



### Life Skills for Pregnant Teenagers – Kampala, Uganda

**Budget: Year 3 (\$16,800) commenced January 2020, \$16,600 still needed. Year 2 (\$16,900 fully funded).**

#### The Project:

This 3-year project assists marginalised teenage girls aged 10 –18 with crisis pregnancies, usually as a result of rape. The girls, who have been sent away from school, home and their communities, due to the perceived shame it brings on the family, are taken in by our partners where they reside for 2–8 months during their pregnancy. The project provides vocational training skills in arts/crafts, cooking, urban agriculture and tailoring. These skills help them to secure jobs after they have left the centre or start small businesses to break the cycle of poverty. The new mothers need a means to support themselves and their child. This is the second six-month report for Year 2.



#### Progress Against Objectives and Impact:

- 94 girls received training in vocational skills such as cookery (snacks, soups, vegetarian dishes, table-setting and food-safe hygiene), tailoring, crafts (candle-making, beading, knitting), computer skills, entrepreneurship and financial management. These will help provide the girls with an income-generating stream. Tailoring sessions include making garments, aprons, bags and the like as well as mending
- Girls also received counselling sessions and attended other workshops to build life-skills, such as literacy programs, infant care and hygiene
- The Centre receives good support from the community with regular visitors and teams
- Pregnant teens at the Centre were trained in planning and vision board creation by the Rotary Club of Acacia Sunset, Kampala, and partner schools have visited to share with the girls and experience life together
- 54 babies were born during this period with girls cared for, counselled and prepared for motherhood during their stay – essential to making a good start with a new baby as they reintegrate into their communities. Often pregnancies cause major family issues and many of these are resolved during the residential care
- Follow-up of girls who have left the centre has occurred either through visits, where distance allows, or through scheduled phone calls to help support them through these early months
- The centre is running fee-paying school holiday programs for non-residents in the same skills areas, as a way to increase the sustainability of the project
- The recent acquisition of 3 acres of land will allow a new centre to be built to accommodate more girls and their babies, as well as a maternity centre where health professionals can manage the delivery and recovery process.

*Margaret Namboowa is an orphan, whose life has been transformed since coming to the Centre. She took up cooking classes and, after returning home, worked in part-time jobs to save enough capital to start a business making chapatis and tea. Vivian (pictured above), another girl from the centre, was passionate about tailoring and determined to use her skills despite a speech impediment. At 14 she is now a self-employed tailor, making and repairing clothes for her community. She is doing remarkably well caring for a young baby as well as herself.*

**Margaret, Vivian and the other girls find a way through the adversity through the help of our partners. Without your help, these girls would be destitute. Thank you!**