

## PCVs (Amy, Eric and others) teams up with Books For Africa to help local schools get books.

Here is Amy's Story.

For the last two years I have been stationed at Ngora Girls S.S. It's an all girls boarding school with a population of 500 students. If someone were to come out and visit our village they would arrive eight hours later from Kampala, covered in a layer of red dust. Despite the heat and lack of precipitation the Ateso people are some of the most motivated, hardworking, and tall people I have ever met. Over the years, I have come to call Ngora Village my home, to call my students my sisters, my supervisor my mother, and my neighbors my family. Although, it



When a volunteer first gets to site they are loaded with ideas, naivet'e, and strong American cultural glasses in which they view their new home, despite their conscientious attempt not to do so. Their minds are filled with ideas on how to improve their new home, their community, and how to bring their village up to speed as best as they can. These ideas are not always feasible or realistic. As time progresses, you learn. You learn how to assess where your community is at, and what they truly need, and what will last when you are gone. Two years is a long time to be away from home, but it is quite ephemeral in regards to any sort of change, or even a needs assessment. I am now on the tail end of things and it seems as though I am finally looking through the same glasses that my school is.

The school already has a full time librarian and dedicated room for a library. The school librarian however is not well occupied. The books are few, old and in terrible shape, so he spends the majority of his time reading the local newspapers or hovering over me while I do computer lessons. Whenever the library is opened you can always find girls in there, and I know that I should be happy that they are there, instead I found myself depressed at the idea of the quality of resources they had available. They are thirsty for knowledge.

When I heard about Books for Africa from Eric who was arranging a 30,000 books shipment I knew that was the answer to the problem at my school. I was able to raise enough money to purchase 2,500 books and a lap top for my school. A reading atmosphere is not a term people use to describe Uganda, but within our community at Ngora Girls it is the head mistress's goal to make it apart of ours. The girls stay in a small compound unable to leave. There is no distraction wrought on upon the opposite sex. There is no TV for them. There are no video games, magazines, or even enough computers, or the internet. Once the library is completed it is our hope that they will be transported into other worlds through these books. Their time will no longer be idle, and they will be consumed by books just as I have been lucky to do my whole life. It expands minds, widens the world, and motivates people to strive for something better in life.

Thank you Books For Africa, Thank you Eric, and Thank you to all my supporters! This library is going to rock all the girls and

