

PROJECT'S PROGRESS



VILLAGE EDUCATION PROJECT KILIMANJARO

Registered Charity No 1041672

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SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER – Summer 2008

This year has seen a significant increase in the charity's reputation and recognition, and the project work has a satisfactory cohesion at all levels. Our original mainstay programmes of support to government primary schools continue with building renovations, and volunteers helping the pupils to learn English. Our computer centre has become a focal point for secretarial services and internet use, and the vocational training school is steadily progressing towards self-sufficiency.

However, it is our work on our Whole School Development programme that has consumed most of our time and energy, and that has brought such encouraging results. This programme seeks to improve the quality of government primary education by addressing the teachers' need for on-the-job training and support, the headteachers' need for administrative and management skills, the need for school committees (the equivalent of school governors) to understand their roles and receive training in how best to support their school, and the need for parents to play a part in their children's education and take more interest in their school. In addition there is the need for better communications and relations



Anne Samson, the Minister for Education, Katy Allen

between district officials and the schools, and the need for district officials to be able to give suggestions and recommendations to higher levels of authority. All aspects of primary education need to be embraced, and only with a long-term programme can this be done successfully. Our programme is unique in that it is not a 'funded programme' with a set life-span. Many programmes in education receive funding for three or five years and that unfortunately dictates the life of the work whether viable or not.

Dr Anne Samson, a teacher and teacher-trainer originally from South Africa but now in London, researches and oversees the programme. Dilly Mtui, our Tanzanian co-ordinator, oversees its day-to-day running

assisted by Mama Sandi, the co-ordinator of Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre. The District Education Officer (DEO) for Moshi Rural district, Mr Msheri, in whose district nearly all the work is conducted, is fully involved and his office gives vital support for the work. In addition volunteers from the UK are involved as well as Tanzanian consultants and specialist trainers.

In the three selected primary schools which are mainly involved in the programme, in-service training is provided each week for the teachers using two periods when all the pupils attend church for religious instruction. By request these sessions now concentrate on subject topics. Most difficulties are encountered in English, maths and science since there are many topics which the teachers do not understand well enough to be able to teach them. Over the months we have seen some teachers display formerly hidden teaching skills simply because they have gained confidence in their subject knowledge. Ruth Senior, a UK primary school teacher, worked with us on this aspect of teacher-training for 14 months but, regrettably, decided to return to the UK in November 2007 to pursue her career. Dilly Mtui and Mama Sandi have since taken over Ruth's role.



Dilly Mtui (c) training local teachers

In August 2007 Dr Anne Samson organised a small team of teacher-trainers from the UK to work with the teachers in their schools for two weeks. For Parvez Alam, a maths specialist, and Safina Alam, a pre-primary specialist, it was their second visit. Cathy Hopley, a science specialist, Alan Carter, an English language specialist, and Jo Draper a skills specialist, completed the team. They

concentrated on planning and teaching difficult topics, and at the end of their assignment jointly gave a one-day seminar. This demonstrated various teaching techniques and the organisation of group work.

Within the schools, leadership and management are noticeable problems. Headteachers are on the timetable as teaching staff and have no support for the running of the school. As most schools perform according to the quality of their leadership the running of the school is a crucial component in our programme. In May 2007 an initial training course was provided for the headteachers, and their deputies, of the three participating primary schools. In early December 2007 a further training course was held. Both were led by Mr Evans Lushakuzi, himself a former teacher.



Evans Lushakuzi with primary school teachers

Dilly Mtui and Mama Sandi participated as well as Mrs Sawaya, a school inspector from the District office for Moshi rural. Both of these courses were a great success, not only in building supportive friendships among the participants but also in leading to practical action in the schools whereby duties were delegated to fellow staff members thus engendering teamwork. This has since led to the proper election of school prefects and monitors and the further delegation of duties to them.

Evans Lushakuzi has made two follow-up visits to offer support and advice to the staff and to receive feedback on the changes being implemented. A third training course for those same participants was planned, but

the headteachers and the inspector advised that the next step should be to work with the school committees, and so ensure that they work with the headteachers towards the same aims for their school. We are in liaison with Evans Lushakuzi and another Tanzanian trainer to design this training.

