

UPENDO GROUP “LOVE” GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO 1

**YOGA MAT BAG & OTHER CRAFTS
INCOME GENERATING PROJECT**

**A project of Rural Women Development Association (RWDA)
in partnership with the kanga project**

GETTING THE BASIC SKILLS

June 6th – general sewing classes start for a group of 15 women. 3 hours a day, 4 days a week for 6 months in the village of Ilongero in rural Tanzania.

Not bad !



The start of this project was made possible by collaborating with the Catholic Mission in the village. Using their premises, equipment and teachers meant we could test the waters without expanding too much funding.

LEARNING TO MAKE A YOGA MAT BAG



PRODUCTION STARTS

October 20th – the efforts and enthusiasm of those who committed to turning their new skills into an income generating opportunity is rewarded with the go-ahead to make a first order of 50 bags.

December 8th – 20 bags have been made.

Notes from Nicole our current volunteer

For the first 2 weeks practising, the numbers of women dropped and some days only 3 members attended. 4 weeks in and all members were attending regularly 2-5pm. Once an order schedule was made, it was stuck to very well.



MEET SOME OF THE TEAM



Lydia Joseph

30 years old. Has been doing some of the hand sewing teaching and is currently supervising the project. Lydia would like to open a college and teach sewing. She joined the group because she wanted to improve her skills.



Hadija Ibrahimu

23 years old. Her dream is to open a store for materials and to provide tailoring. She had no job other than working on the family farm and is really happy to be able to earn an income now.



Neema Julius

21 years old. She also would like to open a sewing stall one day. Like Hadija she did not have a job before and was at home helping. The extra money is going to bring improvements she said.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We are putting all our efforts into finding outlets for the bags and hope they are a success. The women really want to “break into the market” at home and abroad with good quality products that will secure their future better. But none of us is really savvy in the arts of knowing what will sell.

Their prayers may have been answered

We recently received the following enquiry

My name is Ellie Dart . I am a design consultant currently working in Ngara, Kagera Region, Tanzania.

I am a vibrant and passionate designer with a strong focus on using my skills to help people and improve lives.

My current position is ending soon (I will have been working here for 1 year) and I am looking to stay in Tanzania.

I was wondering if you are in need of a Designer/Design Consultant or know any NGOs or the like that are currently recruiting?

**We hoped she didn't
mean interior design.....**

WELCOME TO I LONGERO ELLIE DART



Accessories

Ellie has agreed to design a range of products and spend at least 12 months in the village teaching, supervising and supporting women in their enterprise. We hope that with such quality products and good guidance, many other women and girls will become involved. And as she is now fluent in Kis-Swahili, our ladies could not have wished for more.

Designs for WomenCraft :



Adapting Designs

New Designs



NOW THE BIG QUESTION.....

Some of Ellie's beautiful designs

CAN YOU HELP WITH FUNDRAISING FOR THE PROJECT?



Our initial budget is only £3,600 to meet the needs for sewing machines, other equipment and material and a small wage to our ladies while they learn to make good quality crafts and develop a range.

The project will still work hand in hand with the Catholic Mission as Ellie attempts to put their weaving loom into good use. She will also prepare a full project proposal by end of February to help with funding and finding outlets. Some exciting times ahead.

Ellie is reporting for work on 30th January. We wish her good luck