

Together we are changing lives... one girl at a time.

## HOW IT ALL BEGAN



Debby Rooney and the Dupoto Women's Group - Isinya, Kenya - November 2000

I am a certified teacher with over 18 years of experience in environmental education as a teacher and a program developer for a major aquarium. I have visited the national game reserves of India, Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire, Baja Mexico and Kenya. During the spring of 1991, I took an extended trip to East Africa, concentrating much of my time in Kenya with the Maasai people and the endangered animals. I was hooked, and wanted to share my love of Kenya, the endangered animals and people. Since then I have presented "African Tails", an elementary-level school program that I developed, to over 120,000 students throughout the Northeast.

Although educating American students is vital, it provides no direct aid to the people or animals of Kenya. In conjunction with The African Conservation Center and Wildlife Conservation Center in Nairobi, Kenya, I helped the Dupoto Women's Group of the Maasai people to refine their traditional handicraft of beadwork and

develop a product for market overseas—DOG COLLARS. Volunteers hand-carried and marketed the collars in the United States. This project provides the women with their primary source of income, and each woman's profit per item has doubled. As of 2002, there are 25 women in the collective, supporting over 125 children. They work very hard to make a better life for their families and educate their children.



Young women of the Maasai people are often forced to marry when they are only about 13 years old. THIRTY dollars a month will provide them with an alternative—the opportunity to continue their education. Educating third-world girls is one of the primary methods of reducing overpopulation, improving quality of life, and positively impacting the environment.

In 1999, the sponsorship program for the daughters of the Dupoto Women's Group began with 2 girls. This year, 2002, 24 girls are attending Kenyan schools through this program.

I will be visiting the girls, their schools and families in November. I'm sure I will have many wonderful pictures and stories to share with you.

Thank you for your interest.

Debby Rooney  
Co-Founder BEADS

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