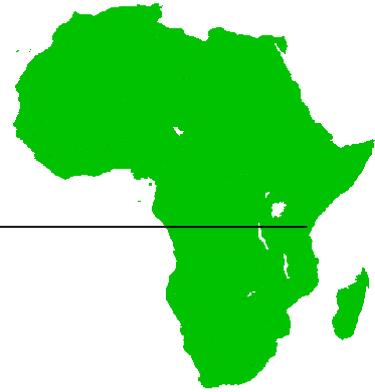


PROJECT'S PROGRESS



VILLAGE EDUCATION PROJECT (Kilimanjaro)

Registered Charity No 1041672

Registered as an International NGO in Tanzania: SO No 9680

In association with Education Projects Committee

Tanzanian Co-ordinator: Dilly Mtui

Patron: Dame Judi Dench

Trustees: Miss KJ Allen MBE, Ms AG Beldam, Mrs ML Branson, Mr MA Richmond, Mrs S Todd, Mr GO Todd

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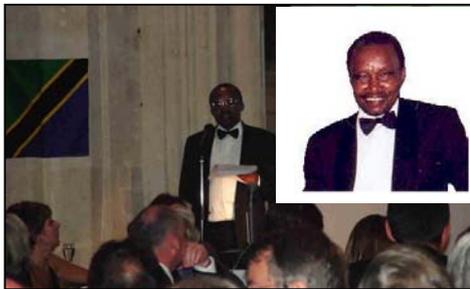
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SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER – Summer 2005

10TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

On Saturday 25th September 2004 130 guests joined our ten-year celebration at the Museum of Garden History in London. Dilly Mtui, the Tanzanian co-ordinator of the projects, came from Kilimanjaro to be the guest of honour.



Dilly Mtui the guest of honour

There was an exhibition of photographs showing the work of the charity over ten years. Katy Allen gave an illustrated presentation telling her story from her very first visit to Tanzania, in September 1992, to the setting up of the charity in 1994 and its work and development. A raffle and auction took place after the meal. The bids were very exciting: two bottles of Kilimanjaro lager, brought over especially for the event, were auctioned for 340 times their retail value in Tanzania; later the badge worn

by our patron, Dame Judi Dench, as 'M' in Die Another Day, kindly donated by the production company, was auctioned for an incredible £5,000. Dilly Mtui then enthralled and amused the audience with his illustrated account of how he became involved with the charity and what now might comprise his work on a typical day. The evening ended with a performance by four Tanzanian dancers. The event raised just over £16,200, and the trustees were delighted to meet so many supporters and their friends, and thanked everyone involved for helping to make the evening so enjoyable and successful.

WORK ON PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Our work improving various primary school buildings has continued, being carried out by both the charity and visiting groups from Quest Overseas and Madventure.

At Matala primary school, down on the plains, the renovation is nearly complete. Both blocks of classrooms have been completely renovated, and verandas built to give covered access and extra support to the buildings, which had been constructed with

shallow foundations. A new staffroom has been built and the old staffroom will be used as a storeroom. The final stage of the work is to finish the new kitchen hut and to put new furniture in the classrooms. Already the headteacher and staff have planted trees and made a pretty garden between the two classroom blocks where before there had been just dusty earth.



Matala's renovation and garden

At Nganyeni primary school, which lies to the east of Marangu on an un-made road, we are building a new staffroom, storeroom and staff lavatory. The teachers presently use a classroom as their office which leaves pupils with insufficient rooms.

In the grounds of Mshiri primary school work on the new pre-primary school continues. The foundations and slab were completed and then the supporting pillars extended for the ground floor structure. The concrete slab on that has yet to be laid as there has been a shortage of wood for the shuttering to support the concrete. The lack of wood and its consequent high price is now a considerable problem. However, the electricity conduit pipes are being installed. The building will only be built as a single-storey, but the foundations are sufficient to enable future generations to extend the building upwards for at least two more storeys.

Visiting groups under our direction have carried out the following work: a veranda outside all classrooms at Lyakirimu, Mseroe and Maanda primary schools; a library, and a pre-primary classroom with office and store at Masia primary school; a school

lavatory at Kotela and Mbahe primary schools.



The new pre-primary school at Mshiri

ENGLISH FOR THE SCHOOL PUPILS

Our 'gap year' programme continues. This year we have seven volunteers teaching in five primary schools. Of these, two had recently finished their degrees and two are having career-breaks. They are continuing with classes taught by previous 'gap year' students. Last year four classes completed primary school and sat the national Standard VII examinations, having been taught English by a 'gap year' from Year I. The results were heartening as in each school more pupils than ever before passed the examinations. However, we shall compare the results with those of previous years and with those of other schools, aware of the fact that until that year passes had only been announced for those going to government secondary schools. No matter; our satisfaction is the recognition of the headteachers and staff who are delighted with the confidence, enthusiasm and improved spoken English of their pupils. It is this which will help them to find work, especially with many tourists visiting the area.

