

Stories From Uganda

March 2018



Are you ready to EMBARK?

*Allyson, Ambrose,
Magambo, Sarah,
Carol*

Looking out my window at the bright blue sky, I am reminded of the song “All Things Bright and Beautiful.” Greetings from a bright-blue-sky Kampala, Uganda! This is our first newsletter of 2018 and I don’t think it’s too late to wish y’all a blessed new year! As I write this, I am reminded of theologian John Mbiti’s famous quote “I am because WE are and, since we are, therefore I am”—my favorite description of the traditional African values of community support and cohesion. With this in mind, we share with you two inspiring stories of how two families who—through sheer determination for a better life and with the much-needed support they got from the self-help groups they joined—were transformed. And, as this new year begins, let us extend an open invitation to you to come and see for yourself how God is using people to change lives of their neighbors. Welcome to Uganda!

Somewhere in the eastern middle of Africa lies my beautiful country Uganda. Just take a quick look at any map of Africa and let your eye fall on the largest lake. From there starts the River Nile and that’s where Uganda lies!

Hi! My name is Carol Musoke and I am the Bridger with World Renew Uganda. Part of my job is to directly connect individuals and groups to our ministry’s field work and walk alongside them through their entire journey. I’d like to invite you to come and experience our ministry work with World Renew’s Ugandan partners and see for yourself what you’re reading about here.

In Uganda we partner with seven different church agencies across the country that are directly engaging with and supporting communities in **relief and disaster response, community health and resilience, agriculture and food security, improved livelihoods and household income, and church-to-church partnerships**—and all of them are ready to host you.

We have short-term and long-term opportunities for volunteering which offer individuals and groups the chance to learn more about international service and community transformation; to discover God’s calling on their lives; to have fun appreciating diversity in culture; and to gain a deeper understanding of loving mercy, acting justly, and walking humbly with God. Besides that, Uganda is such an

[\(Continued on page 2\)](#)

1700 28th Street SE • Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407 • 800-552-7972
3475 Mainway • PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1 • Burlington ON L7R 3Y8 • 800-730-3490

worldrenew.net    

 **World
Renew**
LIVING JUSTICE • LOVING MERCY • SERVING CHRIST

(Continued from page 1)

awesome country to visit! Known as one of the friendliest countries in the world, we also have gorgeous landscapes, incredible coffee, delicious teas, the best pineapples EVER, a rich culture, beautiful smiles, and sunshine every day!

We are currently hosting two EMBARK volunteer opportunities in Uganda and invite you to consider this four week up-close look at our life and work in Uganda. Participants Allyson Gemma from Kansas, USA and Sarah Natukunda from Kabale, Uganda participated in a six-month version of this opportunity. They have this to say about their EMBARK experiences:

Allyson: "Living in Uganda has been quite a journey, with many joys and just as many challenges. I love the relationships I've been able to build during an extended stay in Kabale the most, and I've learned that the most important aspect of cross-cultural missions is the building and maintaining of those relationships. Still, sometimes that's easier said than done, and doing ministry with people who can clash with each other can be hectic and tedious at times, but I remain grateful for the grace and blessing that God gives to us in the midst of it all!"

Sarah: "I have loved the opportunity to travel to new places with Allyson these past six months, and to make new friends all around Uganda. I've learned how to use a computer, to swim, to be outside of my comfort zone, and to value time better. I am so appreciative of World Renew for allowing me to work with them in the EMBARK 6 program and for the many blessings that have come out of this experience!"

On behalf of World Renew Uganda and her Ugandan partners, I take immense pleasure in inviting you to experience and be a part of our awesome mission "engaging God's people in redeeming resources and developing gifts in collaborative activities of loving mercy, justice, and compassion."

To learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit worldrenew.net/gvp



Carol Musoke
Constituency Bridger
Uganda Team

Raymond Mutava • Country Consultant • rmutava@worldrenew.net
Edward Oklor • Program Consultant • eoklor@worldrenew.net
Joseph Mutebi • Program Consultant • jmutebi@worldrenew.net
Carol Musoke • Constituency Bridger • cmusoke@world-renew.net

1700 28th Street SE • Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407 • 800-552-7972
3475 Mainway • PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1 • Burlington ON L7R 3Y8 • 800-730-3490

worldrenew.net    

Prayer requests from the team:

Please pray for:

- Peace in South Sudan, that the displacement of the people will slow
- Recovery from traumatic situations in the refugee settlement
- Additional resources to meet the needs of the Bidibidi refugee settlement
- Aging parents, especially Joseph's mother, who is 85 years old and sickly—that we might find her a suitable house helper

We give thanks for:

- Safety as we travel
- Joy of having Joseph Mutebi serving with World Renew for 10 Years!!!!



Did you know that you can receive this letter directly to your own e-mail and that by doing so you are helping World Renew be a good steward of your gifts? To sign up, contact Carrie Elzinga at celzinga@worldrenew.net.