In addition to working in the schools and with the teachers, we have been conscious of the need to involve the district officials more effectively in the programme. All too often many policies are formed and initiatives begun at central level, with the aid of diverse foreign partners and organisations, and the district officials are not given opportunities to enter into any debate or given channels through which to feed their own views and suggestions for change. Most of the officials are ex-teachers and have a wealth of experience and know better than most the culture, behaviour and ability of the teachers in their district. They know the condition of their schools and the obstacles in the way of improving the education being delivered. In addition, the national programme to 'decentralise through devolution' is giving greater authority to the district officials.

In order to enable the district officials of Kilimanjaro region to have a forum for their views we organised two workshops. Each lasted two days and each was held in a hotel in Moshi. The seven DEOs from the seven districts of Kilimanjaro region attended together with the district chief inspectors of schools. This was the first time they had sat together in their own meeting and they themselves described it as an 'historic event in Kilimanjaro.' We joined with SNV, the Netherlands development agency, for these workshops and SNV provided the facilitator. The workshops analysed the process for making district education plans which DEOs draw up each year; how those relate to eventual funding; what impedes the implementation of those plans and what other plans are imposed and prevail. This gave rise to realisations about the planning and budgetary process at district level which renders some of the planning work redundant. The inspectorate office is quite separate, and there was an honest

acknowledgement of lack of communication between the offices of the inspectors and the DEOs in all districts. Also very few had realised the constraints affecting the work in the other's office. The roles of all participants in the regional educational system were examined with a consideration of the flow of information between them. Improvements needed were immediately recognised. The first steps to producing an annual calendar were discussed, and all the participants noted other practical steps that they could easily take to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their work.



The DEOs and Inspectors gather after the workshop

The workshops produced a list of recommendations. Those were put to the Regional Administrative Secretary and the Regional Education Officer at a special meeting, and are to be discussed at greater length. The DEOs and inspectors requested more workshops as there are many issues yet to be covered. It is encouraging that the forum has been established, and that a channel has been created for the combined experience and views of these officials to be recorded and their recommendations relayed to other officials in the education system.

A link has been established with Singa Chini Teacher Training College. This is a government college just outside Moshi. It provides pre-service training for primary school teachers. Our programme to date has worked in primary schools with trained teachers supporting them with in-service training. It is an obvious step to consider the components and quality of pre-service training. Dr Anne Samson, Dilly Mtui and Katy Allen met three tutors from the college;

the vice principal, the academic dean and the pre-primary specialist at the beginning of April. All tutors agreed that the present pre-service training does not produce primary school teachers capable of delivering quality education to their pupils. They all put forward reasons for the cause of the decline in standards, and all had practical ideas for how to improve the training. They expressed great interest in researching and reporting but had never had an outlet for their views. It is hoped that our work with Singa Chini Teacher Training College will lead to recommendations for the improvement of the pre-service training, and to a proposed programme for in-service training.

In January 2008 Katy Allen produced a paper on the teaching of English as a foreign language in the primary schools. This was based on her 14 years' experience in the schools, and an analysis of textbooks and syllabi. The paper evidenced the decline in the standard of English speaking and writing and suggested causes of this.

Recommendations were outlined for setting up a timetable for addressing the situation and arresting the decline. The paper was distributed to government officials, university academics, donor organisations and the media. In early April Katy, with Anne Samson and Dilly Mtui, met the Minister for Education & Vocational Training, the honourable Professor Maghembe, to discuss the paper. The minister was himself thinking about re-assessing the teaching material and was very interested in the paper's recommendations. A committee is being formed to consider the teaching of English, and Professor Maghembe invited Katy to be on that committee. The committee is expected to start sitting in May or June. Katy's paper can be viewed on our website at www.kiliproject.org under Newsletters & Documents.

Furtherance of our aims will be greatly helped when Bob Phillips returns. He joined the programme for two weeks in February and now comes for a 15-month assignment in August 2008.

