

Brenda School of Tailoring is transforming lives in Congo!

In 2006, ALARM-Congo launched a project aimed at helping women in poverty by teaching them how to make clothes and helping them start a micro-business. The goal is to create productive, self-reliant women that will have a positive impact on their community.

Mrs. Bateya, gives a living testimony of how her training in the Brenda School has changed her from a beggar to a breadwinner for her husband and children.

“Before training at Brenda School of Tailoring, my family was living miserably. I used to complain about life, and begging for food to take home for my family. Today I am no longer begging because ALARM has changed my life,” says Bateya. “I am proudly using the knowledge I acquired at Brenda and the sewing machine ALARM donated to me as a graduation gift. My husband has a small salary that’s irregular but now I am able to provide food for my family.”

The Brenda School is a 9-month program that teaches women tailoring skills. They start learning to make infant and children’s clothing and eventually graduate to women’s dresses and clothes. The curriculum meets the government’s standards, and women receive a government certificate upon graduation.

One of the ways the school blesses its students is to donate a new sewing machine with a sewing kit at graduation. The kit includes one tape measure, one pair of scissors and a container of lubricant.

Not only does Brenda School help the local economy, it rescues women from becoming



prey to male predators who entice them with a little money. Through the Brenda School, women are empowered and able to earn money for themselves. As mentioned above, Mrs. Bateya was dependent on her husbands “irregular” and “little” income, and is now able to provide for her family.

Celestin Musekura (2nd right), Marie Jeanne ALARM-Congo Director (right) and Penninah - Instructor (2nd left) display students’ works at Brenda School

ALARM aims to provide these women with skills and tools to empower them so they can be self-sustaining. However, it is difficult to be self-sustaining without the tools to start a business after graduation.

Since Brenda Tailoring Center has impacted so many lives, there is a big demand for training. For the year of 2011, there are 41 women registered to attend the school. In order to meet this demand, we need to provide additional sewing machines and sewing kits.

You can make a difference by donating toward the sewing machines and sewing kits (\$200 each) or sponsor the teacher's salary (\$120/month).

http://alarm-inc.org/get_involved/donate

On the second page of the donate screens, type "Congo Sewing Project" in the box labeled "Designation".