The 'gap year' programme sponsors school outings, and all who go on them are inspired by what they see and experience.

In August 2004 over 40 pupils from Mshiri primary school went to Pangani on the Indian Ocean to see the sea for the first time. They had a guided tour round a sisal factory,

and went to see the old house where slaves had been kept only to find a heap of rubble!



The hot spring at Lake Manyara

In February this year 54 pupils went from six different primary schools to Lake Manyara National Park for an overnight stay. As well as elephant, giraffe, zebra, buffalo and wildebeest they saw three lions in a tree, and touched the boiling water in the 'hot spring'.

MSHIRI VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

Still offering courses in carpentry & joinery, masonry & bricklaying and tailoring & crafts, the school is in its seventh year. Before Christmas the carpentry teacher, Johnson Mtei, was tragically killed in a car accident. His post was advertised, and at the end of January Hussein Mzava was taken on. The tailoring teacher will be retiring soon, and that post is being advertised. A further member of staff has been recruited to teach English and mathematics and to help with the administration of the school.

The new staffroom and office for the principal have been completed, and the masonry students are now busy building a new workshop. The workshop will house carpentry and joinery machinery which has been donated to us. This comprises, among other things, a planing machine and circular saws. In total 2.5 tons of equipment was sent from the UK in December. It is being stored until the donor comes in early 2006 to install it and to give instruction in its use. This new workshop will be run commercially, planing wood for customers and making furniture

and other items to order, and so provide an income for the school.



New office for the vocational training school

The tailoring & crafts department benefited from a second visit by Abigail Amos, a volunteer with British Executive Service Overseas (BESO). Abigail came for two months and, as well as assisting with timetabling, teaching methods and the re-arrangement of working areas and storage of equipment, she worked with the small craft workgroup.



Abigail Amos and some of the workgroup

This comprises six girls who have graduated from the course but who use the school's facilities and materials to produce goods for sale. They are busy supplying the school's own shop, Village Crafts, at Marangu Mtoni. Abigail gave them guidance in their planning and quality control, and helped them to design some new products. Amanda Bennett, who was a 'gap year' student in 2001, has returned after completing her art degree to work at the school. Amanda is carrying on Abigail's work with the workgroup and is also helping students, particularly with their hand-sewing.

As the road-widening scheme, which threatens the existing shop, shows no

immediate sign of being implemented, the building of the new shop had to take second place to other more pressing work. However, it is now nearing completion, and following the recommendations of Abigail, Amanda will assist with the internal lay-out and display. The café space will be extended with both front and rear verandas as this is a profitable part of the existing shop. Below the shop is a traditional cone-shaped Chagga house. This will be thatched, and filled with traditional furniture and implements. The only concession to the modern age will be the fitting of an electric lightbulb so that people can see in the window-less house! There are very few of these houses left, and many local children no longer know how their ancestors lived. The house is being built by two elderly gentlemen – some of the remaining few who know the building and thatching techniques.



The new Village Crafts shop and Chagga house

In October 2004 Val Moore worked at the school preparing a Business Skills course. Val wrote material pertinent to each of the school's three courses, and trained the instructors in its content and delivery. This is extremely useful for the young people who all hope to earn their own living. In an area where there is little distinction between wholesale and retail, and where 'turnover' is often assumed to be 'profit', business training is essential. All the course texts have been translated into Kiswahili.

WORK WITH PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Geoffrey Dixon, a volunteer with BESO, came for a second three-month assignment working in the eight cluster schools of Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre. Geoffrey worked closely with the

Centre's co-ordinator, Mrs Sandi, and helped the primary school teachers with their teaching methods and with their subject knowledge. In one of his seminars Geoffrey gave an example of how to teach fractions, and it became clear that most teachers had never understood them. Geoffrey is particular to use local materials, and, *inter alia*, each school now has weighing scales made of coconut shells using old batteries as weights. Follow-up visits to the schools were made where further help was given by demonstration teaching, lesson observation, and making and using learning aids. Mrs Sandi has a programme of school visits, and reports that the teachers are adopting new methods and using the learning aids, and that particularly the teaching of maths is improving.

Eleni Pithis came for her fifth consecutive year, and for a month worked with primary school teachers on teaching English as a foreign language. The teachers feel thoroughly relaxed with Eleni, and are beginning to experiment with some of the more flamboyant teaching methods using miming, acting, and the full range of intonation.

There are plans for Geoffrey and Eleni to return for further assignments, and also for two more volunteers to come in late 2006 to work in designated schools on teaching methods and language skills.

The charity has supplied the eight cluster schools with over 750 additional English textbooks, and over 400 additional mathematics textbooks, following requests when the schools' book budgets were exhausted. These books enable pupils to have one book between two. Supply of books in other subjects is in-hand.

Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre library continues to circulate 'book bags' to schools so that classes can enjoy English fiction and non-fiction. The library books have recently been re-classified making it easier for suitable books to be included in each 'bag'.