Bob has taught in primary schools, secondary schools, lectured at university, been an Ofsted inspector, and is shortly to retire after 16 years as Education Adviser to Stockport MBC. Bob will work with the teachers and pupils in the primary schools, as well as liaising with district officials, teacher training colleges and regional and central government officials on all aspects of our Whole School Development programme.



Bob Phillips meeting local teachers

PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLING

Many primary schools now have a pre-primary class, or classes, following the Tanzanian government's recent decision to establish pre-primary schooling within the primary education sector. Pre-primary training is now a single component of the pre-service training at teacher training colleges. However, many primary schools have to assign their existing teachers to pre-primary, and so many pre-primary classes are being taught by teachers who have not been trained in the educational needs of 5-7 year olds.

In August 2007 Mr Temba, from Singa Chini Teacher Training College, conducted a four-day course for 18 pre-primary teachers in the Marangu area. This was successful but highlighted the teachers' lack of familiarity with educational play, and lack of understanding of the physical and mental abilities of 5-7 year olds and the expectations to be put upon them. In March 2008 Mr Temba returned to give further training over four days. This involved visiting five pre-primary classes at different schools to assess the different conditions, teaching materials and teaching techniques.

It also involved some mini-teaching practices with groups of 5-7 year olds.



Teaching practice with pre-primary pupils

Mr Temba and the teachers examined the stages of development of children, and the teachers were helped to construct a scheme of work suitable for this age group, together with guidelines to assess their pupils' progress. The teachers were motivated and inspired, but still lack confidence. They have requested more training and practical support in their schools.

For the first time we have had a 'gap year' volunteer assisting at pre-primary level. Ed Brunet joined the programme in October 2007 and helped Mama Matesha teach fifty 5-7 year olds at Mshiri primary school, and also assisted at Masia Marangu primary school with the pre-primary class of 30 young pupils. Ed taught the English language part of the curriculum, and ably undertook the morning drill of getting the children lined-up to take their shoes off and to file into class. He learned sufficient Swahili to take on the role of teaching assistant.

TEACHING VOLUNTEERS

Our 'gap year' teaching programme was highlighted in a Sunday Times article which had chosen just ten 'gap year' organisations. This was then picked up by the Saturday Telegraph.

The volunteers who have been in Kilimanjaro since January are between them teaching English to Standards II, IV and VI in four primary schools. The fee paid by each volunteer enables two school outings to be run each year. In August 2007 32 pupils went to Pangani and saw the sea for the first

time, visited a sisal estate and factory and explored the historic town of Pangani. In March 2008 26 pupils went on an overnight trip to Lake Manyara National Park. On the way they saw a plane land and another take off at Arusha airstrip and then they entered the park and saw baboons, giraffe, buffalo and lionesses. They were then far too excited to sleep!

For next year's programme we anticipate that at least six volunteers will be travelling to Kilimanjaro.

SCHOOL RENOVATIONS

Improving the physical structures of village primary schools was once the main focus of our work. This is now no longer the case but there are always schools that desperately need help.

Our total renovation of Kilaremo primary school is now complete. When part of its roof was blown off in a storm we stepped in to help. The school now has two new classrooms after the conversion of an old, unused dining room. There are new school lavatories, bright classrooms with tables and benches and glass in the windows.



Kilaremo primary school fully renovated

Our work at Kochakindo primary school continues. The new school lavatory is finished, and the old, condemned one has fallen down. We have started building a pre-primary school. In addition, a house for a teacher needs to be completed as government money was insufficient. Kochakindo is remote and teachers are posted there without suitable accommodation.

Marimemi primary school and Masia Marangu primary school are both being assisted with the building of new staff lavatories.

GUERBA COMPUTER CENTRE

The Centre is busy and popular. Its photocopying and secretarial services are relied upon by neighbouring schools and churches which lack electricity and equipment. Many villagers come to use the internet facilities. There is a steady flow of young people taking computer courses, practising what they have learned or returning to up-grade their skills.



Primary school pupils enjoy the computer centre

Primary school pupils come every afternoon to enjoy the varied programmes on the Acorn computers. These particularly help the children to learn and enjoy mathematics.

