**DRESSMAKING AND TAILORING CENTRE**

**Overview:** An application from Progressive Volunteers for $18,020 grant to expand dressmaking and tailoring training centre in the Mathare North slum in north-east Nairobi, Kenya.

1. **Progressive Volunteers – who we are, where we work and the communities we serve.**

Progressive Volunteers (PV) is a community-based organisation established in 2007 working to promote community development initiatives through volunteerism in Ruaraka Constituency, Nairobi. The organization’s work is to meet the critical needs of people living in five deprived neighbourhoods in north-east Nairobi. The communities – Mathare North, Babadogo, Korogocho, Lucky Summer and Utalii – collectively make up Ruaraka constituency and are officially home to 201,500 people though the real figure is likely to be much higher given the complexities of counting populations in slum areas. The demographics of the local area mean that Progressive Volunteers by default focuses much of its work on the needs of children and young people which in Kenya extends to 34 years of age.

PV works with a diverse range of some of Ruaraka’s most deprived and vulnerable communities, running projects under the 5 theme areas of education and empowerment, skills and economic opportunities, sanitation and environment, community health(including HIV and AIDS) and lastly peace and safety. Some of the projects include:

* Successfully piloted micro-credit project which benefited 15 youth;
* Support to four non-formal schools; Emmaus Education Centre, Precious Kids Academy, Lucy Education Centre and Glorious Friends High School in Ruaraka with 352 text books and volunteer teachers.
* Established a community library with over 2000 books
* Trained 890 school students on Gender Based Violence in School environment.
* Planted over 300 trees along Nairobi River and Mathare North Primary School.
* Trained 32 Ruaraka Community Health Workers (CHWs) on community first aid.
* Hosted International Volunteer Day celebrations in Kenya in 2010 at Mathare North Health Centre and in 2012 in Korogocho Slums.
* Development and launch of  organization Strategic Plan for 2014-2018

The governance of PV consists of a management team of volunteers responsible for the day-to-day running of projects and a board which provides strategic direction and oversight. More details of our work can be found at our website: <http://www.progressivevolunteers.or.ke/>. PV in 2011 partnered with GlobalGiving Foundation and has been supported by individual donors and volunteers from USA, Canada, Europe, India, and Australia among others.

1. **The problem our project is addressing**

Looking beyond the deprivation of Nairobi’s slums, one of the biggest problems facing communities is a lack of economic opportunities. In many cases people do not have the skills or resources to access employment or generate their own income, despite having the ambition to do so. In other cases there are those with skills who simply cannot find work. The national unemployment rate is currently estimated to stand at 40% although it is likely to be significantly higher in urban slum areas.

The dressmaking and tailoring training centre will therefore primarily tackle the problems of low practical skill levels and a lack of income generating opportunities for our target group especially the women who drop out of school due to early pregnancies, widowed, house wives, youth, single mothers etc. However, as Progressive Volunteers is committed to long-term sustainable solutions that create real alternatives to a life of poverty, the project will be used to address other societal problems. For example, the classes will be targeted at women and young people in order to empower underprivileged groups. We will also use our experience in other programme areas such as health to run additional sessions with classes on sexual health and drug and substance abuse, life skills and behaviour change development.

1. **Our project – the Mathare North Dressmaking and Tailoring Training Centre**

A grant of $18,020 would allow us expand the training centre by purchasing the necessary sewing machines and cover the operating costs for the dressmaking and tailoring training centre. A secured centre has been established with seven machines in the Mathare North neighbourhood and five professional tutors identified in the local community are training the beneficiaries. All that is lacking is the capital to expand the centre to meet the huge demands from the community.

The centre focuses on running classes for women and young people (in particular young single mothers) to give them the skills necessary to find future employment or generate extra income. PV envisaged that classes will last for 4 months, after which PV will work with the participants and assess whether they may be eligible for a micro-credit loan, either through a micro-finance institution or through PV’s own grant initiative. It is also expected that some participants may help in the future running of classes at the centre and others though our partnership with Ruaraka Business Community (RUBICOM) help seek employment from the Export Processing zones (EPZs industries) in Ruaraka.

To ensure the sustainability of the project beyond the grant, once the big centre is up and running, we will look to either opening an accompanying shop as a social enterprise, where products can be sold and proceeds invested back into the centre and community service. There are also possibilities to add on additional skills training such as hairdressing and IT.

1. **The beneficiaries of the project**

Initial planning estimated that the dressmaking and tailoring training centre will directly benefit 120 – 150 people per year. This figure is based on there being 3 classes of 15 people a day (morning, afternoon and evening) with beginner courses lasting 4 months.

With the expanded project, we plan to directly benefit 300 women per year. Once participants have completed the course it is hoped that some will be able to find employment, others may be able to start their own (micro) business from home and some will help in the running of future classes.

The 3 classes will also be focused on addressing the needs of particularly vulnerable and disempowered groups. These will primarily be women (particularly single mothers) and young people with low skills levels. PV is also committed to working with those suffering from HIV and AIDS and it is hoped that women living with the virus will have an opportunity to take part. Progressive Volunteers will work with community organizations, local administrators and other local leaders to help in targeting the classes at potential participants.

There are a number of anticipated indirect beneficiaries from the project including the families of those taking part who will hopefully see an improved quality of life and potential employment of participants who go on to establish their own businesses or get employment with EPZs industries in Ruaraka.

1. **Project budget**

The grant would cover the main expansion costs in terms of equipment and tools, room rental, cloths (materials), furnishings (tables and chairs) and local authority permit. These costs are calculated below.

**Project budget**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project equipment/activity** | **No.** | **Unit Cost ($)** | | **Cost ($)** |
| Straight Sewing machines (Manual) | 10 | 200 | | 2000 |
| Straight sewing machine (Electric) | 10 | 360 | | 3600 |
| Over-lock machine | 3 | 600 | | 1800 |
| Kansai Special Industrial machine | 2 | 1175 | | 2350 |
| Room rental for 2 years lease | 24 | 105 | | 2520 |
| Electricity bills per month | 24 | 100 | | 2400 |
| Instructors (Trainers allowances) | 15 | 130 | | 1950 |
| Materials | | | | 1000 |
| Furnishings (table and chairs) | | | | 400 |
|  | | | **Tota**l | **18,020** |