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**PURCHASE OF EIGHTY (80) PLASTIC CHAIRS FOR  
LUMOTIA WOMEN'S GROUP  
ESABALU, LUANDA**

**A REPORT TO SI, AARHUS CLUB  
DANISH UNION  
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## Background

Esabalu village is located in Vihiga County, Luanda Constituency within the Lake Victoria Basin in Kenya. The 30 members of the active Lumotia Women's Group reside in this village. This Self Help Group (SHG) was formed and nurtured by these rural women to empower themselves both economically and socially. It has resulted in their ability to influence and make decisions and increased their self confidence. SHGs give benefit not only to the individual women but also to their families and community as a whole through collective action for development.

In 2012, SI, Aarhus Club supported the Lumotia Womens' group to purchase and install 9 water tanks for rain water harvesting in individual homesteads. The Women were also trained on the management of dairy goats before receiving a male and female goat. Two springs in the village were rehabilitated with support from SI, Aarhus Club. Through the Danish Union, 20 women received 20 solar lanterns which they also use to charge mobile phones for neighbours at a small fee. Each beneficiary had to plant at least 50 tree seedlings in her compound. The recruitment rate of the trees is more than 90%. Two of the women also had energy saving stoves "jiko kisasa" installed in their kitchens as a pilot project.



On 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2015, Hanne Jensbo, Kirsten Lundburg and Andreas Lundburg were able to inspect the projects and interview some of the beneficiaries.

A long walk across the rough village terrain brought us to the Kwa Ogweyo Spring which still requires further rehabilitation to serve the community better. Currently there is only one

outlet pipe. Women and girls have to queue for long hours to await their turn to fetch the water and carry it home on the head in 20 litre plastic jerricans. The time spent in this activity could be used in more productive ventures.





SI, Kisumu Club members and the guests listened informally to members of Lumotia Women's Group in order to determine the areas in which they have a common desire to make a change. Communication channels were kept open and divergent views were appreciated. One of the changes the group agreed on was overcoming the socio-economic and environmental challenges facing the community. This

requires concerted efforts to adopt alternative livelihood practices to reduce over-dependence on the already strained natural resource base. The women expressed the desire to expand their business of hiring out tents and chairs during social functions (funerals, weddings, parties, community meetings, etc.) which are common events in Esabalu village and its environs. It is only when the living standards of community members improve that the threat posed to the environment is reduced.

### **Purchase of the chairs**

A proposal on the same was jointly developed by Lumotia Women's Group and SI, Kisumu Club. SI, Aarhus Club supported this venture by donating a generous amount of USD 770. 80 plastic chairs were purchased on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2015 by the PD, Dolphine Anyango who worked closely with the treasurer Margaret Rambo. Jeremiah Ochieng, (Director, The Smiling School) was kind enough to pick the chairs from Kisumu and coordinate the transportation to Esabalu village on behalf of the women.

### **The handing over ceremony**

On 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2015, the Secretary, Mary Adada, PD, Dolphine Anyango and our new member, Janet Adhiambo drove out to Esabalu Village. The venue was The Smiling School. This is the regular meeting place for the Lumotia Women's Group. The chairs were officially handed over to the women. The SI, Kisumu Club members present at the function reiterated the importance of cooperation and collective responsibility in managing the properties of the group to ensure that each and every member derives benefits from the same in their quest to build a social enterprise.







“We are overwhelmed by the generosity of SI, Aarhus Club members. The funds generated from the same will empower the women economically and enable them to take better care of their families and send the children to school,” reckoned the Chairlady, Isabella.

All the women were in agreement that SI had touched each and every life in their families, especially the lives of women and girls.







**In line with the Kenyan culture**

“Visitors in Kenya never leave the homestead empty handed”. Lumotia Women’s group gave us a feathery send off with 3 live chicken. What a great honour! Thank you SI, Aarhus members for the reflected glory! May our partnership be long – lived as we touch the lives of women and girls.....one village at a time!

“Thank you Lumotia Women’s Group!” says Janet



**THANK YOU SI, AARHUS CLUB!**

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge the following people:

- SI, Aarhus Club members for supporting Lumotia Women's Group. Thank you Hanne Jensbo, Kirsten Lundburg and Andreas Lundburg for visiting Lumotia Women's Group. Thank you so much Hanne for the timely disbursement of the funds and for your constant email communication on the same.
- All the SI, Kisumu Club members. Your tireless contributions both in cash and kind are commendable to say the least. Special thanks to the members at the helm, President Mary Akunja and President Elect, Edna Tado; the Secretary Mary Adada and our new member Janet Adhiambo for gracing the official handing over ceremony of the chairs to Lumotia Women's group; the Club treasurer Margaret Rambo for her dedication and financial diligence.
- Jeremiah Ochieng, Director, The Smiling School, for supporting the Lumotia Women's Group and providing a safe storage space for the chairs.
- All the members of the Lumotia Women's Group. Your desire to drive your own development agenda is very encouraging.
- The Chairlady, Lumotia Women's group for your able leadership and dedication towards improving the lives of girls and women in the village.