



Project Description

june 2012

From Kiosk to Workshop

Accommodation for a group of disabled persons who provide their own means of existence.

Synopsis

A group of disabled men and a group of disabled women in Uganda, who want to secure their own means of support, lack any space in which to expand their activities, sell their product, and meet each other. The municipality has offered them a piece of land on which to realize their own building.

Where

The city of Adjumani is a provincial capital in the north Uganda, close to the Nile and the border with Sudan. The North has suffered from endemic violence and insecurity in the recent past. The situation has luckily improved over the last few years, and ordinary life has re-established itself. The area is, however, still very poor; a situation which changes only slowly due to new unrest in nearby regions, the high cost of food, and high inflation.

Background

Disabled people are in a difficult position in Uganda. Even if they are well-educated, they have little chance of finding employment. Most disabled persons beg in order to secure sustenance. That these people have come together to make a living themselves is admirable.

The current organization in Uganda

The men and women have organized themselves separately and have both been recognized as 'Community Based Organization & Group'. The activities through which they aim to support themselves are different for men and women and based in occupations which were traditionally gendered. Both organization recognize the value of mutual cooperation and are searching for ways to do so.

The men, a tight-knit group of 9 persons, work primarily as cobblers. They also sew related items, such as moped covers, and sell second-hand shoes. From their 2009 profits they bought a small kiosk – previously they sat on the ground – in which they now work and from which they sell their goods. The women rear chickens and pigs and sell foodstuffs on the market. They have had changeable results, but have been very supportive of each other. For instance, the offspring of the chickens was distributed among forty additional women, and they plan to do so with the pigs, too. The women have no common meeting point or store-front, apart from the chicken farm. The group has a nucleus of 10 women, surrounded by a more diffuse group of over 40 women.

Both organizations have their own bank account and have started book keeping, with the aim to gain more insight into their various activities.

The two organizations have joint meetings, there are no familial ties between the members. The yearly self-organized 'communication day' involves the attendance of all members of both organizations – an occasion which they all attend and value highly.

One of the projects involves shared implemented; a mutual bicycle rental project which aims to increase the mobility of the members and to limit their transport costs.

Because the turnovers of these organizations are limited their situation remains fragile.

We have named this project 'From Kiosk to Workshop' to indicate that it involves a further extension of already existing local activities, rather than a wholly novel project without an existing infrastructure. The participants have already proven both their aptitude for and their dedication to the activities which this project merely seeks to further and facilitate.

The Weaverbird Foundation

The Weaverbird Foundation supports the local initiatives of underprivileged people in developing countries, with no regard to ethnic or religious background. Our statutory focus is specifically on Middle and East Africa – in practice mainly Uganda. The support mainly consists of financial and material contributions, the funds are solicited in the Netherlands.

We are a voluntary organization and are not partners in the projects. The projects are sustained by groups and organizations in the local cities and villages. We have no permanent presence, but visit the sites regularly. We also help, on a limited scale, in organization matters, such as structuring an administration or drafting project proposals.

The groups of disabled persons in Adjumani have been supported by us since 2008. This support has mostly consisted of small investments: in materials to fabricate goods or refurbish and resale them; to improve the chicken farm; to refurbish the tricycles needed by some members to get around; and in the mutual bicycle rental project. (For more detail see also www.weaverbirdfoundation.nl)

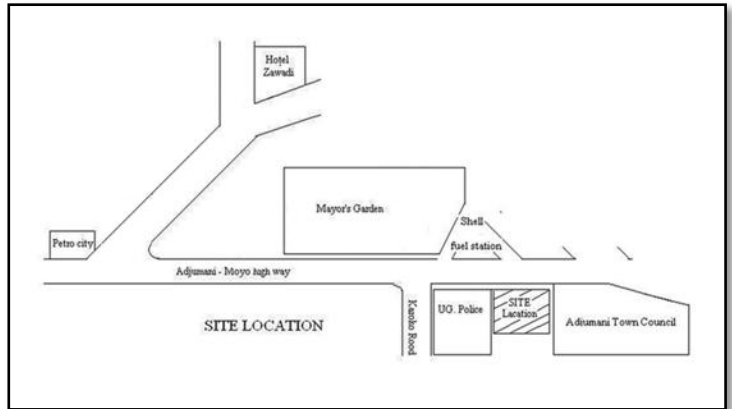
The project in hand is financially speaking more extensive than those we have supported until now, which is why we are now soliciting funds outside our own established network.



