A GRANT PROPOSAL TO SUPPORT THE ROOTS PROJECT OF SOUTH SUDAN

JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN

submission date: May 5, 2016

BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES OF THE PROJECT

2016-17

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $37,000

CONTACT PERSON: NGBABARE SUSAN
OPENING STATEMENT

Roots of South Sudan is a local grass-root women’s organization based in Juba, South Sudan. The project supports women and youth to be economically empowered through arts, crafting and tailoring. The women who work at the Roots center represent all the different tribes in South Sudan. They come together and engage in traditional beading to earn a living while providing for their families. In the past, some of these women worked as cooks for the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) during the civil that lasted for more than two decades. After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) which marked the end of the civil war in 2005, many of these women were demobilized from the military and so most of the decided to stay home and take care of their families.

The Roots of South Sudan serves as a meeting point where women come every day and spend times talking and making traditional beads. Some of the items that they make include: necklaces, belts, headpieces, bracelets, purses, and earrings. The Roots center provides administrative support, facilitates grants, accepts donations from well-wishers, and organizes events to create awareness and to raise funds. They also publish and market the products made to support the women and the operation of center. This grant proposal is requesting for $37,000 USD to support the activities and to maintain the smooth operation that will help realize the long term development goal of the center. In particular, this grant requests funding for developing the training activities part of the project.

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND FUNDING RATIONALE

South Sudan is made up of sixty-two tribes and is ethnically and culturally diverse compared to other countries on the continent. Although there are some similarities among these ethnicities, each of them is bound by a unique system of social structure, tradition and a great sense
of identity. The political environment of the country has been unstable for a very long time and efforts by foreign governments and humanitarian agencies have been inadequate in restoring peace and reconciliation among its people. The diversity of the country poses a potential risk to economic growth as well. As Kozan (1998) discusses in his article, ethnic division impedes peaceful coexistence; he therefore calls for a holistic model that promotes peace and harmony among the people. The long standing political instability in the country is narrowly defined along ethnic hostilities presenting either opportunities or threats to its progress.

According to the World Bank (2015), fifty-one per cent of the country’s population lives on less than two dollars per day and the humanitarian situation is deteriorating with women and children being those most affected. After fifty years of conflict, the country continues to harbor tribal classes. Incidences of poverty are very high with eighty-three percent of the poor from rural areas migrating to the urban centers. Illiteracy is an issue with only 27 percent of the population age fifteen years and above having basic education and gender disparities are significant (World Bank 2015). The majority of girls get married between the ages of thirteen and fourteen years old.

Additionally, a recent report by the World Bank (2015) indicates that there is a huge gender disparity. Women make up 60% of the population of South Sudan. The ongoing conflict is part of the longest civil war in the history of Africa and has lasted for more than two decades. The unstable political environment has affected women and stripped them off of their rights. The male dominated society makes it difficult for women to be part of important decision making processes both in public and private (Ali, 2011). The restricted traditional roles of women discriminate against and limit their ability to actively contribute to the overall development progress of the country. South Sudan has the highest rate of illiteracy with women accounting for 90% of the illiterate. The signing of CPA brought some changes in the lives of women, but school enrollment
of girls remains at 37%, significantly lower than that of boys (Ali, 2011), making progress for women difficult. The result of these compelling issues is frustrating. The current political condition of South Sudan continues to affect and deprive women’s access to basic services.

However, the diversity of the country is embodied in arts and crafts which can be seen as a totem of peace and unity. The perceived relationship between ethnic groups and between men and women can be bridged through arts, presenting opportunities for inclusion and growth. One of the major threats to national building is government failure to create a balance among ethnic groups through national cohesion (Jok, 2011). According to Jok (2011) a multiethnic society has a strong correlation in terms of political, equitable and vibrant coexistence among the people of South Sudan. The question of how the country can move forward with its development plans is deeply rooted in cultural diversity. A scenario where all the different tribes come together and form one identity that will reduce the level of suspicions and hatreds among its people while giving women an opportunity to become economically empowered.

