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### **Ohio Rummage Sale Will Fund Accessible Toilets in Uganda**

In an example of American volunteerism at its best, a church in Ohio has donated \$6,000 to install accessible toilets at a remote primary school in northern Uganda.



**The target: GDPU will replace hazardous toilets at the Abaka School this summer.**

The money comes from the [Prince of Peace Lutheran Church](#) in Dublin, Ohio, and will be used to replace ageing toilets that serve 380 children and staff at the Abaka school in Gulu District (photo).

The project will be managed in Uganda by the Gulu Disabled Persons Union (GDPU) with help from Spencer Caldwell, an AP Peace Fellow. It will be the fourth WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) school project undertaken by GDPU and AP since 2015.

The donation for Abaka came from a rummage sale at the church last year which generated \$32,000 for foreign projects. Ken Scherpelz, a church member, described the 2-day sale as "unbelievable." He said that over 100 volunteers had scoured the parish for items which then went on sale for as little as \$1.

Donations are managed by the Global Missions Ministry, a group of 12 church members that currently supports projects in Uganda, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Kenya. One project aids survivors of the Rio Negro massacres (1982-1983) in Guatemala. Another uses [Kiva](#) to make small loans to community-based initiatives in the Global South. The beneficiaries are chosen by high school students.

The Uganda WASH project was brought to the attention of the church by [Mr Scherpelz's daughter Rebecca](#), who served as an AP Peace Fellow at GDPU in 2011. Rebecca exposed the lack of public accessible toilets in Gulu [in a blog](#) which served as a call to action, and in 2015 GDPU and AP installed accessible toilets for 16 students with disability at the Tochi School. After two more successful projects it has become clear that [WASH also improves morale, discipline and enrollment at schools](#), as described on the AP website.



Thousands of items were sold at the Ohio rummage sale, which will pay for new toilets at the Abaka school.

The need is certainly great at the Abaka school, where GDPU and AP will work this summer. During a recent visit to Abaka, GDPU's coordinator Patrick Ojok was told that enrollment had fallen from 465 in 2016 to 380 because of the poor state of toilets.

After several years of giving, members of the Dublin church group are familiar with the ups and downs of development.

for a week," said Mr Scherpelz. "Since then she has learned and taught us to manage expectations. We know we can't save the world but we also know that we're helping. That's what keeps us going."

"After her first visit to Uganda, Rebecca cried

Rebecca remains deeply committed to people with special needs. She recently joined [a startup in Indianapolis](#) that is developing a new app to support caregivers who work with disability in the US. "The work can be quite isolating," said her father.