

# BSPW Annual Information 2006

## Dear Friends and well wishers,

As we approach the end of this year, we at BSPW wish to express our sincere gratitude for your continued moral and financial support to our communities. We are grateful to each of you for your commitment to improving the lives of the poor people in Uganda. Your contributions though simple and humble, in the form of a bicycle, bicycle ambulance, or solar cooker, have helped individual households to have more than one source of income, be able to market their agriculture produce, access health facilities as well as save some money for future use. This has in turn helped them to get access to education and above all poverty reduction. May we therefore take this opportunity to share with you the highlights of the year 2006.

## TARGET BENEFICIARIES

BSPW supports low income individuals and groups located in both rural and urban areas. We take special interest in women, youths and disadvantaged persons (single mothers, persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDS affected individuals and households, and the elderly). In order to fully appreciate the importance of your contribution to the communities here in Uganda, it is very important to understand the context in which they live.

**Why women?** BSPW has taken special interest in women particularly the rural woman because of her triple role as wife, mother and 'employee' at household level. Women are also the number one productive and reproductive resource at household level. However, despite their important role, a wife's status in the home is close to slavery most especially if bride-price has been paid by the husband thus sealing her status of bondage to her husband.

She has been discriminated against in terms of access to education as a girl child, and this accounts for the high illiteracy rate among women in rural Uganda as compared to men. Uganda is a patriarchal society where property is handed from father to son; consequently women have ended up with no land ownership rights and no access to vital economic, political and social resources. Patriarchy in society is also responsible for the tendency of priority over decisions being left to the husbands with the wife's input being disregarded.

Many women are also living as single mothers or worse still as widows and this makes their role as bread earners twice as hard as that of their male counterparts. Women's proceeds also have a wider outreach thus benefiting all members of the family.

**Why Youths?** This has been as a result of the fact that the future of any country lies within the quality of its youth and if left out of development, this can have im-

mense consequences on society and the economy. We also have particular interest in youths because they are usually considered social outcasts due to stereotypical beliefs that most crimes and atrocities in society are committed largely by youths. A large number of youths are also unemployed often resulting into frustration thus resorting to drugs and meaningless lifestyles. Many youths in society feel unappreciated, confused, helpless and lost.

**Why Persons with disability?** These are disadvantaged persons who on a daily basis face double discrimination, ostracism and stigma from society due to reasons beyond their control. Persons with disability are usually discriminated against if a choice has to be made in regard to which children to educate in situations of

## Bicycle affordability and accessibility programme

Under this programme, bicycles are accessed to groups and individuals on a cost sharing basis / sponsorship, or on hire purchase / credit basis.

## Bicycle Sponsorship

During the course of the year only two projects namely the Women on the Move Strategy and the Bicycle for Health Projects were implemented under bicycle sponsorship. A total of **331** subsidized bicycles were distributed this year, of which 12 of them were given as donations, 186 distributed to individual beneficiaries through partner organizations and 6 distributed to students.

## Women on the move strategy

Under this project, **91** bicycles were distributed to women and women initiatives under the Women on the Move Strategy geared towards promotion of women's social and economic emancipation. These bicycles are being used to transport produce by women to markets for sale. They are also used for transporting sick children to hospital and where the communities have not yet been accessed with bicycle ambulances they are also used to transport ill adults to hospital. Having collectively acquired bicycles has also made it easier for the formation of cooperatives where women collectively farm, harvest and market their produce.

Due to the patriarchal nature of our societies it has been difficult for wives to have control over the proceeds of their harvests, due to lack of land ownership rights. However, we have encouraged women to purchase their own plots of land and a few have succeeded. However as an immediate solution to the above, we have encouraged women to use their income from the use of their bikes to rent land collectively for agriculture and several women groups are now practicing collective farming on rented pieces of land.



limited resources. In consequence many have been left without education or skills, a situation that is not helped by the availability of few schools for persons with disabilities and the few available are too expensive for the average family.