Stories From
Uganda
March 2018



*With her wares on display,
Atuku Joyce awaits
customers outside her home.*

The Will to Move Forward

Atuku Joyce is a mother living in Pajaa village, Kal parish, Patiko sub-county. Her life became very hard after her husband left her for another woman in January of last year. “I was left alone to shoulder the responsibility of bringing up all the five children,” says Joyce. “He rarely supports me and the children. I became helpless and wondered how I would support my children single-handed.”

At this same time, World Renew and our local Ugandan partner, the Diocese of Northern Uganda, began implementing a self-help intervention in Patiko Sub County. The area had depended heavily on handouts and relief for over two decades of the brutal guerilla insurgency of Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army and World Renew and the Diocese agreed on the need to awaken the communities' ability to look within and around for the resources needed to improve their social and economic well-being.

Joyce heard about the self-help program and was curious. “When I heard of a new project that was being introduced by Diocese of Northern Uganda in our village,” she says, “I attended the orientation meeting and decided to join the Lubanga self-help group.”

Motivated by the urgent need to support her family, Joyce started saving on a weekly basis. As a member of the group, she received training on enterprise selection and management and, with the knowledge that she acquired, Joyce de-

cidied to borrow 60,000 UGX (about \$17 USD) from the group. Self-help groups allow members to offer each other microloans from their collective savings, thereby enabling those with no access to the traditional banking system to acquire start-up capital, while providing the other group members the opportunity to grow their savings through interest. With a small loan and some entrepreneurial training and support, Joyce started a business selling washing soap, onions, salt, and cooking oil from her home. Supplemented by income she earns gardening for others, Joyce's income has gradually stabilized and she can now provide basic needs to her children like medication, clothing, and school fees.

Joyce now encourages other women to start up small income-generating activities within their own households, wanting to share the success and support that she has had. “I am happy that my fellow women support me by buying items from my home and that they are saved walking the long journey to the trading center,” she says. “Sometimes I carry my items for sale to our self-help meeting days and take the opportunity to sell there too! This has been a big boost to my small business. I have managed to sell my initial stock in a short period of time, to pay back my loan on time, and to reinvest the interest I've earned from the group.”

Joyce attributes this success and its impact on her family to the moral and social support of her group and the benefits that come from their weekly meetings. She rejoices in the knowledge she has gained through group events about entrepreneurship, conflict management, and gender-related justice issues.



Joseph Mutebi
Program Consultant
Uganda Team

1700 28th Street SE • Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407 • 800-552-7972
3475 Mainway • PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1 • Burlington ON L7R 3Y8 • 800-730-3490

worldrenew.net    

 **World
Renew**
LIVING JUSTICE • LOVING MERCY • SERVING CHRIST

Stories From
Uganda
March 2018



Transformed by the Renewing of the Mind

Apai is a small fishing village in Uganda's northeastern district of Kaberamaido. World Renew and our local partner, the Pentecostal Assemblies of God, work there to address the challenge of HIV and AIDS among over 490 households. Solomon Emyedu, 41, is a fisherman and lives with his wife Immaculate and their 11 children in Apai village.

I visited Solomon and Immaculate and their testimony about the benefit of being part of the local church reminded me of what Paul wrote to the Roman church in Romans 12:2: *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Solomon begins: *"I was a hopeless alcoholic, and even got another woman within the village. Twice I got too drunk to make it home and had to sleep in the bush. All the income I got from my fishing business was wasted on alcohol and a reckless life. Things got worse at home when my wife began drinking and also got another man. I used to fight a lot with my her."*

But then Solomon and his wife were encouraged to join a Stepping Stones group where village households would come together weekly to discuss family life, faithfulness, and love in families. Their Stepping Stones group is one of a collection of groups reaching over two hundred households in three fish-

ing villages, with sessions guided by community health champions, some of whom are church leaders trained by World Renew.

"The programme has totally helped us strengthen our faith in God. I have learnt to be faithful to only my husband and to God" says Immaculate, as Solomon looks on, nodding his head.

In February 2017, Solomon joined a Stepping Stones group for just men. *"Due to the good things I had seen in the lives of my friends who were active participants, I got interested and joined our peer group,"* he explains.

Solomon and Immaculate have changed. Solomon is now a church group leader for Apai village and his wife was appointed by her church (the Anglican Church) as a Mothers Union Chairperson for Apai village, mentoring other women on family life. Solomon and his wife are currently helping three families that are experiencing disunity and unfaithfulness in their marriages. *"One of my friends asked me to share with him on how I have managed to handle my family, since he is experiencing the same challenges I had before,"* says Solomon. "I am really happy with this program and I have realized that I delayed joining it. I would have been a better person long ago had I joined earlier." Better late than never – I say!

I was so inspired by my visit with this couple and what God has done in their lives, in their family, and —through them — in the lives of others!



Edward Okiror
Program Consultant
Uganda Team

1700 28th Street SE • Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407 • 800-552-7972
3475 Mainway • PO Box 5070 STN LCD 1 • Burlington ON L7R 3Y8 • 800-730-3490

worldrenew.net    

 **World
Renew**
LIVING JUSTICE • LOVING MERCY • SERVING CHRIST