



# UMP-KENYA BULLETIN

UMP-KENYA

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## Empowering women economically

Most women in developing countries normally do reproductive work ( i.e. work which do not produce income e.g. cooking, raising children, fetching water, tilling land etc.) and not productive work ( work which brings income to the family). The women do not have control over how the family income is used. They are also denied the right to own and inherit land or property. In order to address this Ump-Kenya has been giving micro credits to women groups who in turn give loans to their members for the sole purpose of establishing micro enterprises hence empowering them economically. Currently 20 women groups have benefited with micro credit loans bringing to a total of 400 women. This in turns means 260 households have access to credit in order to improve their livelihoods. It is the intention of the organization to establish Community- Based Micro finance Institutions (CMFIs) in all the DAs in the country. These CMFIs will be managed by women themselves by forming umbrella groups. So far the organization has managed to organize groups to forming umbrellas. In mombasa DA we have the Women Empowerment Network (WEN), In Kibera DA we have Kibera Women Empowerment Programme (KWEPP), in Malindi DA we have Sauti ya kina mama BBaguo (meaning voices of women in Baguo) Through the capacity building Programme, the organization trains these women groups on book keeping, loan appraisal, micro enterprise business skills, how to make a group constitution, minutes writing and leadership.



A woman knitting sweaters. Ump-Kenya promotes village based industries hence empowering women economically at community level

Some of these women are HIV/AIDS positive, Older orphans, single mothers and widows. Mwanakombo aged 40 years is one of the beneficiaries of the micro credit and this is what she said

**“ I have been married to my husband for over ten years and I have not been able to give him children, so he decided to marry a second wife. This led to all the attention being given to the second wife and I was neglected and discriminated by my husband, his family and the community at large. Since receiving a micro credit from Ump-Kenya, I was able to start my own business, hence becoming economically stable and independent. Ironically, now I receive all the attention and respect from my husband, his family and the community this is because I have become the bread winner in the house.”**

## Ump-Kenya comes to the rescue of Kibera women

**What is a slum?** Slums are neglected parts of cities where housing and living conditions are appallingly lacking. Slums range from high density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights, sprawling at the edge of cities. It is recognized that one billion people around the world live in city slums and these numbers are expected to double in the next 25 years. Here in Kenya we have Kibera slum which is at the edge of Nairobi city. It is the second largest slum in sub-Saharan Africa with a population of over 500,000. It lacks water, sanitation, waste collection, storm drainage, street lighting, paved footpaths, roads for emergency access. It does not have schools and clinics within reach, safe areas for children to play. It also lacks places for the community to meet and socialize. During the election violence Kibera slum was the hardest hit where many businesses were looted and premises burnt. Some murders were also committed displacing a lot of women and children. The aftermath was over 100,000 Kenyans internally displaced. As a result of this, Ump-Kenya assisted 80 women with loans to re-start their businesses hence giving them hope. One of the Kibera women had this to say:

**“ I did lost my business during the election violence, I had nothing or no one to go to. I had lost hope in life. Worst still our group, fadhili women group lost one of our members through the violence. Thanks to Ump-Kenya, I was given a second chance in life. Right now I have started my own business once again and finally I have seen the light at the end of the tunnel “**

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### RURAL WOMEN'S PROBLEMS

- Culturally, women have been considered the property of men.
- Women are expected to give birth, take care of the children and carryout the household cores
- The low status of women led to domestic violence
- Women are not allowed to inherit property from their husbands. Instead, property, especially land, would be inherited by the husband's family. The widows would be inherited; if they refused, they and their children were left destitute



Teachers and students of Enelelai secondary school receive new books to boost their school library

## Education Support Programme

**“We all know the power of education to give a real start in life and to develop the full potential of every single human being, to fight poverty, to fight diseases, to fight ignorance and to fight HIV/AIDS.”**

**GRACA MACHEL,**

**GCE spokesperson, 2007**

Ump-Kenya in partnership with give kids a chance foundation have established a program namely education support program which intends to support education mainly in rural areas and informal settlement schemes through the following:

-Providing secondary school and college scholarships to needy students

-Provision of school resources such as books etc

Since its inception, in early this year, the program has so far achieved the following

Giving school scholarship to four children (three girls and one boy)

Giving college scholarship to three children( two girls and one boy)

Donating books to a community secondary school in chemorut village in rift valley.

## Adult literacy project

Although there are officially close to one billion adults who are illiterate, and closer to two billion people struggle with basic literacy skills, there has been almost no investment in adult literacy programmes in recent decades around the world. Donors are reluctant to fund programmes and governments are reluctant to prioritize adults when national education budgets struggle to respond to the growing demands of formal education systems. In response to this problem of adult illiteracy, UMP-KENYA in collaboration with its partner (Give Kids a Chance Foundation) did establish an adult literacy project. This project is being implemented by women themselves in a small village called Chemorut in the rural part of rift valley. The response from the villagers has been overwhelming with majority of the students attending the classes being women. Rebecca aged 60 years is one of the students attending adult classes said:

**“ I am happy that I have started learning how to read , write and count. At least now I wont ask my children to read for me letters that I receive, read doctor's prescriptions and write minutes in my group and understand my children's' school reports. Through the classes I will also be able to keep proper records of my business. I now have a better understanding that education is very important and will urge my children to study hard so as they can have a better future”**

**Women empowering women, this is a slogan for the adult literacy program where women have taken a leading role in addressing the problem of adult illiteracy in their village**

## The Gift Fund



A nursery school in a slum area in mombasa

Nursery school education in Kenya is not free and for the poor people in rural areas and slums it is difficult for them to enroll their children to nursery schools where fees are so expensive. Parents in these slums have been relying on informal nursery schools which lack basic learning facilities. The environment in which the children are exposed is always bad. Ump-Kenya did set up a gift fund where the fund is used to buy learning materials for nursery schools and sanitary pads, and health kits to students in rural areas. Ump-Kenya would like to thank One of the supporters of this fund Mr. Steve from Canada for his generous contributions towards this fund. In fact its his first donation which was used to establish this fund. You can also make a change in the lives of these children by giving you support to this fund. Make a child in slum and rural areas have a better start in his/her education. Your support will make a difference in many children in slums and rural areas in Kenya. Education is a human right and hence we should not deny children this right.

