

PROJECT'S PROGRESS



VILLAGE EDUCATION PROJECT (Kilimanjaro)

Registered Charity No 1041672

Registered as an International NGO in Tanzania: SO No 9680

In association with Mshiri Village Education Committee

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SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER – Summer 2001

MBE HONOUR FOR KATY ALLEN

In the New Year's Honours List Katy Allen was awarded an MBE for her services to education in Tanzania. This marks her seven years' work in Tanzania dedicated to improving the education of village children. Katy heard of the award just before she returned to Kilimanjaro in early December 2000.

I was telephoned by the British High Commissioner in Dar es Salaam, Bruce Dinwiddy, and asked if I would like to accept the award. I was enormously surprised and thrilled, but the award is certainly not for me alone.

The award of an MBE is a celebration of all that those connected with the charity have helped to achieve. In Tanzania I work daily with the local people who are charming, courteous and hard-working. Their humour in the face of all adversity is most remarkable. I have been inspired by Tanzanian teachers and head teachers who have been trying for years to effect change, never giving up hope against financial and bureaucratic odds. I have been helped and supported by the Tanzanian education officials who have slowly recognised me and have given the charity and me their time and

advice. The single person without whom the projects would not succeed is Dilly Mtui.

Dilly was a primary school head teacher who is now seconded to the charity full-time as the Tanzanian co-ordinator.



Katy relaxing in Kilimanjaro

People often ask me if I have any regrets about my change in life to run the charity. It would be a lie to say I don't miss my earnings as a lawyer, but I see all the developments first hand and I see the joy they are bringing. When over 1,500 pupils and nearly 50 teachers enjoy new school buildings; when classes of ten year olds see an elephant for the first time ever and see the sea; when volunteers come to help and tell you it's the best experience of their

whole life; and when even the local bus conductors thank you for what you're doing for their children – the only regret is that I waited until 1994 to start!

I feel doubly rewarded when two professional people, one Tanzanian and one English, who have seen our work have independently described our projects as a 'blueprint' for the development of basic education in Tanzania. Indeed with our foundation of renovating school buildings and supplying books, our work teaching English and motivating the pupils, and now building the knowledge, confidence and ability of the teachers we are undoubtedly improving the education of village children. The award of an MBE is a great encouragement.

GREAT STRIDES FORWARD AT MSHIRI TEACHERS' RESOURCE CENTRE

Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre (TRC) is a centre for 11 nearby primary schools. The Centre is helping teachers increase their knowledge and is introducing new teaching methods.

The VSO volunteer, Maggie Allen, who joined the Centre in April 2000, sadly left in December. Maggie had not only set up an excellent lending system in the library but had started a routine of lesson observations with feedback in the cluster primary schools.

Maggie also held a one-day seminar on making storybooks and telling stories. Two other VSO volunteers from Zanzibar came to the Centre and gave a two-day seminar on using and making teaching aids. In early December Dr Ken Fletcher came from Canada. He had heard of the charity through the Guerba travel brochure. He gave a 4 day seminar on teaching science and geography with no equipment. This was held in the first week of the school holiday. Over 20 teachers attended and greatly benefited from Ken's ideas, demonstrations, and the chance to put them into practice in group work.

We were very lucky to be approached by Anne Haycock, an elementary school teacher also from Canada. Anne offered her services for 8 months from January 2001.



Anne Haycock with pupils in the TRC library

Anne adopted all Maggie's systems, and continued lesson observations in the cluster schools. Once Anne had observed sufficient English lessons to understand the difficulties facing the teachers she began giving demonstration lessons. For this the teachers give Anne topics which they don't know how to teach or with which they would like help. Anne then gives that lesson to the class followed by a discussion with the teacher. These are continuing and are proving very valuable – not only in improving the English of the teachers but also in the demonstration of new teaching techniques.

In March another volunteer, Eleni Pithis, joined the TRC for three months. Eleni is an established teacher of English as a foreign language, and has lived and taught in Brazil, Trinidad and Greece.



Eleni Pithis helping the teachers

One of Eleni's tasks is to help the teachers who have to re-qualify by 2004 if they are to keep their jobs. Thirty-nine teachers are in

their second year studying part-time for six O'level subjects, and all will sit the examinations in November 2001. All subjects are taught and examined in English. Eleni is also giving demonstration English lessons in the primary schools, and will be giving two one-day seminars on aspects of teaching English.

