

AMAKA

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Acres4Life Prepares Uganda for the Harvest

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When God calls, you have two choices – you either answer or you make excuses. Charlie Schafer and his wife Suzette received their call in 2006 when they first visited Uganda. While visiting the different ministries and organizations there, they noticed what appeared to be a trend of financial aid and food flowing in from western donors, but no apparent means of cash flow or viable agriculture within the communities themselves. The stark contrast of so many starving people surrounded by acres of usable but unutilized farm land was astonishing to them.

Upon further investigation, they discovered the villages possessed neither the knowledge nor the resources to start up their own farms. It was then they heard God's call. Neither Charlie nor Suzette had planting or harvesting on their resumes and because of their limited knowledge of the agricultural sciences, they were initially a little hesitant. But God understood and He always has a plan! He sent them one very knowledgeable farmer, Marty Coert, and one very skilled land developer, Michael Owens. Crossing paths with these two men was all the reassurance the Schafers needed and Acres4Life was born!

These visionaries believe that by establishing successful farms, Ugandans can eradicate hunger and poverty while transforming villages from donor dependency to independent, functioning communities.

Charlie explains this concept as a new way of thinking, "It is not just meeting the immediate needs by giving a bag of beans, rice and salt. Those things are good but limited in their capacity to improve the health of the villager or his economy? As believers, we need to start thinking of new ways to solve immediate as well

as long-term needs. Sustained agriculture is the best way to take them out of their current state." He adds that there is so much more to farming than just planting crops. There has to be certain infrastructures in place to ensure the success of a farm. "First, you have to find land that meets various requirements for growing. And you must have a clean water source which often requires the building of wells."

The main purpose of Acres4Life is to provide food by equipping the people with agricultural knowledge and skills. In Bethany Village, the young people help to work the farms and are learning essential life skills that they will be able to teach to their own children. The Schafers are excited because the farms are able to bless other villages by sharing the bounty along with the love of Christ. "We sent teams from the States to help at harvest time. Boats were loaded full of beautiful, rich produce such as tomatoes, eggplant and cauliflower, and were then sent up Lake Victoria to nearby fishing villages who had been watching the new farms go up. The produce was simply given to them as a gift of love. And by the sharing of this food and the Gospel, eight people gave their hearts to the Lord. That is what it's all about." Charlie feels that these farms are actually churches in

disguise. Meeting the needs of the people creates an opportunity to meet the needs of the soul.

In addition, the farms create a source of cash flow that supports ministries such as ARM, while decreasing the monthly food budget. He notes that it now costs much less to feed the children who benefit from the farms, and they are able to eat higher quality food several times a day. The children get to enjoy healthy meals of fresh, sun-ripened



Tomato Harvest



Charlie Schafer
Founder and President of
Acres4Life and Sam



Marty Coert
VP Farming Operations and
his son Jacob



Suzette Schafer
Founder and VP of Marketing

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* AMAKA means "family" in Luganda, the tribal language used in Gaba, Uganda, where ARM is headquartered.

Building Hope through Self-Sustaining Ministries



*Pastor Peter Kasirivu
President and
Founder
of ARM*

Greetings to you from Uganda! The ministry continues to grow and as usual, growth comes with challenges. At present, we are addressing the possibilities of moving many of our ministries towards more self-sufficiency. The current economic recession in the western world has affected our work so much that we are realizing the need to do something drastic to maintain the effectiveness of our ministry. We have been praying about raising money locally to support our efforts and after assessing various options, we feel the best avenue to take is to increase our efforts in food production.

Our existing partnerships with Acres4Life and EV-Free Church of Canejo Valley have proven so successful, it seemed an obvious course to take. We initially began producing crops, raising pigs and poultry at Bethany village some time ago. The end result has been healthy, more balanced diets for the children, all the while teaching them how to garden. The venture has saved ARM considerable money.

With about 5000 children in our sponsorship program and 177 children in our orphanage program, we spend an enormous amount each year on food alone. In reducing this cost through self-sustained



The piggery at Bethany Village

agriculture, we can then use the additional funds for other operational needs. Our intention is to produce more food than required so the excess can be sold and the ministry becomes self-sustaining with an income.

