



Canada Africa Community Health Alliance
CACHA



Nikibasika

**Children's
Development Project**

Supporter Update

November 2010

Nikibasika means "it is possible" in *kinyankole*, and it describes what this project is all about. Nikibasika is the home for 51 "orphaned and vulnerable" children in western Uganda, who we are educating and supporting to grow up to be self-sustaining adults who will contribute to their communities.



Yves Precourt rides in the Triadventure with a photo of all of the Nikibasika children for inspiration on his back. See p. 3 for full story.

Moving Beyond Basic Sustenance

Up until 2009, the focus for the Nikibasika project was achieving operational stability and ensuring a reliable funding stream to support shelter, food, medical and school costs for the 51 orphaned and vulnerable children in the project. After 3 years of running the project, we achieved that, and in 2009, using a small grant from Fielding Graduate University called the Elizabeth Douvan Award money as seed funds, we were able to implement a more multi-dimensional strategy. Rather than "merely" supporting the basic needs of the children, we initiated a vision-based program aimed at enabling the children to become self-sustaining adults, with strong ties to their community, a sense of a broader world and their role in it, and a spirit of inquiry into and capacity for changing their worlds.

In 2009, we began holding career development sessions with the older children, and encouraging them to think about the aspects of their worlds they might like to influence or change. When Joel, who is interested in technology, for example, talked about the underdeveloped infrastructure, we encouraged him to explore how Uganda might improve its technological underpinnings, rather than to assume that he necessarily needs to move elsewhere for a meaningful career. Another child began to explore the possibilities of micro-credit to support some of the women in the village of his extended family.

Over 2010, we implemented a more tiered development program, with five streams: career guidance; computer training; arts & crafts; household and life skills; and

Looking for holiday gift ideas?

See page 5 for how you can donate specifics like school supplies, tuition for one child, footballs and shoes as gifts. We'll send you a tax receipt and a note you can provide to the recipient.

Continued on page 2

Development: Continued from page one

community involvement.

The community involvement initiative is a project called “BECO” – the Beautification and Environmental Conservation project – development in partnership with a local NGO. Through BECO, the children of Nikibasika are working with the local municipality to plant trees in the context of learning about climate change and environmental issues. In addition to beginning to locate themselves in a global context and to recognize their role in influencing significant issues, the children are also gaining local recognition, a profound need for previously “invisible” and stigmatized children.

In 2010, we were also able to initiate career guidance and computer training sessions for the 31 children in “Primary 5” and older, and to introduce arts and crafts and life skills workshops. The Arts and Crafts program is aimed at deepening the children’s experience of their cultural history, including sharing different traditional traditions such as dance and music. Our social worker also works with the children to create plays, poetry and art to express their own experiences, and works with them to make meaning of and heal some of their personal traumas.

Similarly, the Life Skills program is a critical part of preparing the children for an independent and sustainable future, teaching children who haven’t lived in a family setting how to do basic household tasks such as shop for food, cook and manage a budget.

Over the next year, we will be adding development sessions on entrepreneurship, and will be initiating a youth leadership program for the senior level secondary school students, where we will provide bursaries to 2 or 3 students each year to attend a youth leadership forum in another part of Africa, with the intention of identifying and supporting the children who will be able to influence generative change in their worlds.

The children who are taken care of within the Nikibasika project had the worst possible beginnings for their lives – poverty, illness, abandonment and violence. Our hope is that we can provide an environment that enables this group of remarkable, ordinary people to enter adulthood equipped to support themselves and to influence the creation of a cross-cultural world that has more options than they were faced with. The foundations laid this year make this a real possibility.



Nikibasika mission

Strong Futures We believe that the best way to provide sustainable support for a community is to enable the leaders of the future. We are committed to helping our children achieve their imagined futures, by providing education, shelter, food, medical care and housing until they are self-sustaining adults. We will support each of them with vocational training, university or the development of a business, to sustain themselves and be leaders in their communities.

These Children as a Family Our focus is on these 51 children, rather than continuing to add new children to the project. We want each member of this group to have the best chance possible, and to feel unique and loved.

Community Connections To help the children learn how they can make a difference in the world, we are partnering with community officials to create volunteer projects for the children. We also encourage the children to stay connected to their communities of origin wherever possible, by spending time with extended family and their home villages on holidays.

TriAdventurers Paddle, Pedal & Power their way to more than \$65,000

For 3 days in August, 42 Canadians became full-time fund-raisers for Nikibasika, running, swimming, paddling and cycling in the annual TriAdventure, raising more than \$65,000. While pushing themselves physically over the three days, the participants also shared the emotion they felt about being so connected to the

children of Nikibasika.

"There was a picture of a girl named Beth in my welcome package," said one participant. "And while I was struggling to run the 15 km, more than I'd ever run before, I was thinking about Beth, and feeling like I could do anything."

Around a campfire on the second night, participants shared how they'd been inspired by the children of Nikibasika, not just in the three day event but over the entire year.

"I hope the children know

how much we learn from them," said Karen Beitel, former Tri-Ad Chair and a key organizer of the event. "It's a two-way street."

