

## **Little Angels Spring 2010 Update**

### **Background:**

Little Angels is a privately run primary school and orphanage in Mityana, Uganda, about fifty miles west of Kampala. The majority of schools in Uganda are private due to the poor standard of education at government schools. The school was started by a local community member, Sarah Kiggundu, in 2002 to meet the needs of families and their school aged children in her local community. When Little Angels first started it provided for the needs of 14 orphans in the local community. The school has grown over the last 8 years and today the school meets the educational needs of 400 students in pre-primary through primary 7. All 400 students come from the surrounding community and either live too far from the nearest public school or cannot afford to attend their local public school. Of these 400 students, 200 are orphans, and 70 of these orphans board at Little Angels. All of the 200 orphans receive breakfast and lunch and the 70 boarders receive dinner as well. 2010 marks the year that the original students at the school have graduated from primary school (the number had grown to 16 students). Project Kesho is very pleased to report that all of the students have passed the secondary school entrance exam and, with Project Kesho support, are now attending secondary school.

Since Little Angels, by definition, exists to meet the needs of the poorest of the poor, they are unable to collect enough revenue through school fees to meet their basic operating costs. The school only charges a modest fee of \$10 per three month term and only the 200 students who are not orphans are required to pay this fee. However, many of the families of the children who are not orphans are unable to afford some or all of the school fees. This means that Little Angels is constantly in the red financially. If they were to charge more money to help cover their expenses they would drive away many of the children they are trying to help. Due to this lack of revenue, and other factors, there are several challenges facing Little Angels.

- A monthly shortfall of money means that Little Angels is unable to meet the educational, health and nutritional needs of the children they are serving. There is often not enough money to purchase all the food that is required or pay for their medical needs. A shortfall of money also makes it challenging to pay for the salaries of the school teachers and many months the teachers receive less than what their contract states. The shortage of funds prevents Little Angels from purchasing an adequate amount of school supplies and support material.
- There is not enough classroom space for the number of students who attend the school. Some classrooms have as many of 40 or 50 students in a room about 15 feet by 15 feet. The overcrowding makes it hard for the teachers to make sure that all students are learning and it can lead to the classrooms becoming overheated.
- There are several needs specific to the orphans who board at Little Angels. The 70 orphans who board at the school have all lost one or both parents and they had a previous living arrangement that was unable to meet their basic needs. Sarah and the staff of Little Angels are challenged with caring for the psychosocial needs of these children, as well as meeting their educational and health needs. The lack of monthly revenue can make it hard to meet these physical needs, and sometimes these children are forced to go without. Also, as noted above, these boarders are starting to graduate from primary school and this presents additional challenges. Secondary school is considerably more expensive—about \$250 per child per year, and since these children are orphans they still need a place to live.

## **Project Updates:**

### Monthly Support:

Project Kesho, through Village Assist support, provides a monthly stipend of \$300 to the Little Angels primary school and orphanage. This money is mainly used to meet the basic nutritional and health needs of the orphans. \$75 of this money is also used to rent a room in a neighboring house to provide additional space for forty orphan girls to sleep. Any extra money left over from this stipend is used to help pay teacher salaries or repair existing classroom structures.

### Secondary School Support:

As noted above, 16 students graduated from primary school and are enrolled in secondary school. School fees and classroom materials were supplied by Project Kesho, while the purchase of school uniforms was supplied by Little Angels (which amounted to about 10% of each student's costs). Currently the students are doing well in school and Project Kesho is committed to ensuring their continued success throughout secondary school. By successfully completing secondary school, the students are guaranteed access to more employment opportunities that will enable them to break from the cycle poverty.

### Classroom Support:

The need for additional classroom space at Little Angels is overwhelming. As noted above, the classrooms are considerably overcrowded and sometimes become unusable in the late afternoon heat. Little Angels' school leadership and a Project Kesho representative decided that the best long-term use of money would be to begin to build permanent classroom structures. The majority of existing classrooms are constructed mainly of papyrus reeds with tin metal roofs. The papyrus reeds, while considerably cheaper than bricks, are leaky in the rainy season and need constant repair and upkeep. Two new classrooms are currently under construction and are being built with brick walls and tin metal roofs.

### Other Support:

The bathroom facility that Project Kesho constructed in the fall of 2007 is full. Project Kesho will facilitate the maintenance cost to have a sewage truck empty the bathroom hole. We will also fund the construction of a simple hand washing station to compliment the bathroom facility. Last summer Project Kesho purchased a cow and goat for Little Angels. The cow is now pregnant and the goat has had one offspring and is pregnant again. This spring, Project Kesho purchased two additional goats. These animals act as investments. The animals are purchased cheaply, cost almost nothing to maintain, and then they can be sold for double or triple the purchasing price. For instance, the previous cow Project Kesho purchased was sold to pay for new uniforms for the students going to secondary school.



An overcrowded Little Angels classroom



This class must meet outside due to lack of classroom space



The foundation of the new classroom building at Little Angels



Little Angel's students competing in relay races



Some of the new Secondary School students from Little Angels who are sponsored by Project Kesho

## Little Angels Spending Report Spring 2010

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Secondary School Support:	\$1080
Classroom Support:	
New Classroom Construction:	\$1550
Teacher Salary Support:	\$300
Facility Maintenance:	
Bathroom Maintenance:	\$100
Hand Washing Station:	\$30
Mosquito Nets:	\$40
 Total:	 \$3100