As I write this article, ARM and Acres4Life have already expressed interest in 466 acres of land in Kapeeka, about 50 miles north of Gaba. The site is very fertile, not far from us and has the potential of producing crops like corn, upland rice, beans, sweet potatoes and peas. The land cost is \$87,500, or \$188 per acre. We currently have commitments of \$43,750, putting us half way to our goal; we are now trusting in the Lord for the second half. A master plan to develop the land is already in the works! It will include farm houses, tractors, a farm truck, a silo, water wells and a team on-site to help manage the project. The initial investment will be high but the return in the future will be inestimable.

In light of all the above, please continue to pray with us that this dream will soon become a reality. Pray also about how the Lord is calling you to get involved — either through financial support, an area of expertise or possibly referring ARM to organizations that are able to help in this kind of venture. May the good Lord bless you as you continue to serve Him.

In Uganda, land is life!

The fertile soil of Uganda is its biggest natural resource. Year-round tropical weather provides abundant agricultural crops throughout the year. For ARM, the richness of the soil supplies the means to feed a multitude of children and their families, and it also provides the opportunity to teach Uganda's people to be self-sufficient through agricultural development. Presently land prices are quite reasonable; however, the rapid investment by other nations and businesses is driving prices up, creating a growing demand for Ugandan land. We are now experiencing a land inflation rate between 25% and 100% per year, based on location.

ARM recognizes the best bet for a long-term return on the betterment of human lives is purchasing land for agricultural and potential ministry projects. Good rural land identified for such endeavors can be purchased for \$175 to \$400 per acre. We ask that you prayerfully consider donations for the purchase of agricultural land and also, identify any such donations as "Agriculture Land".

The Global Economy and Its Effects

Uganda and all of Africa for that matter is not immune to the effects of the global economy. Since the beginning of 2008, there has been a great increase in the prices of agricultural products. The price of the food that is commonly used in schools and orphanages has doubled. Last year alone ARM saw a kilogram of beans (2.2 pounds) that had cost 900 Ugandan shillings (approx. 0.6 dollars), now selling for 1800 shillings. A kilogram of posho (a ground corn product) was 800 Ugandan shillings (approx. 0.5 dollars), and is now 1400 shillings.

Naturally, these huge increases have become a strain on the ministry's food budget and meager resources. The only hope for the ministry projects is to embark on growing their own food in order to reduce the cost of feeding the children. Just one more reason the work of our partner Acres4Life is so essential to the well-being of ARM and the communities it serves.

Viewpoint: Impressions from My First Ugandan Trip

As the new kid on the block in the position of Executive Director of ARM – USA, I continue to be amazed and thankful for all that the ministry accomplished on Don Jones' watch as the former Executive Director. Don spent much longer than anticipated overseeing, guiding, directing and insuring that Africa Renewal Ministries would not only have the resources they needed, but effectively use those resources to make a huge impact upon the children of Uganda. We cannot express adequate thanks to Don for his leadership and commitment to ARM.

When I first began to discover the great variety of projects supported by ARM, I was impressed with the vast impact being made. From orphanages to churches to schools and villages, ARM reaches out in the Name of Christ and instigates the kind of changes that meet earthly as well as eternal needs.

As I return from my first trip to Uganda, I am equally impressed how ARM has managed her compassionate care by enlisting the Ugandan people themselves. An entire army of God's workers are employed around the nation at the various project sites, schools and churches, working day in and day out to

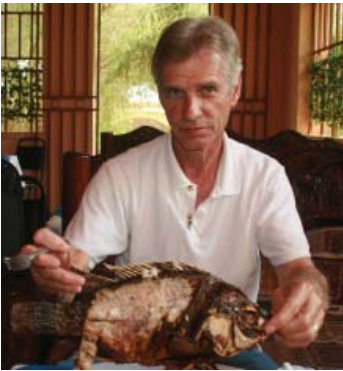
bring the love of Christ in a very real, hands-on way to their own people. I am confident that one of the reasons ARM is so blessed and successful is the commitment to help the people of Uganda serve as God's instruments in providing solutions to their own problems. We in America are privileged to come along side these wonderful, caring people and offer the first fruits of our blessings to assist and encourage them.

