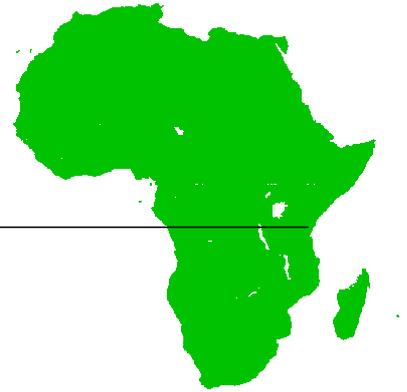


PROJECT'S PROGRESS



VILLAGE EDUCATION PROJECT (Kilimanjaro)

Registered Charity No 1041672

Registered as an International NGO in Tanzania: SO No 9680

In association with Education Projects Committee

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SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER – Summer 2006

At last the importance of education in sub-saharan Africa is on the world stage centre front.



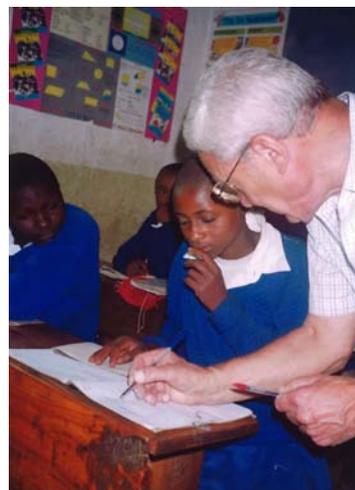
The District Education Officer (l) with the three headteachers (r)

Our programme of 'whole school development' (WSD) has begun. It is very gratifying that the District Education Officer, who is responsible for 240 primary schools over an area of 1,764 square kilometres, has agreed our programme in outline to run for an initial, renewable, period of 7 years. A written agreement to the broad terms of our operation is being finalised.

Our programme is on a small scale in the national picture but our years of work to date, with teachers in government primary

schools, means that we have unique experience of the teaching/learning taking place, the constraints hindering change and of the needs of the pupils, teachers and headteachers. This experience is only of value if, ultimately, we can use it to influence change at higher levels in the education system.

The main thrust of our work is in three government primary schools, but along the way we hope to offer in-service training to teachers from other schools. Only three schools were chosen because of our limited resources and a fear of otherwise taking on a task we could not carry out to a sufficient standard.



Geoffrey Dixon working with the children

As part of our programme we are planning a course for headteachers, focusing on team-building with the aim of the head and his teachers forming a united team to be involved in the running and development of the school. This training will be a forerunner to later development of management skills. We also plan training for school committee members, typically villagers who should perform the role of school governors. They need to understand their roles and responsibilities and need to be helped with the skills required to assist the day-to-day affairs of their school, and to communicate educational information to the community in order to link the community to its school. There is a huge need also for development work in the community so that parents and villagers value their local primary school and learn how to budget for the costs of educating their children. For all of this training we are proposing to liaise with MS Training Centre for Development Co-operation in Arusha (northern Tanzania) which is a Danish organisation. They have over 25 years' experience and have highly trained Tanzanian consultants. A one-week residential course, as outlined above, for a headteacher would cost approximately £430 all-inclusive. A course in the village for school committee members, for one week, would cost about £125 per head. We hope to start these in 2007.

A link with a Teacher Training College will be another necessary aspect of this programme.

However, the most important aspect of the programme is in-service training for the primary school teachers in their knowledge of the subjects they teach and how to teach effectively. Various specialists have already helped. In July 2005 Patricia Mulkeen, a lecturer in languages at Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, came from Ireland to work on English as a foreign language. Patricia embarked on shared teaching in the lessons and found that it worked well. Eleni Pithis, an English language lecturer at the University of Sharjah, came for her sixth visit in January 2006, and she developed her own previous work with Patricia's in the three schools. English is a great challenge as

the teachers' command of the language is not confident, so the methods of teaching that the pupils can understand are, therefore, even harder to adopt.