Kabeer (2005) defined women’s empowerment as self-generating efforts constructed, initiated and directed by those whose interest it is meant to serve. According to her, empowerment should not be considered a charitable program, rather, it should be self-driven and sustaining especially by those benefiting from it. The term empowerment has become popular and commonly deployed by the international government agencies and organizations working around making a difference in the lives of those deemed to be poor. Kabeer argued that through empowerment, women are able to challenge and transform the biased gender binary that has victimized women in the society.
Arts and crafts have been identified as means that support and strengthen the cultural heritage of the society. Jones et al. (1996) argued that people who entirely depend on subsistence farming tend to invest more time crafting during dry seasons as they wait for the rain season to kick in. According to the authors, crafts centers have become major proponents that provide opportunities for personal development and creativity for people from different cultures and traditions, including women. Bringing women together through arts and crafts helps in breaking the deep rooted cultural barriers while at the same time, promoting a peaceful coexistence among communities who are ethnically diverse.

For instance, Segalo (2011), conducted research on how a similar embroidery project in post-apartheid South Africa impacted women’s lives whose voices and contributions were highly ignored during and soon after the colonial times. According to her findings, women who worked for the project narrated their stories of subjection and how it helped them to challenge the gender divisions and racial discrimination. These women came together and stitched baskets and bags that were sold to the international market. In return, they were able to contribute their families and earned respect as women in their respective communities. Moreover, women’s participation in this project transformed the perceived image of women as objects into more responsible citizens who paid taxes and contributed to the country’s economic growth.

Additionally, Gombe (2012) illustrated his result from a study conducted involving an equal number of both men and women from two different ethnic groups in rural Uganda to measure the feasibility of local knowledge and skills through economic empowerment. The purpose of this research compared income generated by pottery makers, and that of monthly salaries earned by graduates in government paid jobs. According to his reports, indigenous crafts gave local women
an opportunity to learn and appreciate cultural diversity and promote self-employment needed for individual growth, community awareness and economic growth of the country.

One lesson from Gombe (2012)’s article is that artisanal work is a good source of employment that empowers both skilled and unskilled women to enjoy a good standard of living especially in developing countries where access to education is scarce. Gombe (2012) concluded that pottery provided good amount of money that benefited poor families hence a viable mean of empowerment for socio-economic change and development. Furthermore, women who participated in this study admitted that they were able to meet their essential needs especially with things such as paying for their children tuition fees, clothing and food.

Crafts have become a popular technique for women’s empowerment. Maidment & Macfarlane (2011) carried out a research in Victoria, Australia. The study focused on elderly women who joined together in crafting as a way of supporting themselves. Drawing from their findings, they concluded that crafting offered social networks, fundraising, and learning opportunities to the spirited and committed number of women who participated in community activities. For Maidment & Macfarlane (2011), there was a clear connection among the women who participated and organized the informal community craftworks. What is interesting is the fact that these women were mostly old and spoke different languages, yet they were able to use crafts to share their values and customs.

It is evident that the stories and experiences of women’s involvement in crafts plays an integral role in fostering economic independence and growth. Although the majority of crafting centers involve primarily women, most of them do not employ a feminist ideology. Instead, the group exerts principles of empowerment and the desire for self-realization of the community as a
whole. Advocacy for women’s and gender equality should reflect and value the indigenous local culture, especially in a war wrecked country like South Sudan.

Given the political, social, economic and cultural condition of South Sudan, arts appear to be a useful technique for women’s economic empowerment. The political upheavals and the rigidities of a male predominated society have divided and victimized women. The Roots project encourages women to have one voice through arts and crafts while at the same time, gain access to basic services such as income, education, socio-cultural and well-balanced diet. Learning from countries like South Africa and Uganda, South Sudan, has a great potential to benefit from crafts.

The diverse culture of each of the ethnic group can have direct influence in the lives of the women. The roots of South Sudan create an avenue where women can voice and share social problems affecting. The center brings women together and grants them a chance to learn, earn a living and to be able to support their families. As such, arts and crafting has the potential to contribute to women’s economic empowerment in a way that will help women craft the new nation of South Sudan, while at the same time, preserve the tradition and restoring peace among the people.

By applying this concept, the purpose of this grant is to support and increase the capacity of the Roots Project to continue helping the women of South Sudan help themselves. The main goal of the project is to empower women to become financially independent through arts and crafts. In order to achieve to this, the aim of the center is to create a safe and conducive environment that will accommodate the need of these women and their children. The people who will benefit from this project are women over the age of 15. Most of these women are ex-combatants, housewives, widows, single mothers, divorcees and school dropouts. At the initial stage of the project, the center had very few women involved but as of now, the center has of about 60 women and this
number continues to increase. As the number of women increases, the demand to accommodate this growing number is a challenge that the center must address immediately.