The Contribution of the Municipality

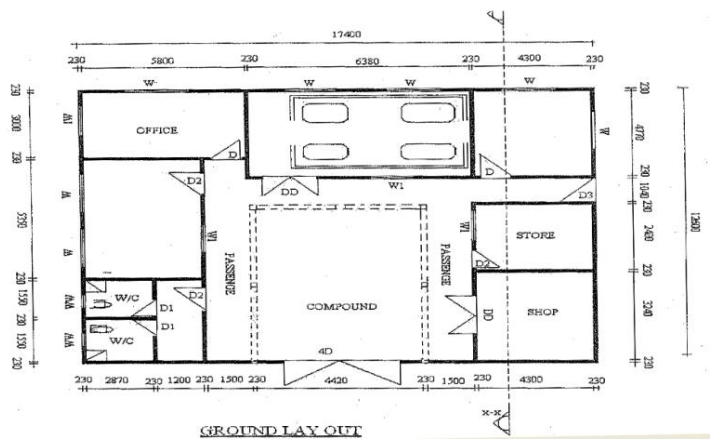
In 2011 the Town Council made land available for a workshop and activity centre. The municipality decided on this commitment because they realized that the dedication of the group of disabled people, as well as the support of the Weaverbird Foundation, could lead to a structural improvement in the living conditions of the group members. The site offered is a suitable one, at the edge of the city centre, next to the city hall. One condition made by the municipality is that the centre has to be realized within three years. See page 7 for the property deed.

The municipality has also provided drawings of the workshop. And although the municipality has no formal representation in the board of the organizations, it is closely involved with both in practice. When visiting the organizations, volunteers representing Weaverbird also meet with the mayor.



The new accommodation

The new accommodation has been designed in Uganda in consultation with the disabled persons and includes a workshop, store, storage room, small office, sewing studio, conference room, and sanitary fittings. The conference room can also be used by or rented to the inhabitants of Adjumani.



The courtyard is spacious enough that it can fulfill different functions in different seasons. The building is 17.5m by 13m, including the courtyard, and will be build with building materials common in Uganda. See page 8 for further drawings.



Potential improvements for the handicapped community

For the male subgroup of the community, the new accommodation will offer them more storage space and a workshop, as well as a permanent shop to sell their wares. They will also have a place to put their sewing machine, rather than having to carry it around all the time—a serious challenge for this handicapped group. These improvements will allow them to increase their revenue. They have already shown a capability to diversify the range of products they produce—e.g. moped covers as well as shoes—and they are eager to expand their business, as they did by starting a second-hand shoe import from the capital. They are, however, limited by their current working conditions; the proposed workshop would enable the group to further develop their business.

The group of handicapped women live spread out over a large area, with the only available meeting place a chicken farm a long way out of the city center. This place is hard and expensive to reach for those that are not close by the farm already. The proposed accommodation will provide a centrally located place for the women to sell their wares and develop other economic activity. Their group has long acknowledged that a sewing workshop would benefit them all, as the investments for the machines have to be borne by the whole group. Additionally, no individual member of the group can house the sewing machines. Other women in the group prepare food for sale, but run into logistical issues as they are largely immobile and have to spend too much money distributing their food. A central space, as proposed here, would provide a place to store cooking equipment and to sell their produce, and as such this would benefit the group's revenue. By no means is it intended that all the women work at the center every day; in addition to being contrary to the intention of the center, such large numbers of people at any one time could not be supported by the proposed building.

In addition to the group-specific projects outlined above, the men and women will also develop projects together, as they did with the bicycle rental project. They will also be able to rent out parts of the building for meetings or festivities. Both groups share this intention for more collaborative projects.

