

OURGANDA



Let's ignite hope.
Let's change things.

A Visit to **Bubukwanga Prison**

Dear Friend,

"We are sorry you are here. But we want you to know that we don't hate you. We love you."

I was standing face to face with a young man dressed in bright yellow prison garb who had resorted to violence and had been subsequently confronted by OurGanda's Mankind Club members. On the day of the offense, when the mankind members offered him a choice between kindness or prison, Herbert assumed they were bluffing. He learned the hard way that the rules had changed. His freedoms were gone.

Believe me, the Bubukwanga prison in western Uganda is not on anyone's list of 1,000 places to visit before you die. It is not a happy place. No one has a good day behind those bars.

"Herbert, you gotta believe me. We feel awful that you made the wrong choice, but it's true that we love you."

Also with me in the prison that afternoon was Esther, Benard, and my friend Carl who lives in Oregon and had joined the mission trip last December. Benard translated as I did my best to balance our genuine love for Herbert with the reality that violence is no longer an option.

"As you know, you will be released someday. You will have another chance. If you are willing to choose kindness, Esther and her team will be your best friend. If you don't, you will likely be back here serving even more time."

Herbert responded with words that seemed genuine. *"I feel ashamed at what I have done. When I am released, I promise to choose kindness. I will join the mankind club and do my best to help others make the right choice."* Benard prayed with Herbert, we gave him some money to buy some things he needed, and went on our way.

Q: Can domestic violence be stopped?

A: Yes. Definitely. Absolutely.



How?

Mankind Club members confront offenders and let them choose between kindness and prison. Soul Sisters members surround victims and provide whatever support and care they need. Once Esther and Benard build a strong relationship with government authorities, they eagerly enforce the law when a perpetrator makes the wrong choice.

Where's the proof?

- In the 15 months since Esther became the domestic violence constable of Bundibugyo, **450 offenders have changed their behavior**. Word has spread and domestic violence is becoming a thing of the past (no one wants anything to do with forced labor, prison meals, and bright yellow prison suits).
- Just last month, Ourganda commissioned a completely independent researcher to help us measure our impact. The researcher asked 550 women in 11 villages three questions: (1) Do you feel safe in your home? (2) Have you been physically abused in the last 30 days? (3) If you are afraid or hurt, do you know where to go? Check out the results here: ourganda.org/DVimpact

We are thrilled with the impact of Esther's leadership, but the need is still great.



Here is how you can help:

- Online: Scan this QR code or visit ourganda.org/donate



- Mail: Send a check made payable to Ourganda to **PO Box 874205; Vancouver WA 98687**
- Phone: Call **360-624-7271**

Every dollar you give empowers our team to **ignite hope** in one more heart. Thank you sincerely for being a vital part of this unique and powerful ministry!