New reading books are on order from OUP which will enable classes to have a structured reading programme. The stock of Kiswahili reading books is to be increased, albeit from a very limited supply.



Eleni Pithis helps the teacher with his English lesson

COMPUTER LEARNING

The Guerba Computer Centre has had a most successful start. The Centre's manager, Tony Fred, has had a steady flow of students paying to learn on all eight computers. Disappointing is the lack of enrolment of primary school teachers even though the Centre is open on Saturdays until 2pm. To try to address this, Tony, together with Mrs Sandi of the Teachers' Resource Centre, ran a half-day session at the end of April to show a handful of invited teachers what is available and how it could help them in their work.

By contrast, primary school pupils queue up to use the Acorn computers. They come at lunchtimes and after school as computer learning is not part of the school curriculum. They are benefiting from fun mathematics, English language, music and art programmes.

Very soon we are hoping to get internet access at the Centre. This will have to be by satellite connection as the phone-lines are too unreliable for any alternatives.

INSIDE THE PROJECTS

Dr Rosemary Squires, a volunteer with BESO, has assisted our work during two further short assignments. The central running of the projects now has its own office, and is known as the Project Management Unit (PMU). The heads of the Teachers' Resource Centre, Computer

Centre and Vocational Training School, together with those in the PMU, meet once a fortnight to discuss work done and to be done. Initially meetings were once a month, but were changed when the heads of those centres freely admitted that they found it difficult to envisage a whole month and to plan in detail. In December we introduced quarterly planning and budgeting in a very easy, step-by-step guided format. All made admirable attempts at completing their reports for that first quarter. These showed that most had been over-ambitious in their plans. Everyone found the plans for the second quarter easier to complete, and say they find the exercise very useful. These are concepts and tasks to which they have never been exposed before, and with more practice and experience each head of centre will be able to take greater responsibility.

In addition we have started English language training for most of the project's support staff in response to their demands. The staff saving scheme, which we set-up at the end of 2003, is very popular and has helped some to pay school fees and medical expenses. The staff hold their own monthly meetings, and have recently introduced a system of fines for anyone who comes late to a meeting or who is absent without notice!

REFLECTION ON THE PAST: PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

When the charity started work in Tanzania in 1994 we had no office – indeed no building with electricity, no telephone and no vehicle. In 1999 we had our first office, and acquired our first computer in 2000. In 2001 we bought our first vehicle. Telephone connection came in 2002, then email facility, and later in that year mobile phones came in and took over the whole country. Sometimes it is hard to remember the struggles we have been through!

Our work started with the most obvious needs: the condition of the primary school buildings and the teaching of English as a foreign language. Locally we have gained a

reputation through our building and renovation work – it is there for all to see, and it represents value for money. Moreover, it identifies us as an NGO (non-government organisation) which uses its money for the purposes for which it was intended. We have renovated 9 complete primary schools, and have carried out building work at 7 others.



A new library building at Masia primary school

It is time for our energies to be channelled in other directions. Of far more importance now is the quality of education within those schools. We have embarked on work helping the primary school teachers, and this will be the mainstay of our work in years to come. We are developing plans for a long-term approach to reform, probably starting in only a very few schools, which will involve: in-service training in subject content, teaching methods, learner involvement and problem-solving; headteacher and classroom teachers' partnership in planning and management; work with the community leading to community participation in the delivery of education; close contact with the district education authorities for support.

We will be using specialists from the UK and from Tanzania, and we will be embarking on a new element of 'community development'. We will be learning from education programmes run by Aga Khan projects and the British Council in other parts of Africa. Also we will be drawing on the experience of HakiElimu, an NGO based in Dar es Salaam, which has been

working in four districts outside Kilimanjaro.

We do not expect a complete success story. Even before we start there are constraints: some of the syllabi are over-ambitious and not wholly suitable for primary pupils; the final national examinations are not always a good test of pupil understanding; the distribution of teachers; the ever-rising pupil numbers. However, we have a head start: our work is already known and valued; we know the schools and the teachers; the teachers have tried our in-service work and are keen for it to continue and expand; and, importantly, we have a good relationship with the district education authorities. Our greatest chance of success is that we are in no rush. This is not another programme to be started and finished in 3 or 5 years. We want to see change, and change will take time.

This new emphasis will not have much to show for itself. Photographs of new or improved buildings are a favourite of donors. They like to see their money going into solid bricks and mortar. The improvement of teaching and of the running of schools, plus changes in a community's attitudes will take time and will be hard to capture in photographs. We do hope, however, that our donors and supporters will stay with us. We have no specific funding for this new challenge, which in itself will make it difficult to present plans, but we are sure that this is a natural progression of our work and is the most worthwhile contribution to help village children.



Our overall aim is to enhance the quality of education, especially for village children, in order for future generations to become confident and responsible citizens

Thank you all for your generous support

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THANK YOU VERY MUCH

VILLAGE EDUCATION PROJECT (KILIMANJARO)

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