THE ORGANIZATION

Roots of South Sudan is wholly a South Sudanese non-profit organization devoted to helping women and children. The Roots of South Sudan was registered in the United States on March 3, 2011 and became a member of a State Washington non-profit 501(c) 3 organization on March 30, 2011. Under the non-profit 501 (c) 3, member organizations are permitted to raise funds by receiving public and private grant money and not be taxed on money that is made. The organization was registered in the United States as a foreign non-profit organization because of the high cost associated with registering it in South Sudan. There was also the crucial element of tax exemption, transparency, and accountability under the non-profit law governing the states under consideration.

The Roots of South Sudan is locally owned in South Sudan and has its office located in Juba – the capital city of South Sudan. The center is run and managed by a well structured and qualified employees responsible for planning and controlling the day-to-day activities pertaining to the organization. The center currently has close to seventy women working and attending classes to learn basic concepts in English, Math and accounting. The center is responsible for facilitating donations and raising funds to support its operation. The Roots of South Sudan consists of board of directors who are appointed to oversee the operations of the organization to ensure that the goal is achieved. The Roots of South Sudan is well established and work closely with other organizations both locally and internationally to market and sell the products made by women. The Roots of South Sudan, supported by its strong and committed board of directors, is responsible for
managing and maintaining the smooth operation of the organization. Below is a brief description of the roles and responsibilities of each category of shareholder.

**The Board of Directors**

The Roots of South Sudan has a ten-member board of directors who have immeasurable experience working overseas for some of the most reputable non-profit organizations. One of the valuable assets that the center has is the constitution of the board of directors. The founder for instance, is a woman and a national of South Sudan. The organization is locally owned and a third of the board of directors are women. Members of the board of directors have diverse backgrounds and experiences working in different countries around the world. The board of directors is headed by the president and composed of a treasurer, one secretary, and six directors, five of whom are women. The function of the board of directors is to oversees the all the activities that are undertaken by the organization.

**Local and international donors**

The organization works closely with various stakeholders who are critical to the successful operation of the organization. Since the inception of the project in 2004, the center has received funding from local and international donors to support the organization socially and financially. Some of these organizations include: The French Embassy to South Sudan, PACT, the Van Arden Fund of the Tides Foundation, Norwegian Peoples Aid, UNWomen, UNESCO, UN mission to South Sudan, and other private donors.

**The staff at the center**

The center hires qualified and motivated staff who are responsible for the running of day-to-day activities. The organization is made up of one office manager assisted by the office
assistants, the sales and market personnel, head cooks, part-time instructors, and cleaners for maintenance purposes.

**The beneficiaries**

The Roots Project currently has approximately 60 women and 15 children receiving assistance from the center. These women play an integral role in the overall activities and function of the center. Without them, the organization cannot exist. The passion and the unique characteristics of each of these women is what makes the organization viable. These women dedicate their time and work five days a week making beautiful traditional beads which are marketed and sold in the market. The different and beautiful fashions of the beads that are made are sold locally and internationally to generate income for the women and the center.

**CURRENT ACTIVITIES**

The Roots Project is the only local women’s organization in the South Sudan that promotes and empowers women through arts work. In order to achieve this goal, the organization undertakes different activities to ensure that women get the desired training and skills that they require to perform well in their respective roles and responsibilities. The activities that the Roots Project undertakes vary and each of these activities is evaluated to measure the expected outcome against the actual inputs.

**Fundraising events and donations from well-wishers**

Throughout the year, the Roots Project hosts several social events and works with volunteers and other local partners to request for grants as part of its initiatives to raise money to run the organization. These events are sometimes held at the center or any available conference identified within Juba. The organization was formed five years ago and has not been able to have a stable financial system. Due to the presence of political conflict, the economy collapsed and the
demand for the products made at the center drastically dropped. For the organization to function well, it requires a sound financial plans and support from the government.