Anne and Eleni are building greatly on what Maggie started, and the motivation of the teachers and their willingness to try new methods is growing.

However, with all the input from white, English speaking volunteers, Katy had perceived a resignation on the part of the teachers that they could never emulate their white counterparts. Katy wanted to run a seminar for the local teachers to make them feel valued and valuable by discovering their hidden abilities, and experimenting with new ideas for teaching and learning. Little time has been invested in helping primary school teachers: new books, new syllabi come their way with very little, if any, consultation and yet they bear the brunt of the blame for poor standards in primary education. The seminar would explore the teachers' backgrounds, their culture, and the hierarchy in the community and in the schools. The seminar needed, above all, to be in Swahili.

In 1999 Katy had met Zuhura Muro, an independent trainer from Kilimanjaro, who now lives in Dar es Salaam. A Tanzanian, a woman, and from the Chagga tribe - Zuhura was the perfect person. The seminar took place from 2nd to 7th April 2001 – the last week of the primary school Easter holiday. 23 teachers attended all six days. It was a huge success. Zuhura's techniques were innovative and superb. Some examples of the seminar activities might be of interest:

- the teachers wrote their personal details, goals and wishes on a sheet of paper pinned to their front, and then wrote constructive comments for each other on a sheet of paper pinned to their back

- each teacher chose an adjective to reflect their good qualities and that adjective was their name during the course
- the teachers imagined themselves at their own funerals five years from now and wrote the speeches of their family and work colleagues to see how they could be remembered
- they examined personality types and learning styles
- they visited a primary school and planned what they could do with no money to improve the environment
- they learned how to plan and budget
- they discussed the inclusion of acting, miming, singing, stories, group work and pair work with examples and demonstrations
- they were shown effective methods of classroom discipline without using corporal punishment
- each teacher wrote their own personal plan for the next three months
- they considered how parents and the community could become more involved with their local primary school.

The final evaluation sheets completed by the teachers showed that they felt more positive and enthusiastic about their jobs and felt ready and able to adopt new methods of teaching, and now felt that they had a valuable social role to fulfil as teachers.



Zuhura enjoys the seminar activity

The Curriculum Officer from the District Education Office attended the seminar and it is hoped that the District might repeat the seminar in some of the government TRC's.

The charity plans to run Zuhura's seminar again for other teachers in the cluster schools of Mshiri TRC.

The Centre's library is now well used. Several classes visit regularly and read the English story books and watch a video. One of the most popular videos is 'Africa's Child' produced by Channel 4 Learning. It shows the lives of 10 children in different parts of Africa. The teacher's pack has activities for geography, art and comprehension. Both pupils and teachers are fascinated. The Centre also has special English language videos and wildlife videos. Every week-end the UK student teachers run a video club for some of their pupils, and this shows cartoons, musicals etc. A grant from District Based Support to Primary Education of secondary school textbooks to assist the teachers studying for O'levels has given the Centre one of the best stocked libraries in any TRC. This is now used by secondary school pupils in the evening.

For those cluster schools which are too far away for their pupils to come for a lesson in the library, a 'book bag' is taken to their school once a month so that stories can be read to different classes.

All these activities are worthwhile and popular which is why we are hoping to install a battery power back-up system so that the library, television and video can continue to be used when the mains electricity fails – unfortunately a fairly regular occurrence.

MORE SCHOOL COWS

The Leggatt Trust generously gave funds for the purchase of three pregnant cows and a bull. The cows are at Mshiri, Mauo and Ashira primary schools, and each cow has produced a heifer calf. The cow of Mshiri primary school is pregnant again. The schoolchildren have had the milk from their cow in their school lunches, and in return each child eagerly brings in his handful of grass for the cow each morning.

Sales of the milk at week-ends and in the holidays form a fund for extra cow feed and medical treatment, and the excess has been used to buy such things as maize seed for the school 'shamba' or a new school cooking pot.

Anne Haycock heard of this project before she left Canada, and she set about raising money for another school cow. Things snow-balled, and after dressing up as a cow for a pub night, and being on Canadian national radio, Anne raised enough money for 6 new pregnant cows, the 6 cow sheds to house them, and possibly a new bull as well.