## Why HIV / AIDS affected individuals and families?

The AIDS scourge has had its toll on the African continent and Uganda has not been an exception. It has been largely responsible for the loss of many bread earners at household level leaving along a dependency burden of helpless orphans, the elderly and dependants. During the course of the year, BSPW has had a number of achievements through the following Programme areas, which include:

## Bicycle for Health project

**28** bicycles were also distributed under this project were distributed to HIV/AIDS initiatives. The bicycles have helped to boost the movement of health personnel, social workers, counselors and medical services closer to the beneficiaries. 2 bicycles were also distributed to a children's orphanage. These bicycles have played a key role in bringing counseling and family planning services close to the communities. These bicycles have also helped improve community outreach programmes and improve community access to voluntary testing and counseling (VCT). The bicycles have helped improve community mobilization and access to Anti retro-viral therapy (ART) and prevention of mother to child

transmission (PMTCT) services through improved community outreach programmes.<sup>14</sup> bicycle ambulances were distributed, under this project to areas of Jinja, Mukono and Iganga. The bike ambulance has proved handy in times of emergencies. An ambulance is used by the benefiting community at least 4 times a month and most of the patients transported are mainly women in labour, though the vehicle is also used by men. Children are primarily carried by their parents on bicycles.

#### **Bicycle Credit Scheme**

Under this scheme 90 bikes were distributed to both men and women. Of which 14 of them were accessed to women, 8 were distributed to an organization. This project has gone a long way in increasing initiative and boosting savings among individual households due to its nature and due to an increased sense of ownership of the bicycle by the beneficiary. BSPW is also trying to expand its efforts into promoting this scheme



#### **Capacity Building and Sensitization Programme**

Due to the need to economize resources, BSPW has developed a holistic and integrated training package that combines both sensitization and capacity building. It has also improved on its services by adopting a psycho-social approach geared towards improving attitudes and causing behavior change among target communities.

Capacity enhancement was aimed at organizational strengthening with special emphasis on prioritization of

expenditure at household level, identification of possibilities of income generation in the target communities, saving and credit management, and leadership skills. During this period BSPW made eight trainings, and by September 2006, three groups had formed cooperative societies for purposes of provision of banking services to the communities.

#### **Appropriate Technology Programme**

##### **Solar cooker project:**

8 solar cookers were distributed during the reporting period, of which four were distributed to Solar cookers

frames, 1 bicycle cart and repaired a number of items for the general public.

#### **SCHOOL FEES PROGRAMME**

During the course of the year a number of pupils and students in Western and Eastern Uganda have received scholarships via our organization. These include orphans of the St. Moses / Mama Jane Children Care Center, the Jinja Programme and the Mpura Rural Helper Family. Beneficiaries range between the ages of six to 28. We therefore commend the Christa Frei fund and all who have contributed to enable orphans and vulnerable children access education.

#### **Perspectives**

BSPW hopes to join collective efforts in making a small contribution to the traumatized communities of north-eastern Uganda. This comes at such a time when the government of Uganda is trying to resettle internally displaced persons (IDPs), the bicycle is still an important tool for resettlement and boosting economic recovery because it can be relied on as a source of livelihood, accessing water, helping in agriculture for such communities.

international, an organization working to promote the use of solar cookers to rural households in Kenya, one was distributed to St. Kaloli Mbiko Parish while 3 were distributed to individual households in Jinja and Mukono.

##### **Income generation initiatives:**

During the year, 52.426 kg of maize were milled while under the Carpentry section produced 150 chairs, 150 lockers, 3 beds, 9 doors, 2 tables and 20 windows. The Metal refurbishing section on the other hand, made 22 casement doors, 160 windows, 30 beds, 100 locker

We also hope to increase community access to bicycles, bicycle ambulances and solar cookers and to improve the capacities and capabilities of the beneficiary communities.

Over time to open up a vocational school to train communities and empower students with life skills in bicycle repair and maintenance, metal-works and refurbishing, carpentry and joinery, industrial arts (tie and die, batik, ceramics, sculpting, printing of fabrics etc.), tailoring and hand loom weaving.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2007  
Richard Kisamaddu*

**If you want to support our activities your are welcome to donate**

**More details through**

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