Improving economic skills and knowledge

Both male and female groups will be supported in their skill and knowledge development for two years. A particular focus will be in bookkeeping: this will provide the group with a better understanding of the costs and profits associated with each of their projects separately. At the moment they are not aware of anything beyond the amount of money in their bank account. They will also be trained in how to recognize potential opportunities and risks of new projects; how to estimate the market potential for new ideas; and how to bring all this together in a style not dissimilar from a business plan. Local people from Northern Uganda already involved in development work can provide this kind of training, as these people have already been approached.



Integrating the new workshop / activity center into the community

In addition to providing workspace and training to the handicapped people themselves, the center will show to the rest of the community that handicapped people are respectable members of society. The local council has expressed that they are not worried that this project will lead to jealousy in the community, as Northern Uganda and this town in particular have experienced Western support for local projects more often. Also, no financial support or housing is provided, but rather this relatively poor but highly motivated element of the society is provided with a one-time boost to their economic potential. Furthermore, the center will serve as a meeting point for non-handicapped people in Adjumani as well, as they visit to buy items from the shops and rent rooms at the center for gatherings.

Financial details

We received three offers in late 2011 from contractors to build the center. The difference in price is about 13% between the offers, with the lowest coming in at €54,000. The offers have been judged by Good Shepherd, an organization that has ample experience building accommodations in Uganda. They made their own estimate which is in the same range as those provided by the contractors.

The offer is a provisionary one, and contains items that can be negotiated on. The group itself could also take care of some last things of the workmanship, given the experience already present in the group. However, given the inflation in Uganda we have to assume that the price on the offer will not differ strongly from the final price. Please see page 5-7 for the offer. *Not included on the website*

In addition to the center, costs will be made for training a number of skills outlined above. This training is provided by Ugandans during two years, totaling €9,000.

The total costs for the proposed project are as follows:

	amount	item
land	€ 8,300	from local council: 360 m ² in city center
enclosure	€ 800	two offers, to be executed summer 2012
building	€ 54,000	three offers, see supplemental items
coordinator	€ 500	during construction
training, coaching	€ 9,000	2 years, Good Shepherd
total	€ 72,600	

Following these investments no more financial support is required from the Netherlands for the center.



Duration of the project

Enclosure the land may 2012
Construction of center: 4 months during early-mid 2013
Coaching, skill training: 2 years following the construction of the center.



Fence for the building plot



Supplemental info 1: visual impressions



Current kiosk



Measuring the perimeter for change of land ownership




Chicken and pig farm



Supplemental info 2: Proof of change of ownership of the land

OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK



ADJUMANITOWN COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 3 ADJUMANI
Date: 15th /11/2011

IN ANY CORRESPONDENCE ON THIS SUBJECT
PLEASE QUOTE No: ATCLAM/10

To Mr Vuzara Richard
Chairperson Persons with Disability
Adjumani Town Council, P.O Box 3, Adjumani-Uganda

Dear Sir,

SUBJECT: LAND OFFER


Reference is hereby made to your letter dated 27th /07/2011 requesting for a piece of land within Adjumani Town for construction of an activity center for Persons with Disabilities (PWD).


In view of the foregoing, Adjumani Town Council has no objection to your request and the council in its second ordinary Council meeting held on 20th October 2011 under Min 04/OCM/2011 agreed to offer to your association a piece of land under the following terms and conditions:

1. The size of the land offered is 15x18 Meters
2. The land is located along Gulu Road and it is within the civic centre
3. The land is free from any claimant and it is free from litigation
4. The Land should be strictly used for the construction of an activity center for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)
5. The above land should be developed as soon as possible at any rate not later than 3 years from the date of offer.

Finally, I wish to congratulate and appreciate the Weaver Bird Foundation for the support and commitment towards helping the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in Adjumani. Counting on your usual cooperation

Yours faithfully


Lagu Samuel
Town Clerk, Adjumani Town Council



Cc: LCIII Chairperson-Adjumani Town Council
Cc: Head of Finance-Adjumani Town Council
Cc: Senior Town Engineer
Cc File



Supports local initiatives
for underprivileged persons in Africa

Supplemental info 3: blueprints of the center