MSHIRI VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL

The school was set-up by the charity in 1999 as a way to help young people learn practical skills. It has courses in masonry, carpentry, tailoring & crafts. The school is registered under the Vocational Education Training Authority (VETA) and its students sit the recognised VETA examinations. The school hopes to expand and to become a boarding school so that it can take students from other localities. An accommodation block has been built with the help of groups of volunteers from Quest Overseas. In January a further Quest group came and floored, plastered and painted the top floor. Also glass was put in the windows and both lower floors were given an extra coat of paint. There remains much to be done to complete the interior and to furnish it, but it

is hoped that the first in-take of students will be in 2009.

This year the vocational training school has benefited from visits by Susan Lowe and Martine Stevens. Both have worked at the school before. Susan's assignment concentrated on new product designs and managing orders for the shop, and Martine worked on the craft syllabus and teaching techniques.



Martine Stevens during her assignment

The training school has a shop and café, Village Crafts, at Marangu Mtoni which is an attraction for passing tourists. Village Crafts sells items made by the school's students. It has also started to buy-in stock from a Maasai jewellery maker and from local artisans. The shop moved into its new premises in September 2007.



The new shop attracts local customers

The interior of the new shop was designed and fitted by several volunteers and we are particularly grateful to Martine Stevens, Ebony Andrews and Amanda Bennett. The shop is now a very popular local meeting place, and many families come on Sunday afternoon with their children. Next to the shop is a traditional Chagga house to show tourists and local children how the Chagga

tribe used to live. The shop and Chagga house make a small profit that helps with the school's running costs.

On the school site the carpentry workshop continues as another income-generating venture for the school. Equipped with donated industrial, electrical machinery it is run by Gilbert Mremi who takes a percentage of the profit. The rest of the profit helps the school. Students on the second and third year of the carpentry course receive training on the machinery.

THE YEAR AHEAD

Our Whole School Development programme will continue to be the main focus of our work.

However, we can reflect with satisfaction on the new buildings and improved classrooms for pupils and teachers. We have introduced fun into school life as pupils participate in the volunteers' English teaching programme. We have begun to work with teachers to help their classroom teaching and their administrative skills, and we are building from this at ground level. We will now complement this by influencing those within the upper levels of the education system. Change is needed so that schools are not adversely affected by poor planning within those upper levels.

One aspect will be to collect and disseminate the views of experienced Tanzanians working in the education sector so that they join national debates that are open to foreign donors. Working with the Singa Chini Teacher Training College to formulate a programme for in-service training will be another strand. And now we welcome the beginning of Bob Phillips' assignment.

The other areas of our work outlined above will continue. At the computer centre we are considering up-grading the internet connection from our service provider, and at the vocational training school we will hope to complete the accommodation in order for boarding students to enrol.

Our website is undergoing change and a 'new look'. We hope that those with access to the internet will enjoy looking at it from time to time.

Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro) has received tax-exempt status in the United States under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Therefore, US contributions to that organisation are deductible for tax purposes.

Our long-term, flexible approach to our work with stated aims and strategies but no rigid timetables or targets is suited to the way things work in the Tanzanian culture. This approach does not, however, lend itself to getting funding. Many sources of grants have criteria which necessitate plans with strict time-tabling of aims and results. Maintaining our income is a constant endeavour. However, we are careful with expenditure, and without guaranteed funding we have a policy of keeping money in reserve. We continue to rely on our existing donors and feel that our use of money and our results are impressive. Our administrative costs have never risen above 5% and have averaged 3% of our income per annum. We thank all those who continue to support our work and who value our long-term commitment to improve the education of the young people of Kilimanjaro



A newly-appointed class monitor

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

There are 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: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____ Telephone number: _____ Email: _____

I would like my donation(s) to be (a) **Gift Aid** donation(s). My donations are:
The donation of £_____ made to you on _____ 2008*
All donations I make under the standing order 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:

Expiry Date: _____

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◆ **BANKER'S STANDING ORDER MANDATE**

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and on the same day each month/quarter/half year/year for _____
(state period)/until further notice.**

*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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