

JESSICA POSNER ODEDE

Shining Hope for Communities

Co-Founded with Kennedy Odede

2010 Global Fellow



BIG BOLD IDEA

Combat intergenerational cycles of poverty and gender inequality by linking tuition-free schools for girls to essential social services in the Kenyan slum of Kibera.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Lucy Auwor lives in the Kibera slum of Nairobi, Kenya—the largest in Africa. At age six, Lucy was forced to exchange sex for food to survive. Lucy knew that as a poor, uneducated woman her life prospects were bleak. Lucy is just one of nearly half a million young women in Kibera denied education and made to suffer daily indignities. Shining Hope for Communities has developed an innovative model to combat gender inequality. They link free schools for girls to holistic community centers that provide residents with essential services unavailable elsewhere through a community center adjacent to the school. By concretely linking essential health and economic services to a school for girls, they demonstrate that benefiting women benefits the whole community, cultivating a community ethos that makes women respected members of society. In their model, girls' schools become portals through which attitudes toward women change as community members associate needed services with an institution dedicated to girls' education.

PERSONAL BIO

Jessica is the Co-Founder of Shining Hope for Communities, a non-profit that combats extreme poverty and gender inequality in Kibera—Africa's largest slum. Shining Hope runs the Kibera School for Girls—the slum's first free school for girls, as well as a community health clinic, clean toilet initiative, youth and community education, and economic development initiatives. Jessica is a nationally recognized social entrepreneur and activist. She won the 2010 Do Something Award and was named "America's top-world changer 25 and under" live on VH1. Shining Hope for Communities has been featured by Nick Kristof in The New York Times, CNN, and on NBC Nightly News. Jessica graduated Phi Beta Kappa and with honors from Wesleyan University. She is twenty-five-years-old and fluent in Swahili. She is currently based in Nairobi, Kenya.

Organization/Fellow Location

Nairobi, Kenya

Impact Location

Africa

Kenya

Organization Structure

Nonprofit

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