Dilly with the two new cows

Two lovely Ayrshire cows are already in place at Masia Marangu and Masia Mamba primary schools. The other primary schools ready and waiting for their cows are Mbahe, Maande, Lyasomboro and Palangeny. The pupils really benefit from this project, and our great thanks go to Anne and her supporters.

PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

The charity remains committed to improving primary school buildings. Since 1995 the charity has completely renovated Mauo, Mshiri, Ashira and Samanga primary schools. All are now unrecognisable from their past states, and are welcoming places in which to work and learn. Our present project is the renovation of Palangeny primary school – a small school with two blocks of classrooms. We are building a veranda outside each classroom block to provide not only covered access but to bolster the classroom walls. Inside we are

concreting the floors, putting up ceiling boards, fitting windows and doors and whitewashing the classrooms. We will be transforming the staff room and providing a larger area for the store of books and equipment. We expect the renovation work to finish this summer. This project has largely been funded by Kibo Breweries Limited, which is part of the Guinness Brewery group.

In December we had three groups of Australian schoolgirls who came to build a new kitchen hut and a new lavatory block at Samanga primary school. They worked extremely hard, and the locals were so impressed with the new lavatory block that they thought it was a dining hall!

Our next project is the complete renovation of Lyasomboro primary school. This is a large school with over 650 pupils, on the main road near the entrance to Kilimanjaro National Park. It has three large classroom blocks, comprising 12 classrooms, 2 offices and 2 stores. We have every hope that this school will eventually look as impressive as Samanga primary school now does.

We are under no illusion that a good building makes a good school – but without improving the workplace the ability of the teachers and the pupils to perform well is severely handicapped. Only when school is made attractive can full attendance and commitment be hoped for.

UK STUDENT TEACHERS INSPIRE THE CHILDREN

We now have our fourth group of student teachers (Gap Years) teaching English in 5 village primary schools. Their energy and imagination is wonderful. After two weeks' training in the UK they teach English to their pupils using techniques for many different pupil-centred activities. The lessons are fun and lively, and the pupils learn quickly and speak good English.

The student teachers also teach extra-curricular activities, and this year the pupils

are enjoying football training, netball and general games, singing, art, reading, and the video club.

The Commissioner for Education, Mr Ndeki, asked Katy about the noticeable results of the project so far. Katy told him that undoubtedly the oral English of the children had greatly improved, that their written English still needed more work and attention, but overall the children's confidence and keenness was the most rewarding result. Mr Ndeki was pleased and promised he would come to visit the project. He also said he thought the project was one about which he might approach the British Council for its expansion across the country.

The student teachers continue to accompany some of their pupils on school outings. Last summer 52 pupils went to see the sea at Pangani.



Pangani beach provides great amusement

In October, Guerba World Travel Ltd gave, for the fifth year, a week long safari in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater. 18 pupils who had completed their Standard VII examinations at the end of primary school, took part and had the time of their lives pitching tents and eating to excess between day-long game drives.

This year 54 pupils went to Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Parks to see the animals, and they will go to Pangani in the summer.

The children look forward to these outings for months, and after each trip they are

excited and inspired, not believing that such things had existed before they saw them. It is the fees from the student teachers which make the outings possible. Our student teachers, 32 in all since the inception of the project in 1998, have made a remarkable contribution to the education of the children and to the success of our work overall.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING LEADS TO PAID WORK

Mshiri Vocational Training School has completed its second year under the guidance of its Principal, Mr Brighton Mariki. The first intake of carpentry and masonry students have now graduated.



The masonry students make their own bricks

During their course they built a new classroom at the school, and for their final masonry examination they began building a further classroom/workshop. They also made tables, a wardrobe and a bed, as well as the window frames and windows for the classroom. Six of the graduates have formed a small workgroup and they are being engaged by the charity to work on the primary school renovation projects, and they also have a contract for work from Mshiri Lutheran Church.

The current carpentry and masonry students continue to finish the new classroom/workshop, and have contracts to build new brick stoves for two primary schools.

The art and craft students who finished their course last year have also formed their own workgroup. They remain at the school and produce goods and market them themselves.

Two volunteers from England, Julian Stapley and Ian Fletcher, spent two weeks with them this year helping with marketing and with ideas for new products. Julian and Ian were impressed by the standards they saw at the school.