The Roots Project also provides the information needed by volunteers to identify potential donors and to submit grants for proposal. The Roots of South Sudan also partners with other small non-government organizations that have similar goals and good financial history to apply for grants. In-kind donations from private financial institutions like the Kenya commercial Bank and Equity as part of their corporate social responsibility are also welcomed.

One of the social events that the center organizes is the annual fundraising event called the ROOTS JAM for which participants pay for dinner. The event is graced by different colorful performances which include a talent show, modeling and fashion show, music as well as traditional dance and performance by the women. The Roots project also forms partnerships and participates in international fairs such as the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market to sell jewelry. The organization also has created a gift shop at the center and distributes its products for sales in homes and local shops throughout the country. The immediate outcome of this activity is the increasing awareness to raise public support and increase sales to generate more money needed to facilitate the smooth of operation of the center.

**Recruiting and training of the participants at the center**

A second activity which the Roots of South Sudan engages in is the recruiting and training of women to participate in center activities. The women who work at the center represent a majority of the different ethnic groups in South Sudan. As part of the organization’s policy, the center recruit women based on the unique characteristics and styles of beading that represent each tribe. These women are accepted on the basis of what they can bring to the organization that others do not have. Once the women have been accepted to work at the center, they are divided into small
groups of 5-10 and trained according to their specific skills. After the training is completed, they are assembled to work on each of the different activities of beadings. The ones who are very good at beading are encouraged to share their experiences with others.

Secondly, the Roots project also runs adult literacy programs that gives the women the opportunity to learn in the classrooms. The subjects that are taught include English, Arabic, mathematics, commerce and tailoring. The center hires part-time private instructors and volunteers to teach the women how to read and write, and at the same time, acquire some basic skills in business and tailoring. It also provides Summer internship openings for graduate students around the world who are willing to spend their Summer teaching English as a foreign language to these women. The Summer English program is usually very intensive and the volunteers are required to engage in creative learning activities to enable the women grasp concepts very quickly. The center has well established classrooms and learning materials and administers exams to assess the progress made at the end of each program.

**Child Daycare Service**

The Roots of South Sudan also undertakes day care services to accommodate women who are breastfeeding or those with children under the age of five years old. The majority of the women working at the center have two children who are below the age of five, while others are breastfeeding. Because most of the women working at the Roots center are either divorcees or single women struggling to raise children by themselves, the Roots project decided to create a daycare service within the premises of the center to allow these women to concentrate on beadwork while staying close to their children all day long. The organization hires local women who cannot bead but have some education background to babysit the children of those women who work full
time at the center. Since these babysitters are educated, they are expected to teach numbers and words and read stories to the children.

Similarly, the organization has a full meal plan to feed the women and their children three times a day. With the help of qualified and experienced cooks, women are provided for a well-balanced diet through meals in the morning, lunch and dinner time throughout the week. The cooks have a well developed menu to ensure that the meals prepared have the required amount of proteins and other nutritional values. The center also has good connections with local food suppliers that supply food items on weekly basis to ensure that it does not run short of enough food to feed the women. Apart from just enjoying the food at the center, women are also encouraged to learn basic ways to prepare healthier meals for their families. These activities, however, are currently being undertaken to strengthen the capacity and to support the organization to achieve its long term goal.

**PROPOSAL FOR EXPANDING THE TRAINING ACTIVITY**

The ongoing political violence has contributed to the increasing number of women joining the Roots center everyday. The organization is getting bigger and bigger as more women and children come to seek help from the center. Funds are limited to support the operation and development of the organization effectively. The challenges that are currently facing the organization are diverse and continue to affect opportunity for future growth and development of the center. The unstable political environment has, in turn, resulted in market failure leading to the decline of demand for and supply of tradition beads made and sold locally and even internationally. The rise in cost of living and increasing cases of hunger throughout the country is affecting the performance of the Roots Project to financially sustain its current activities.

Although the center has some general funds to run the project, additional funding is needed to sustain its operation in the short run and to absorb the sharp increase in the number of vulnerable
women coming to the center. Due to this fact, this proposal requests funding of $37,000 USD to support the training of an additional 60 women over the course of one year. These trainings will help to absorb the demand currently placed on the center by women who want to become involved and will also ideally lead to greater sustainability of the organization through increased productivity. Three training sessions will be conducted during the course of the year, each with 20 women. Each session will last for a period of 10 days. Although the the Roots project has some general funding, it is not sufficient to provide training for the incoming women and childcare for their children.