As Pastor Peter shares in his article this month, the farming project is one way in which we hope to enlist Ugandans in providing food for their children, thereby reducing the rising costs of food, and even enabling a profit-making opportunity for the ministry. This is one of many ways we help the ministry in Uganda to become self-sustaining so that American resources can be applied to the greatest areas of need.

Thank you – to all of those who pray and support the work of ARM throughout Uganda. Through child sponsorships, orphanage sponsors, and giving to ARM's general and various project funds, we are able to insure that thousands of children experience life beyond survival, and by God's grace, are able to become agents of change in the nation.



Craig DuBois
Executive Director
ARM-USA



Craig eats his first Tilapia from Lake Victoria in Uganda.

Acres4Life, continued from page 1

fruits and vegetables in place of imported canned goods. This also frees up donor aid to be used for other pressing needs such as clothing, education and medical care.

Today Acres4Life works in partnership with organizations such as ARM and God Cares. They currently have 66 acres; 20 of them are in the process of being developed into self-sustainable farms or are already producing. The farms in Bethany Village, Mubende and Kampala feed some 1200 children. Their goal is to introduce this mission to as many churches across the U.S. as possible. They can then sponsor any number of acres to feed a certain number of children. The support will also be used in training the children to be productive members of their communities. If you would like more information on how you and your church can become involved with

Acres4Life, please visit their website at www.acres4life.org. I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. (John 4:35 NIV)



Michael Owens, Acres4Life VP of Operations and his wife, Debbie

Future Plans and Development

Acres4Life is not only looking at helping ARM in the provision of food at Bethany village but is stretching to other districts as well. This season we are delighted to begin cultivating five acres with maize corn and beans on the 50-acre plot acquired in Mubende district by Acres4Life. The beneficiaries of the produce will primarily be ARM's Mulete and Kachungwa sponsorships and school projects in the district.

Similarly, ARM and Acres4Life have acquired a 466-acre property in war-torn north central Uganda, approximately 73 kilometers away from the capital city of Kampala. This land is seen as a means to meet the food requirements of ARM, other ministries and the people so desperately in need in this region.



Children from the Bethany children's homes help with the farm harvest.

In this issue:

- Acres4Life Partners with ARM
- Agriculture Update

Agricultural Updates

Education Key to Proper Nutrition

Proper nutrition facilitates normal, healthy growth for children, both physically and mentally. We all know that we can only have a healthy mind from a healthy body.



Gathering eggs in Bethany Village

In Uganda, more young children fall prey to disease and health disorders because their immune systems have been compromised due to malnutrition. But with awareness, education and

provision of nutrient-rich foods, we can make a difference.

Wilber Muyomba, ARM Farm Manager explains, “In Uganda and all across Africa, people praise God to have a plate full of food at the end of the day, but having a plate full of food with the essential nutrients is another thing entirely. There has been a universal lack of knowledge of the nutritional value of different types of foods and meeting daily nutritional requirements remains a challenge. So teaching parents and their children about various foods and their effects on the body is key.” If a child learns about nutrition at an early age, he or she will pass this knowledge along and can live a healthy life throughout. Improving the overall nutrition of Africa’s children will ultimately improve the health of its villages.

Bethany Farm Seeing Green

The latest news from Bethany Village Farm is remarkable. They now have seven acres of crops under production — two acres are planted with beans, one acre with maize, two with cassava, one covered by sweet potatoes and one assorted vegetables including tomatoes, cabbage, eggplant and collards.

Livestock enterprises are comprised of poultry including 104 hens that produce almost 100 eggs each day. Bethany also has a piggery of 30 pigs and a dairy farm with one cow and a calf. They had intentions to bring seven cows from up-country in August; however, a food and mouth disease quarantine prevented the transfer. Once the quarantine is lifted, the livestock will be added to the farm. Unfortunately, like food provisions, the cost of feed has also doubled which makes sustaining the farm’s livestock more of a challenge. Through your continued support of ARM and Acres4Life, we can maintain the quality of the farm’s produce.



The Kirschner family helps Wilber, the Bethany Farm Manager, with the corn harvest.