The art and craft teachers, Rose and Samuel, have had some specialist training in drawing and sewing to help their work, and in the next few months they will have training in drum making, and advanced batik techniques. Rose and Samuel have been asked to hold a seminar on basic batik by local women's groups.

Susan Lowe, who helped to set up the art and craft course in 1999 and who returned for two months in 2000, is hoping to visit again early in 2002.

The school expects to be connected to three phase high tension electricity shortly. We hope to raise funds for a planing machine. This would help the students to produce better quality woodwork, and its commercial use would bring an income into the school.

NEW AND OLD FACES ON THE PROJECTS

Mr Josiah Kessy, a retired Chief Inspector of Education, has been working with us since last year. He started at the Vocational Training School but now also helps at the Teachers' Resource Centre. He is an excellent administrator, and is also helping us liaise with the education offices in the district and the region so that the work at the Vocational Training School and at the Teachers' Resource Centre is known about and supported. With his years of experience and many contacts his advice is invaluable.

We have a night-watchman, cleaner and gardener at the Teachers' Resource Centre all in the person of Soldier. Soldier has made a vegetable garden and planted flowers and trees. We plan to have an official opening of the Centre in August 2001 and so Soldier is working hard to make it look good.

Wilibrute continues as our messenger, and is making good progress with his reading and writing. With all the visiting volunteers his spoken English is improving too.



Josiah Kessy and Dilly Mtui

Dilly Mtui continues as the Tanzanian co-ordinator of all the projects. He works tirelessly and is responsible for all the projects and the volunteers. When Katy visits Kilimanjaro his workload is marginally reduced, but the success of the projects is largely due to Dilly's methodical organisation, meticulous supervision, energy, good-humour, and firm but charming manner.

Regina Mlay has worked in the Village Crafts shop selling the craft produce of Mshiri Vocational Training School since March 1999. Mlay has good English for the tourist customers and keeps excellent shop

records. As the shop is at Marangu Mtoni she helps with the purchase and delivery of materials for other projects, and is often a central point of contact for Dilly, Kessy, Wilibrute and Katy.

OUR THANKS, AND A REQUEST

We would like to thank all our supporters who have made and are making our work possible. Our particular thanks for help this year go to **British Airways** in Dar es Salaam for donating a return ticket for the second time to Katy, to **Guerba World Travel Limited** for their continued generous support and for the October safari, to the **Marangu Hotel** for the use of their telephone and e-mail, and to Cynthia Stacey, an influential freelance journalist in Dar es Salaam, for her help, hospitality and introductions.

Over the past year we have found a growing need for a video camera for use with training at the Teachers' Resource Centre, for publicity material for our 'gap year' programme, and for our links with UK schools. If anyone is able to donate this or can put us in touch with a possible donor we would be most grateful. Please telephone Katy Allen on 01732 459799



Grateful teachers after Zuhura's seminar at the TRC

We hope that this Newsletter shows how your gifts are enabling our work with the pupils, the teachers, and with the young people at the vocational training school to establish long-term benefits to the whole community.

Education is life – Elimu ni uhai

There are new rules to help charities reclaim tax on donations of any amount from donors who are taxpayers. If you would like Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro) to be able to reclaim the tax on your donation, or future donations, please complete the following declaration:-

Full name & title: _____
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Postcode: _____ Telephone number: _____

I would like my donation(s) to be (a) Gift Aid donation(s). My donations are:-

The donation of £_____ made to you on _____ 2001*

All donations I make under the direct debit mandate/banker's order below* *please delete if not applicable

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Remember, to be Gift Aid donations you must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your donations (28p for every £1 you give).

Date: _____ Signed: _____

◆ If you would like to give again please make your cheque payable to 'Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro)' and send it to **Mint Cottage, Prospect Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3UA.**

◆ If you would rather donate by credit card (Visa/MasterCard/CharityCard) please complete the following:

'I wish to make a donation of £_____ to Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro)'

Card number:

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*this cannot be earlier than the date you sign this order

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Pay to Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro) a/c 13643487,
National Westminster Bank plc (60-19-02) 67 High Street
Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1LA. Reg. Charity No: 1041672

THANK YOU VERY MUCH
VILLAGE EDUCATION PROJECT (KILIMANJARO)

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