## Community resource and information center

People normally say information is Power and yes in deed its power. By providing access to important and right information, communities in rural areas can be able to make informed decisions when it comes to issues relating to them, their community or country at large. In most African countries where the majority are poor, the rich class which is always the ruling class has been taking advantage of poor people ignorance. But its high time the poor get informed. How do we do this? Its through the establishment of information and resource centers in villages. Ump-Kenya in collaboration with Give Kids a chance Foundation established a community information and resource center in a rural village called Chemorut in Rift valley province. The center is being managed by a women umbrella group called Chemorut Women Empowerment Initiative (CWEI) .This center also serves as a Community Learning Center where the CWEI women conduct adult literacy classes. Now the center serves both primary, secondary and college students who borrow books from the center. Both women and men also borrow books from the center to keep themselves informed on different issues such as land policies and rights, constitution making, corruption, democracy, good governance, responsible leadership and citizenry, environment, agriculture, HIV/AIDS etc. The following are some of the comments made by some users of the center.

**“ Due to lack of books in our school, students could not do well in the national exams but I am sure that I will do best and some students in the community too since we have enough books in the community information and resource center.”**

**“ I did not know any responsibility of a member of parliament but after reading a book which outlines the role of a member of parliament, am now in a position to engage our MP in case he does not perform.”**



Women inspect new books for their community resource and information center.

## Global Campaign for Education's action week

The global campaign for education's action week was this year marked globally from 21-28 April. Ump-Kenya and its partner give kids a chance foundation managed to have joint activities to mark the action week. The two organizations marked the action week in a small rural village called chemorut which is in the rift valley province of Kenya. The following activities took place to mark this year's action week.

Workshops for children and women

soccer for girls

Art for children

Formation of a student association at the village level

*-Education is a human right and all children in the world should enjoy this right.*

*-Promises to children should never be broken **Nelson Mandela 2006.***

## FOOD SECURITY

Kinango district is one of the Kenyan's districts where famine is a common thing due to climatic conditions. This is a district where rainfall is not reliable. Currently Ump-Kenya is working in a village called Tobora which is in Kinango District (formerly Kwale district) within coast province. Poverty in the village is high and with the climatic conditions being harsh community members mostly rely on relief food. Ump-Kenya in collaboration with its partner (Give kids a chance) gave grants to the community members in the village to, restock their agro vet shop, buy food and also establish kitchen gardens. During this year short rains the community members did utilize part of the grant to establish kitchen gardens one of who is Saumu. Saumu said:

**“ I would like to give thanks to our donors for the support they gave us. Now I am happy that we have food for my family and surplus to go and sell at the market and hence improving my family income. The vegetables I planted will boost the nutrition in my family. I am a happy mother and a good example in my village.”** UMP-Kenya intends to establish a grain bank within Tobora village to enhance food security in the village. The organization also intends to establish an irrigation project too. Your support will be highly appreciated in order to improve the livelihood of the Tobora villagers.



Saumu and her children in their kitchen garden. She planted kales, tomatoes. She also planted maize.

## UMP-KENYA

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**TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE  
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**UMP-KENYA** was initiated out of the dire need of forming a partnership with poor people for the sole purpose of joining hands in alleviating poverty. The organization is working in three provinces in Kenya namely Coast, Nairobi and Rift valley. The organization has five Development Areas (DA) within the above provinces. There is Mombasa DA, Kinango DA and Malindi DA which are all in Coast province, Kibera DA and Kangemi DA which are in Nairobi province and Chemorut DA which is in Rift valley province. The organization has three key programmes namely:

- Women Empowerment Program (WEP)
- Capacity Building Program (CBP)
- Education Support Program (ESP)

## A letter from the Country Director

Dear Supporter,

I am pleased to welcome you to our first newsletter. As you will be going through the newsletter you will get to know what Ump-Kenya is doing in the country. I am happy to say that our organization is expanding. In 2006 and 2007 we were only operating in three Development Areas (DA) that is Chemorut DA in Rift valley Province, Kibera DA in Nairobi Province and Mombasa DA in Coast Province. This year we have started operating in three more Development areas that is Kinango DA in Coast Province, Malindi DA in Coast Province and Kangemi DA in Nairobi Province. It is also in this year that the organization established a new Programme called Education Support Programme. During this year we also managed to get two representatives from Give Kids A Chance Foundation from Canada to inspect our work in Kenya. I am pleased to announce that the two representatives were satisfied with what we are doing in Kenya and Give Kids A Chance Foundation is now our official partner in development. It is the intention of Ump-Kenya to form partnership with other like minded organizations in the world for the sole purpose of improving the lives of poor and marginalized communities in Kenya.



James Marafa, UMP-KENYA Director.

As you are aware that early this year Kenya experienced election violence and many lives were lost, women raped, and children affected leading to over 100,000 Kenyans internally displaced. As a result of this the organization intends to hold peace and reconciliation workshops in villages within Kibera DA, Mombasa DA and Chemorut DA .

Finally with your invaluable support, our work across Kenya continues to improve the lives of poor communities in many ways. Thank you for being there with us.

Yours sincerely,

James Marafa

Country Director—UMP-KENYA