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“Harambee 2002” funds 18 educational projects in Africa

Project Harambee announced its grant awards on June 23, including a program of social reintegration for former child-soldiers in Sierra Leone, a new library for a Ugandan school, and a farm for families taking in Rwandan orphans. Its press release follows.

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Rome, June 23, 2003. The Harambee 2002 foundation will fund 18 educational projects in Africa. The projects are sponsored by various organizations in 13 sub-Saharan countries.

“Harambee” means “all for one” in Kiswahili. The Harambee 2002 solidarity fund was set up at the October 6, 2002, canonization of Josemaría Escrivá, Opus Dei’s founder, with donations from people attending the ceremony and various others who wished to contribute.

18 projects focusing on education

Each initiative selected for funding by Harambee 2002 is different, responding to the needs of the various distinct African situations, but they all share the common theme of education.

The diocese of Fort Portal, **Uganda**, will use Harambee’s award to

improve and expand a secondary school. They will pave classrooms and install doors and windows; buy benches, chairs and desks; and set up a library so students can study with books rather than just class notes. In addition, new classrooms will be built to enlarge the capacity of the school.

The program submitted by the “Family Home Movement” of Freetown, **Sierra Leone**, is rather different. With the € 40,000 they are receiving from Harambee 2002, they will move forward with educational and social activities to reintegrate children forced to fight during 11 years of civil war. The program will be for 218 students aged 6 to 18.

Among the other projects selected for grants is a program of basic training for youths in Ruhengeri, **Rwanda**. In the Rwandan province of Cyangugu, Harambee 2002 will finance a hog

farm for families taking care of children orphaned by the genocidal war.

An award was also given to a project organized by university students in Johannesburg, **South Africa**, who will create 4 small professional training schools for youths finishing primary school in **Mozambique**. In Enugu, **Nigeria**, a Harambee award of € 39,565 will benefit 281,000 people through a project that will increase the hygiene level by helping a number of schools provide drinkable water.

Harambee 2002's other grants were awarded to projects promoted by various educational and social institutions in **Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Sudan, Kenya, Cameroon and Guinea Bissau**. (A complete list may be found at www.harambee2002.org).

The Secretary of Harambee 2002 received 122 grant applications from 20 countries. A selection panel, made up of international cooperation experts in the education and training sector, met periodically during the months following the close of the contest last December. As all the applications were for quite worthwhile initiatives, selecting the grantees was not easy.

When the donation deadline came, Harambee 2002 had received a total of € 700,000. The contributions collected subsequently – more than € 100,000 so far – will go to fund projects in future grant awards, for which reason Harambee 2002 encourages people to continue contributing.

The future of Harambee 2002

Harambee 2002 has announced that, in addition to a new round of awards for African educational projects in

2004, future activities will include an international communication prize for an audiovisual report on Africa (2003) and an international congress entitled “Communicating Africa” (2004). “Our experience in international cooperation,” says Linda Corbi, coordinator of Harambee 2002, “leads us to the conviction that communicating is an important way of helping.”

Project Harambee 2002 is developing its activities in conjunction with the model of Rome’s ICU Association, which for years has promoted international cooperation with African educational projects.

The announcement of the grant awards coincides with the celebration of the first liturgical festival of St. Josemaría Escrivá, which will take place on June 26 (www.opusdei.org).

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