

SCHOOLS FOR SCHOOLS PROGRAM UPDATE





Invisible Children's Schools for Schools program links over 2,000 schools worldwide with 11 secondary schools in northern Uganda, creating a partnership that serves to raise the standards and quality of education in each beneficiary school to a nationally competitive level. In just three years, the Schools for Schools program has grown from a simple idea into the largest scale effort to rebuild secondary schools in all of northern Uganda. The thousands of young activists involved in the program have raised \$4.8 million, making them the largest donors to the secondary education system in northern Uganda during this time, outpacing the United States and the United Nations

Schools for Schools by the Numbers

- 11 Partner Schools in Uganda serving a total of 8,000 students
- Over 2,000 fund raising schools worldwide
- \$4.8 million raised in three semesters
- Average student to classroom ratio improved from 183:1 to 94:1
- Safe water coverage improved from 53% in 2007 to 85% in 2009
- 26 new classrooms constructed, 17 more refurbished
- 108 latrine stances constructed, 14 flush toilets refurbished
- Six motorized water systems established, four new boreholes drilled, six more boreholes refurbished

Changes at our Partner Schools

The Schools for Schools program is transforming all eleven of our partner schools, but the campuses of Awere Secondary School and Keyo Secondary School have been especially impacted. These schools have been operating at displaced locations for the last 17 and 21 years respectively because of the war, but are now returning to their original sites thanks to the efforts of the Schools for Schools program.



Three new classroom blocks, a new lab and latrine stances, a motorized borehole and new generator and wiring system that supplies power to all teaching and learning facilities will allow Awere SS to return to its original site (right) from its displace site (left).

The refurbishment of these campuses is not only bringing schools back to their original locations; it is also encouraging entire communities to return to their villages from the Internally Displaced Persons' camps they have been living in for over a decade. The return of a school to its original location has been proven to be the number one reason for families to return to their home villages. Communities returning home means that people are planting once again and no longer relying on handouts of food to survive. It also means the return of commerce, the decline of widespread alcoholism and the revival of the Acholi culture that has been suppressed in many ways over the last 23 years.

Real-Time Web Based Platform

Schools for Schools is unlike any other fundraising program. The Schools for Schools website is the world's first real-time, interactive humanitarian website, where money raised can be viewed as it accumulates. During and after each round of competitive fundraising, students worldwide are able to check the progress of their Ugandan partner school, as well as see proposed implementation projects, student bios and video updates.

Since the fall of 2007, the Schools for Schools site has received over 2 million page views. This is 587% more views than the average site of its size.

Additional Web Statistics: Fall 2007 - Fall 2008:

- 254,071 unique visitors
- 441,609 visits
- 4:29 minute average time spent on site
- \$788,143.47 donated via the site

Implementation

Schools for Schools uses a holistic approach to promote educational development by focusing on six target areas of implementation: construction of facilities, water and sanitation, supply of books and teaching aids, school fees and tuition, teacher capacity and development, and introduction of new technologies. Of the funds that have already been implemented on the ground, 78% has been spent on construction of teaching and learning facilities such as classrooms and laboratories. Fifteen percent has been spent on improving water supply and sanitation, while the remaining costs have covered scholastic materials and teacher training.



The innovative technology used in our Eco-San Latrines (above) does not contaminate groundwater or use precious water resources. These latrines are also cheaper to produce than the traditional pit latrines that previously existed at our partner schools (left).

The Schools for Schools team is committed to researching and implementing the highest quality and most innovative solutions at our partner schools. Some of our newest initiatives include environmentally friendly latrines, rainwater harvesting systems and customized teacher training workshops.

Success Stories

We could not possibly tell all of the success stories that have come out of the Schools for Schools program, but recent events at St. Joseph's Layibi offer some insight into what is happening at all 11 of our partner schools.



Munduga Patrick, the Ugandan Schools for Schools Program Manager has said that nothing excites the Ugandan staff more than seeing the parents at our partner schools taking an interest in their students' education. Soon after seeing the Schools for Schools program construct a laboratory on their children's campus, the parents of St. Joseph's Layibi came together to refurbish two entire dormitories, giving their students a safer place to live and study and letting them know that they are investing in their education. The students at Layibi seem to have gotten the message as they earned the only six university scholarships the Ugandan government awarded in all of northern Uganda last year.

Web Expenses:

We spent \$126,000 reformatting last year's Schools for Schools site and creating an Invisible Children Facebook application to promote Schools for Schools. This money allowed us to completely redesign the website and add school specific videos to each of our partner school pages that gave the international students using the site a more in-depth look at their partner schools than they had ever been afforded. The videos were so popular that they have been integrated back into this year's site.

The Future

Schools for Schools is committed – and will remain continually dedicated – to holistically improving the standards of education in our partner schools. We are simultaneously committed to exposing international students to the harsh realities of this war and empowering them to do something about it. While we have experienced great success on both fronts, we are constantly challenged as this war is not yet over and these schools are still far behind their counterparts in the rest of Uganda. It is this knowledge that keeps us motivated to tell the ever progressing story of these students. We will not rest until this war is over and these institutions are once again performing at a nationally competitive level.