

wanting to bring beauty into the world...

locan rebe creates colorful beads and jewelry to sell



Locan Rebe:

is a community based organization in Kampala, Uganda with 170 members (made up of youth and women) from the IDP camps of Northern Uganda. 50% of the members are HIV/aids positive, including 25 children and dependent elders.

Each bead is made hand by hand:

Beads and jewelry are made from re-used calendars, posters and magazines. The colorful calendars are cut into long, thin, triangular strips, then rolled around a small stick. when the bead is the right size, it is coated and sealed in varnish. Every single, bead is unique and original!

Their mission: is to support displaced children, youth (with focus on girls), and women from Northern and Eastern Uganda, through small income generating projects, in an effort to increase education, improve economic conditions and strengthen Ugandan culture and morals.

Prior to meeting in Kampala and founding their Community Based Organization, the women of Locan Rebe were originally from Northern and Eastern Uganda. They were forced to leave their homes for Internal Displacement (IDP) Camps, due to the extreme violence of a 20 year war between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Government. This war has specifically targeted children, abducting them, torturing them, and turning them into soldiers, sex slaves and porters. In the East, communities were affected by additional challenges the war, cattle raiding, and violence by the Karimoja. Such violence has displaced over 1.7 million Ugandans. In these camps 1,000 people die per day from treatable illnesses. Most of them are under the age of five..

The women that make up Locan Rebe wanted more for themselves and their children than the extreme living conditions, disease, and death that surrounded them in the camps. They did not want to survive on humanitarian aid, they did not want a hand out. They wanted their independence and the opportunity to use their many diverse skills to support themselves and create a better life. What they wanted was A MARKET. Each of them left the camps and set off for Kampala with this hope.

Once in Kampala, while living on the streets, the women found each other and recognized in each other's eyes the same hope and vision. They united to form Locan Rebe, committed to raising their voices for positive changes and actively creating solutions to poverty, injustice and illiteracy. It is their mission to support women and youth, especially girls, from Northern Uganda, in an effort to increase education and improve economic conditions, as well as strengthen culture and morals. The most crucial activities of the women is income generation.

Wanting to bring beauty into the world, Locan Rebe creates colorful beads and jewelry to sell. The beads are made from used calendars, posters and magazines. Time spent working on the beads is used as an opportunity for group members to teach each other about business, health, literacy, HIV/AIDS prevention, and other life skills. With any profits made from the sales, the group collectively decides how the money will be spent. Priority expenses are school fees, food, medication and shelter. Any remaining money is reinvested in their businesses or funds activities in accordance with the mission and objectives.

This group of former teachers, business women, artists, farmers and health advocates each has a wealth of skills, trades, talents and experiences that they contribute to accomplishing their mission. Together they have the wisdom, power and determination to fulfill their mission. Their only request was to "Find a Market"—and unexpectedly they have launched a movement that connects them to the global community and generates hope for humanity and peace.

Written by Diana Docus of the W. Glen Boyd Foundation