Geoffrey Dixon, a primary school headteacher for 27 years who has also worked on education projects in the Maldives and Solomon Islands, visited for the fourth time in January 2006 for two months. He too worked in the classrooms with the local teachers both sharing teaching and mutual observation in mainly maths and English lessons. Geoffrey also took advantage of 80 minutes of religious instruction for the whole school taught by the local vicar once a week in each school, to be able to sit with all teachers. In this way he worked through five phases of teaching and learning and what they mean and entail: teaching; learning; practice; revision; and testing.

To illustrate the level at which Geoffrey worked with the teachers, after his experience of their needs from his other visits, he particularly stressed, inter alia, that: the lesson and materials have to be prepared; the teacher should appear happy; the teacher should call pupils by name and ask questions to individuals; practice work should be organised in ability groups and the



Group work counting with bottle tops

children be encouraged to ask questions. In all of his work over the two months Geoffrey saw some signs of this but he saw no sign of children being encouraged to ask questions. This, of course, stems from the teachers' lack of confidence, and shows that this work needs to be continuous over a long period of time.

Dr Anne Samson, a teacher and teacher-trainer from London, is conducting research for the WSD programme, and has written the outline for the initial 7 years. Anne and four of her colleagues will visit in August 2006 to work in the three schools intensively for two weeks to assist English, maths, science and general teaching skills. Anne will then continue to oversee the programme. We have recruited Ruth Senior to work full-time on the programme in Tanzania to act as overall co-ordinator and to run the in-service training. Ruth is a UK primary school teacher who also has English language teaching qualifications. She has previous experience working in Tanzanian primary schools, and will start with us in Kilimanjaro in September 2006. Ruth has kindly agreed to work with us for payment equivalent to that of a VSO volunteer.

We don't underestimate the enormity of our task since the reason for the constraints on our plans are many: teacher absences are numerous and have a great impact on the work of the schools; traditional, mindless chanting, particularly in early classes, is an ineffective learning method which persists; examinations and tests are given a priority that exceeds their true value; corporal punishment is still used too much; there is lack of coherent or cogent government plans for any in-service training; the often intransigent authority imposed by the inspectorate is unhelpful for the teachers and there is inappropriate content and order of learning in some of the syllabi.

However, the teachers openly enthuse about the in-service training provided by our volunteers, and nearly all of them are keen to try to develop their knowledge and their teaching. Many managed to adopt some of the techniques of participatory teaching and seemed to enjoy doing so. Their desire for learning aids shows that they see them as having great potential benefit. Bonna Temu, a teacher who worked with Geoffrey, confessed (from her Swahili), 'I see the benefit of group work for different abilities but it takes a lot of preparation work. I am adopting it when I can in maths lessons. I am learning a lot from Geoffrey, but we

need him to come for longer so that we can learn more.'



Bonna Temu

Katy Allen and Eleni Pithis contributed in January to a seminar organised through the Ministry of Education at zonal level and made some very useful contacts. In March Katy was one of the trainers at a workshop for English language teachers across Moshi Rural District, and hopes to continue to help in a training role within the District.

We hope that working slowly at primary school level and documenting all the in-put and the reactions of the teachers and the perceived and real results will enable us to report to the District and Central Ministry with some tried and tested recommendations for constructive and sustainable change.

We are sure that we have an important role to play in Tanzania's primary education sector to make known the real causes of the lack of quality education. Effecting change so that the quality of education is noticeably improved will take at least a generation. Rather than shy away from the daunting task we relish the opportunity to try to influence the process. Only a long-term, dedicated and determined effort will assist Tanzania's primary education.

TEACHING PROGRAMME FOR VOLUNTEERS

We continue with our 'gap year' programme for volunteers to teach English as a foreign language to the primary school pupils. For the 2006 school year we have four graduates and one sixth-form leaver teaching English to year 2, 4 and 7 pupils in five schools.

It is gratifying that this programme, run by us in those five schools since 1998, is having a greater impact than we thought.