The condition at the center is worsening everyday and the Roots project must derive an effective way to respond to this problem. As the organization straggles to provide for basic needs such as food, maintenance, and space to accommodate these women, identifying and designing different ways of contributing to the building and strengthening the capacity of the organization is an important step that this proposal is suggesting.

**IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY**

The goal of the Roots Project is to promote economic independence among women in South Sudan. The proposed activity will strengthen the management capacity to delivery services in the most efficient and effective way. At the beginning of the program, 60 women would be trained and would acquire new skills to enable them work independently with minimum supervision. The amount requested for would be used to improve back office operations such as paying the women and employees. With additional training, participants will become more passionate and motivated to make new and quality products that are appealing to the market and to maximize profit for the organization. As the center expands and sells new and quality products, women will earn extra income and to be able to provided enough food and school fees for their families. Developing and
training the staff will help expand the organizational capacity as women may become entrepreneurs and start their beading business in the future.

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

The aim of the Roots Projects is to be self-sufficient and sustaining in the long run. However, as a small organization, there are still a number of challenges affecting the ability of the center to support itself without assistance. The donations and funds that the organization receives go to supporting and maintaining the operation of the center. Part of this money is also used purchase new equipment, office supplies and administrative cost. Most importantly, some of the money is used to pay the women working at the center. Since the project started, $258,550 in income has been earned by members between the year of 2011 – 2014 and close to 75 women have received emergency financial support. Therefore, the proposed of $37,000 USD is needed for training and upgrading some of the current activities that the center undertakes to raise funds. The amount requested will be used to facilitate the training of additional 60 women; child day care and meal plans during the training; payments to the trainers and trainees; and additional babysitters to take care of the children during the training period. To further illustrate this, a detailed descriptions of the budget is providing below.

**BUDGET PROPOSAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity /Item description</th>
<th>Total ($USD) $37,000</th>
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</table>


1. Training of 60 additional women for ten days (10 days)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Room</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stipends to participants</td>
<td>$8,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowance for instructors</td>
<td>$5,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 meals plan per day</td>
<td>$8,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training materials (books, pens, folder, markers,</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$25,500.00</strong></td>
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2. Child day care service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children's meal</td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages for 3 babysitters</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,500.00</strong></td>
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</table>

**Overall Total Project Cost**  
**$37,000.00**

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION: USING THE LOGIC FRAMEWORK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>outputs</th>
<th>Immediate outcomes</th>
<th>Intermediate results</th>
<th>Target results</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity #1: Recruitment and Training</td>
<td>Ten days of intensive training of 60 women between the age of 15-65 on how to make different beads. Trainers educate women on how to make different types of beads. Trainers educate women about how to enroll in English, Business, and Math courses, and discuss the potential impacts of these classes. Workshops take place for women to share their stories. Ten days of babysitting for participants’ children between the age of 0-5 year old.</td>
<td>Sixty women are trained, sharing their expertise and learning to make different beads. Sixty women understand how to make different designs of beads. Sixty additional women are employed at Roots of South Sudan as beaders. Motivated workers willing readily to work independently. Sixty additional women enroll in English, Business, and Math classes.</td>
<td>Increased women’s participation. Increased necklaces, earrings or traditional purses produced by Roots of South Sudan. Increase literacy rate among women. Economic activities improved.</td>
<td>Increased economic independence among women. Increased literacy among women in South Sudan. Increased sustainability of the Roots of South Sudan organization.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

$37,000 invested

Sixty women between the age of 15-65 are to be trained.

$11,500 invested in meals and baby sitters for 30 children.
Reference


COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Risa Whitson, Ph.D – Chair of the committee
Associate Professor
Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies
Ohio University
3740-593-1144 and 740-593-4686
31 S. Court Street
whitson@ohio.edu

Julia A Paxton Pagan, Ph.D – Committee Member
Professor
Department of Economics
Ohio University
740-597-1249
Bentley Annex 329 Athens, OH 45701
paxton@ohio.edu

Edna Elizabeth Wangui, Ph.D – Committee Member
Associate Professor
Department of Geography
Ohio University
740-593-1097
Clippinger Lab 106 Athens, OH 45701
wangui@ohio.edu