these and other items at our [web store](#).

Your gift gives twice: once to the lucky recipient and once to the woman who made the beads making a profound difference in the lives of Ugandan families.



Travel to Uganda

"Two exciting opportunities to visit BeadforLife in Uganda! We are continuing to offer life-changing trips through [Conservation Concepts](#). Past participants rave about the impact the trip has had on their lives, and two of our current staff members came to us originally as trip participants! We guarantee that this is a trip you will never forget.



Experience Uganda: February 28 - March 13, 2009 Immerse yourself in the cultures and wildlife of Uganda, with many opportunities to interact with BeadforLife and our members. We will visit the BeadforLife village, an AIDS clinic, a school, local conservation projects, and go on an unforgettable safari to Murchison Falls National Park. This is the best way to get a feeling for what BeadforLife really means in the lives of our members and what they mean to us.

Teaching Global Issues: July 11 - 24, 2009 We have gotten many requests from teachers who want to join one of our trips but can't make our spring and fall offerings because of the school schedule. Well, this one's for you! This trip is specifically designed for teachers who address global issues in their classrooms and want an experience that will really bring those issues to life. The trip will be co-led by Mark Jordahl, who has been an environmental educator for 15 years and is the husband of BeadforLife co-founder Devin Hibbard, and Ben Wheeler, a Master Teacher for Facing the Future (www.facingthefuture.org), a global issues curriculum organization. This trip will have many of the features of the Experience Uganda trip, but will also include time spent with Ugandan teachers, visits to schools, and discussions on how to bring this experience back into the classroom. Your teaching will never be the same!



Take Action! "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise." World AIDS Day-December 1st 2008

- Despite HIV awareness now reaching nearly all areas of the globe, *infection rates are still happening 2.7 times faster than the increase in number of people receiving treatment.*
- HIV reveals drastically the inequality between the sexes. Young women get at least twice as many times infected as their same age males. *76% of all women living with HIV live in Sub Saharan Africa.*
- The UN estimates that, currently, there are 14 million AIDS orphans and that by 2010 there will be 25 million.
- Over half of the members of BeadforLife are living with HIV/AIDS.

The World AIDS Campaign launched the Stop AIDS Leadership Pledge in November 2007, with a goal of 100,000 signees. These pledges serve to leverage greater political leadership on universal access to AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, and act as a visual example for key national and international decision-makers to follow. To sign this Leadership Pledge go Worldaidscampaign.org and take action by signing up to do something about stopping AIDS.

There is great power in individuals joining together to make change happen. Please join us in the fight to "Stop AIDS," and **make a pledge today** to help "Keep the Promise" on December 1st for World AIDS Day.



The Bead Circle: Love Letter to Uganda

Dear Beads Friend,

My name is Ellie and I'm in 8th grade. We learned about the magazine beads and I made two bracelets. It's pretty hard work. I can't believe you roll yours so tight. I think it's very cool that you have a way to make money and care for your children. I think it's a very beautiful art and I would never have thought you could make something so beautiful out of trash. You are truly a strong people. Do you have any children in the 8th grade?

Ellie Robbins