Each participant raised at least \$1000 in order to participate, and sponsors provided prizes for the top fundraisers. Robert Goderre won a coveted package from **Intrepid Travel** for raising \$5000, with Danny Nashman, Cate Creede, Stewart Borden and Ian Mahaffy each winning additional prizes donated by **Rubbermaid** and **Solo Bace** hair salon. The \$65,000 raised was two thirds of our annual budget.

The logistically complex event was supported by 7 crew, led by Blair Cox, who provided food, transport and encouragement to the athletes. The first day featured a 3 km swim in Lake Couchiching, then a 15 km run. Camp Wahanowin, which has sponsored the TriAdventure since its inception in 2005, hosted the first day, and

generously provided food and shelter for the participants.

Day two started with everyone crowding into a room for a call to the children of Nikibasika, who spoke briefly and sang. There were a few tears when we hung up, as everyone was reminded about how the funds they raise support specific children. (You can hear an excerpt from our call at triforafrica.org).

The athletes left Wahanowin by canoe and paddled nearly 15 km to Lake Simcoe, where they ate lunch, then cycled to the evening's campsite, Point of Mara park. Taking down tents in the rain the next morning tested everyone's patience, but everyone had the fortitude to cycle the damp 135 km back to Toronto. The return to the 519 Community Centre, where family and friends greeted the athletes, was emotional and satisfying for everyone.

"I participate in the TriAdventure because I can," said Mohan Sharma, this year's Chair. "I get caught up in the day-to-day grind, and a dose of reality about other people, their families, and entire communities in Africa that are struggling with war, poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic reminds me of what matters most. I can't sit back and do nothing. I'm hard pressed to think of a better way to help than by participating in athletic

TriAdventure participants and crew, at Camp Wahanowin



Nikibasika \$\$ facts

A volunteer group of four people in Canada manages the project and raises funds. Our Canadian partner, the Canada Africa Community Health Alliance (CACHA) provides oversight and accountability and enables us to provide charitable tax receipts to donors. Our Ugandan partner, Reach the Youth, provides us with on the ground support, acts as the employer of the Nikibasika staff in Kasese, and provides accountability for spending.

1 Budget

Our total budget for the project is approximately \$90,000 Cdn per year. Exact costs shift as food, transportation and exchange rates change.

Funding

2 We have no steady or public sources of funding. Since 2008, we've been supported for the majority of our funds by individual donors and through two sources: the TriAdventure fundraiser (www.triforafrica.org) and Brendan Wood International. This year Nikibasika was the sole beneficiary of the Tri-Ad, which took place August 20-22.

How we use funds

3 90% of the funds we raise go directly to the Nikibasika operational budget, with the remaining 10% supporting the core programs of our umbrella agency, the **Canada Africa Community Health Alliance**.

Demographics of Nikibasika in 2010:

24 Primary school children
23 Secondary school children
4 Young adults in post-secondary learning: 2 in University, 1 in Driver school and 1 in Hairdressing training.

Pictured at the right are Elinah (right) and Annet, two of the children in post-secondary learning. Elinah is in university in Kampala, while Annet is studying hairdressing.



Several of the middle school girls demonstrate a traditional dance learned by one girl in her home village; sharing these dances is one way of weaving diverse cultures together.

Make a Designated Donation to Nikibasika, and we'll provide you with a Gift Card

We've had several requests to donate "specific gifts" to Nikibasika as holiday commemorations. If you would like to support Nikibasika with a specific item such as school supplies, tuition for one child, footballs or shoes, we'll create a customized card to acknowledge the gift.

See costs in the sidebar, and send an email to: cate.creede@gmail.com Indicate the item you'd like and the name of the recipient and how you would like to pay. We'll email you back a customized card; if you're a Canadian resident, you'll also get a tax receipt.

THANKS SO MUCH!

Gift options....

\$25 Textbooks for one secondary school child

\$30 Football or netball

\$30 Shoes for two primary children

\$40 School uniform for one child

\$50 Set of "dress" clothing for two children

\$100 Food budget for one week

\$135 School fees for one year for one primary school child

\$266 School fees for one term for one secondary school child (\$798 for the year)

Special Thanks

We are grateful to so many people who make this project possible. We particularly want to recognize:

Brendan Wood International, which has supported Nikibasika with significant donations for the past 4 years. We are especially personally grateful to Brendan Wood and Stewart Borden for their tireless support.

The **Canada Africa Community Health Alliance**, especially Jean-Charles Le Vallée and Jimmy Sebulime, who provide advice and a lot of thankless administrative support on our financials.

The **Tri-Adventure team**, especially Blair Cox, Karen Beitel, Mohan Sharma and Raymond Helkio, among the many others who make an inspiring fundraiser every year.

The **Libby Douvan Award**, from Fielding Graduate University, which provided \$1000 in seed money for the development project we initiated this year.

TO DONATE TO NIKIBASIKA:

Online: <http://cacha.ca/donate>

Make sure to choose Nikibasika in the dropdown project menu.

Mail:

Canada Africa Community Health Alliance
1 Nicholas St., Suite 300
Ottawa ON K1N 7B7

Make sure to write Nikibasika on the project line of your cheque.

Thank you!

Cate Creede, Danny Nashman & Carissa Reiniger, Co-Leads

For more information: