

## THE PURPOSE OF OUR MISSION

*The Mission of COPE is to provide education for Pokot children by empowering Christians and their community to nurture their children spiritually, mentally and physically so that they can grow into local and national leaders who think and act from a Christian worldview.*

The Mission Statement embodies the goal of assisting the Pokot to become self-supporting through education. The process of empowering a community becomes multi-faceted and expands beyond the confines of the schools and the mission compound. Growing leaders who think and act from a Christian worldview requires the community to accept Jesus Christ and open their lives to the Holy Spirit. The COPE Mission is laboring in His vineyard in Pokot, while the Holy Spirit harvests for the Lord.

## OUR PROGRESS IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS

### Education

COPE finished building the final classrooms for Tapadany Christian Academy and today every classroom has a desk for each pupil. The Head Teachers each have an office and the teachers have a room to mark papers and eat lunch. Pokot children compete with children who live in metropolitan areas and have educated parents. In spite of this, the students of the Tapadany Christian Academy consistently perform above their peers. A student must score at least 250 to be eligible to go to high school, and the higher the score the better high school the student is qualified to attend. The school feeds our 630 students and has 46 employees who eat two meals a day.

### Evangelism

COPE continues to share the Gospel of Jesus with as many children and adults as possible. We have started a number of programs designed to teach and encourage the Pokot to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

#### o Bible Study for Adolescents

A Bible study was started for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade pupils who live at the mission. The Bible study teachers are students who have graduated from our school and continued on to high school and college. They bring the Gospel message to the children in a way that makes it very real for them.

o **Bible Study for Adults**

The majority of the Pokot in our area have not been able to go to school, therefore, cannot read. Whether the Bible is written in English, Ki-Swahili or Pokot makes no difference. Our Bible study uses the story-telling approach as we teach the Word.

o **Celebration of Christian Womanhood**

The Pokot consider Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) a rite of passage and most girls expect to be circumcised. COPE responded to this dangerous practice by inviting Pokot girls to come to the Mission for a week of prayer, fellowship and education. Christian, Pokot women teach the girls and local Pastors come to lead the girls in prayer and Bible Study. To our knowledge, no girl who has attended these sessions has ever gone on to be circumcised.

o **Celebration of Christian Manhood**

The traditional circumcision ritual for Pokot boys is often very harsh and lasts for a couple of months. In response to this practice, which confirms the Pokot male as an adult and ready for marriage, COPE invited Pokot boys to come to the Mission for a week of teaching and fellowship. This has been a much more difficult program to "sell" to the community because the message of following Jesus as He respected women is not well received. In spite of the challenges, the Celebration is held each year. Other organizations have come to Pokot and are circumcising the boys in a medical environment to promote good health and discourage the traditional practice.

o **Jesus Film**

COPE members have traveled throughout Pokot sharing the Gospel of Jesus. Each week a different area is visited to show the Jesus film that has been translated into the Pokot language. For many of the Pokot, this is their first experience hearing the Gospel in their own language and the first time they have seen the enactment of the life of Jesus.

**Community Outreach**

The COPE Mission has always responded to community needs. Relief food has been distributed on many occasions when famine left many people hungry; we hold community meetings to deal with community problems - explanations related to the old constitution and the proposed constitution, meetings with the women to discuss the needs of their daughters now that the girls are in school, meetings with the men to discuss the changing needs of their sons and community celebrations.

**o Health**

COPE provides a dispensary and basic free health care for the Pokot community. Community Health Education is provided by the nurse during school breaks.

**o Academic Assistance Program**

In order to supply the COPE Mission with educated leaders who follow Jesus Christ, COPE initiated the Academic Assistance Program. The need for Pokot leaders who will serve their fellow tribesmen in Christian love is enormous. The goal is to assist appropriate candidates with school fees to obtain a college education. Each candidate signs a contract to work for COPE when his/her education is completed. Each candidate agrees to repay the school fees so that other potential leaders can be assisted. Five of our current teachers graduated from our school and went to teachers' college. Our nurse is also a graduate of our school. Pokot caring for Pokot.

**o Canteen**

The canteen provides a much-needed local source of supplies and food for the community at cost.

**o Economic Development**

There are few opportunities for employment for the Pokot who live in the West Pokot area. There are no jobs for the un/under educated. Bringing small development projects to the area goes a long way in improving the economic development.

- Brick-making machine

COPE bought a brick-making machine that requires much less cement. The bricks are interlocking which eliminates the need for mortar. COPE has three men making the bricks, which has provided support for three families. The bricks have been used in the construction of the bakery, dormitories, security wall and will be used for any other building projects that may be needed in the future. In addition, bricks will be sold to any members of the community who have their own building projects.

## **OUR VISION FOR THE MISSION**

### **Education**

The school provides quality education and affordable schooling for Pokot children from nursery school (age 3) through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. An important goal of the school is to provide a Christian outreach arm into the Pokot community. When children go to school, they return home and share what they have learned about Jesus Christ with their families. The school also contributes to the community by providing students, their families and the community with free medical care and health education. The ultimate goal of COPE is to bring each of the Pokot children and adults to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

### **Evangelism**

Taking the Gospel message to the Pokot people and initiating discipleship is the biggest challenge facing the COPE Mission. The Mission works with local pastors to establish continuity in Christian teaching. The COPE Mission is now seen as a center, which means it is a place for the Pokot to come together for guidance, prayer support, safety and love.

### **Community Outreach**

#### **o Economic Development**

##### **- Bakery**

The goal of the bakery is to provide jobs for local Pokot and baked goods for the Mission, school and the community. The building housing the bakery is finished. Equipment is still needed and we are continuing to purchasing items as funds allow. However, without electricity some equipment would be useless. The bakery has a few clients and takes bread to the local markets. As more clients are added, additional people will have to be hired to gather firewood, make the baked goods, package them, distribute them and market the bakery for more business. The goal is to have the Bakery registered with the government and self-supporting by the end of 2016.

##### **- Future**

Future projects COPE is prayerfully considering to provide more jobs and skills for the Pokot include Aloe Vera & Honey.

The Mission of COPE has been impacting lives with the love of Christ for almost 19 years. Our desire is to continue bringing them the Gospel message for years to come with your prayers and support.