

# The Story of the Beads

## A TRUE STORY ABOUT YOUNG MOTHERS STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE



More than 20 years ago, in Uganda, a young woman in her twenties laid on her deathbed. Abandoned by her husband, after having infected her with HIV, she was left alone to care for her three young children. Because of her deteriorating health, she lost her job. Her friends and family all left her for dead. When her youngest child was just a toddler, she learned he also had HIV.

***With no source of income and being too weak to work, she had no food, no strength, no hope.***

One day some strangers came to her door and offered to help. No one had been kind to her since she had gotten sick so she was very suspicious of their motives. But the strangers kept coming back, week after week, and she slowly began to trust them. Eventually she accepted medicine, first for her baby, then for herself. As she and her baby became stronger and healthier, ***she realized that she and her baby did not have to die.*** She began to hope that she might live to care for her children.

☒ The strangers introduced her to a woman who taught her how to make paper bead necklaces. As she carefully made each individual bead by hand, she planned how she would sell the beads to buy food and clothes for her children. And step, by hopeful step, that's what she did. Along the way she met other young mothers who were in the same situation and taught them the skill of making paper beads. Soon there were

hundreds of children who had medicine to take, food to eat, and clothes to wear from the sales of their mothers' paper bead necklaces. *All because some strangers took time to stop and offer help.*

**This is the story of hundreds, if not thousands, of Ugandan women.**

To include some of these beads in your gift giving please contact us.