



# Seeds For Peace

"Changing the world, one garden at a time"

## *History of Seeds for Peace*

### **Mission**

"Seeds for Peace" is a non-profit organization providing vegetable and flower seeds, as well as garden tools, for war- and weather-ravaged people in many nations. This "hand-up" enables war-weary and storm-stricken people to feed themselves, to regain human dignity, and even to work peacefully beside those they once called "enemies".



Orphanage in Uganda  
They were able to purchase this house because of the money they saved from having their own garden.



Children from Lesotho holding the seeds packets provided by Seeds for Peace

In 1998, a newspaper article planted the idea for "Seeds of Peace" in the mind of a garden center operator in Saratoga Springs, NY (USA). That idea germinated in 2003, when this tiny mustard-seed of a group began collecting, packaging, and sending packets of seeds to a town in Bosnia. In 2000, the group was able to provide seeds for eight "peace gardens" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The gardens themselves were the work of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and were planned with the intent of providing a safe and supportive environment where people from different ethnicities could work side by side to grow food for their families. The gardeners were diverse: widows, pensioners, students, refugees, prisoners and the mentally challenged. Almost all the participants require social assistance, and were it not for these community gardens, they would rely on Red Cross kitchens for sustenance. By 2004, the number grew to 15 gardens that served some 280 families. In 2007, while the gardens number 14, the number of people participating in the program in Bosnia and Herzegovina is approximately 3000. All the participants enjoy this highly successful project, as it gives them the opportunity to learn gardening (work therapy for many), to enjoy otherwise unavailable vegetables (a degree of self-sufficiency), and to meet and interact with others (resocialization and reconciliation after several years of hostilities).

"Seeds for Peace" has provided vegetable and flower seeds, as well as simple garden tools, for communities in Bosnia, Guatemala, Uganda, Tanzania, Paraguay, El Salvador, Lesotho, Namibia, Malawi, and South Africa. The aid hasn't only been abroad; in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the group sent over 50,000 seeds to residents in Waveland, Mississippi.

## *Seeds for Peace Current Successes*

**June 2009:** Fundraiser at Gaffney's restaurant : \$ 4,200 raised!

**September 20, 2009:** Seeds for Peace participated in the First Annual Peace Fair. The fair promoted worldwide celebration of the International Day of Peace. The money collected in our "pickle jar" that day enabled our Ugandan recipient, Julius M. Lwanga, ([www.ugandachildrenshope.org](http://www.ugandachildrenshope.org)) to rent more land for a larger garden. Seeds for Peace then mailed 192 packs of vegetable seeds in late September.

**October 18, 2009:** Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church. Director Sue Johnson spoke to the congregation about her 11 years of being The Seed Lady. The organization has its' roots (pardon the pun) in this church; as its' members have contributed money and efforts over the years. The good news: as a result of church members hearing Sue speak, we may have new contacts in Zimbabwe ([www.dangwa.org](http://www.dangwa.org)); Malawi and Israel/Palestinian territories.

**October 21, 2009:** Adirondack School, Greenwich NY: Seeds for Peace participated in career days. Students will again collect loose change towards the purchase of 2009 surplus seed packets. In spring of 2009, they collected enough nickels to buy 1,460 seed packs!

## *Upcoming Events*

**November 18, 2009:** Meeting of the American Association of University Women, Schenectady, NY. Founder/Director Sue Johnson will talk at their meeting about ways to help.

## *Continuous Help Throughout the World*

*You must be the change you wish to see in the world.*

*-Gandhi*

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### **Uganda**

Since 2006 Seeds for Peace has donated seeds to a group of volunteers, lead by Paul Phillips. He works with AOET, which is an indigenous organization that assists AIDS widows, orphans, and other vulnerable children. Paul also finds sponsors for Ugandan children in order to ensure them their education as well as health care.

Uganda's Children's Hope Foundation was founded by Julius M. Lwanga in 2006. He takes in vulnerable, orphaned, and abused children, but food prices are extremely high. Seeds for Peace donated seeds in March 2009 and they were already able to eat their food in June. This helps to cut the cost of food, which better enables Julius to provide a place for these children.

### **Bosnia**

Kathy and Mark Eikost traveled to Bosnia in 1998. Since then they have partnered up with local churches in order to develop the children into strong motivational leaders. They also work to help with soup kitchens, gardens, literacy, tuition assistance, cottage industry, as well as advocacy for Roma people.

### **Tanzania**

Sister Rosalie Lacorte has lived in Tanzania for the past decade, during this time she initiated Tupendane Cottage Industry. This helps women become self reliant, which in turn makes them able to support family members. She is also involved in Community Alive which assists people of all ages that are affected by HIV and AIDS. Currently Sister Rosalie supports 50 women and 45 AIDS orphans.

### **Lesotho**

Lynn Minderman is a Peace Corps volunteer in Lesotho, Africa. Six years ago, 10 men and women established an "orphan's garden" in the village of Likiting in Qholaqhoe, Butha-Buthe, Lesotho. The garden is completely organic and is maintained by the 35 AIDS orphans that live in the village.



The children of the UCHF in Uganda

### *Our Current Seed Recipients*

Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFSC Peace Gardens)

Uganda (Paul Phillips, AOET) and (Julius M. Lwanga, Uganda Children's Hope Foundation)

South Africa (Engender)

**Waveland, Mississippi (The Giving Circle)**

Lesotho (Peace Corps)

Guatemala (Karen Flewelling)

Tanzania (Tupendane)

Malawi, Namibia, and El Salvador (Karen Flewelling)

Tanzania (African Reflections)

Paraguay (Peace Corps)

**Tutwiler, Mississippi (Tutwiler Community Education)**

Seeds for Peace

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One of the goals that Seeds for Peace would like to accomplish is expanding our organization and our help throughout different countries of the world. If you or anyone you know can help us achieve this goal please contact Susan Johnson at [saratogagardendesigns@yahoo.com](mailto:saratogagardendesigns@yahoo.com) or visit our website at [www.seedsforpeace.net](http://www.seedsforpeace.net). Thank you in advance for your continuous support and prayers!