

Since December, we've been hard at work. Thanks to the success of the IC Plunge, we are pleased to announce that the doors to the Dwon Madiki Partnership are open in Gulu, Uganda. This February, 21 special children will go to school that otherwise might not be able to afford it. Selected by our Administrator of Ugandan Operations Grace Odonga on the basis of a rigorous application process and on need, these kids will receive books, food, uniforms, guidance, a place to play soccer and learn traditional dance after school, express themselves through art, and have their extra-tuition school fees paid. There are currently 21 primary age children in the education program and an additional hundred or so that will benefit from the after-school program. Grace Odonga, seen in front of our office in the photo, oversees all of this. We hope to get her some help soon, so we're not done asking for money.

A particularly lovely aspect of the program underway is the development of trans-Atlantic and inter-continental relationships between Westerners and Africans. The children have sent us drawings, poems and letters, so that we might learn their story and expand our understanding of the world. We of the Dwon Madiki Partnership have created a book, each of us with a page that seeks to tell as much about ourselves as possible with such limited space. The result was a poetic condensation of many lovely people onto individual sheets of paper, covered in verse, photos, drawings and collage. This is just the beginning of our relationship. We are all giddy with excitement at the prospect of making so many new friends across the world, and eager to share our lives, with them as they share with us. Our desire is to open the lines of communication. To that end, part of the Dwon Madiki mission is to enable *you* (yes, YOU) to share openly with the children as well, and to join us in getting to know them.

A blueprint for expanding and strengthening the mission is in development and will be available soon to all of you, our friends and potential friends. Our mission involves empowering the children of Northern Uganda through education, mentorship, and art, enabling them to transform their lives and their community. Also part of the mission is a recognition of the power of art to heal and tell stories, the need to tell this story to the privileged world, the need for transformation in every individual and community, both in the privileged West and in Gulu, Uganda, a commitment to stay positive and creative, an emphasis on the importance of teaching human-rights in addition to standard scholastic instruction. Check the website soon for the blueprint for program implementation and expansion. In the meantime, **please check out the pictures of our (your) office in Gulu, along with Ugandan Operations Administrator Grace, and several of the kids your money is supporting. Please don't fail to also view some of the artwork and poems the kids sent you. Keep a box of Kleenex handy.**