

No Need for More Money, Uganda Partner Tells LWR

[The following is a news release from Lutheran World Relief]

Note: *The ELCA communicators visited Kiterrede Vocational Institute during their trip to East Africa.*

Baltimore, May 21, 2004 – "We don't need your money anymore.' That's a sentence I love to hear because it's really a sign of equitable partnership," said Evariste Karangwa, director of LWR's Africa program. "I just heard it in Uganda."

Karangwa recently visited LWR partner Kiterrede Vocational Institute, a school and home for AIDS orphans and youth from impoverished families in southern Uganda.

KVI started out as a homespun school struggling to survive like the often-troubled teenagers it serves. In a district where one person in ten is an AIDS orphan, students learned construction skills to support themselves and their families. But by the late 1990s, when LWR began a partnership with KVI, the challenges of staying open had almost overwhelmed the institution.

Today KVI has nearly 300 students. Instructors, courses and exams now have government certification. The students always grew their own food, but now they also produce vegetables and milk for sale locally. Students have built the new buildings on campus. When they graduate, a revolving loan fund helps buy tools and equipment for their new trades. Some start small businesses. Others go on to become civil engineers, thanks to KVI's new affiliation with a technical university.

What is more, over a third of KVI's students are now girls - a key indicator of social change that is essential for lasting development in a society.

Brother Hillary Kazoora, school principal and the person who said KVI no longer needs LWR's money, is quick to credit LWR for part of the school's success. "Our relationship is a partnership based on mutual learning, networking and information exchange," he says. "It's brotherly."