Both Geoffrey Dixon and Eleni Pithis working on our 'whole school development' programme observed that the teachers at the school which had not had 'gap year' volunteers were less confident when using new teaching methods and the standard of the pupils' English was lower. It seems that the presence of the volunteers from the UK over the years has introduced the local teachers to different teaching methods, and has helped to improve the confidence of all pupils to speak English.

PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Our building and renovation work is no longer a central part of our operations. Most of our projects are reaching completion. The new staff-room and office for Nganyeni primary school needs only paint and some new furniture to be ready for the teachers to move in. The pre-primary school in the grounds of Mshiri primary school is also ready to be painted, and furniture for it is being made at the new workshop which is part of Mshiri Vocational Training Centre.

However, we are undertaking a new primary school renovation at Kilaremo primary school in response to a donor's request for a project to fund. Soon after the donor agreed to fund Kilaremo a huge storm took the roof and rafters off one of their classroom blocks. Help for this school is now needed more than ever!



Kilaremo primary school after the storm

GUERBA COMPUTER CENTRE

The Guerba Computer Centre (GCC), initially constructed and equipped with sponsorship money raised by a climb of Kilimanjaro organised by Guerba World Travel Ltd on our behalf, has seen major developments. In September 2005 the Centre was connected to satellite for internet

access. After research we used GT&T in Belgium and signed-up for 5 lines to have 24 hour access for a 12 month term. The connection and service is good. Access to the internet has brought in many customers, and this has helped the other services offered at the Centre to be more widely known.

In February Mike Clarke came for his fourth visit, and worked with the GCC manager, Tony Mollé, to set-up a new computer classroom. The Centre now has the original computer room operating as an internet-café with photocopying, laminating and secretarial services provided. It has the new computer room for computer training, and a room with Acorn computers for use by primary school children. It is a thriving, buzzing centre operating partly commercially and also as part of our education programme.



The internet-café at the Guerba Computer Centre

There is a rota for primary school children to come each afternoon after school to work on English, maths, art and music programmes in the Acorn room. They love this opportunity, and at a quarter past three the comparative quiet of the Centre is invaded with the incredible noise summoned by the chosen twelve children racing down the hill and shrieking, each trying to be the first in. Until five o'clock the only noise is from the computers as they 'speak' English sentences, make noises to congratulate correct maths answers, and play bars of composed music.

There is also a rota for primary school teachers to come after school to learn basic computer skills and to be shown and taught how computers could help them in their work – particularly with the administration

of writing schemes of work and reports. Some teachers have experimented with using the internet to view educational sites, but the difficulty they have with the English language is still a barrier to the success of this.



The new computer training room

Many secondary school students come to learn computer skills, particularly in the school holidays, in order to gain a skill to help them with further studies or to get a job. People from several villages come to the GCC to get photocopies made, letters typed, certificates laminated, digital photographs printed, or invitation cards printed.

MSHIRI VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

The work here, as at the GCC, is quite distinct from our work in the government primary schools. This Centre was built and is run as a project of Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro) and is not part of the government's district education programme. However, the Centre is registered with the national Vocational Education Training Authority (VETA) and the students sit the national examinations operated by VETA.

The Centre caters mainly for children who leave primary school at age 14 with no hope of a secondary school education. If they can acquire a skill and an examination certificate they have a very good chance of employment or of starting their own sole-trader business.

Each year the school receives applications from students from far away who would have to have accommodation so are turned down. In conjunction with Quest Overseas a

group of architect students from Edinburgh University and elsewhere designed an accommodation building, fundraised and came to Mshiri in August 2005 for two months to start to build it. Working with local skilled labour who had already laid the foundations, they built the ground floor and prepared for the first floor slab to be laid. Work has continued, boosted by another group from Quest Overseas who plastered and painted the ground floor and paid for all plumbing and electrical connections, as well as windows and doors. The building will be two-storeys, and a computer-generated image can be seen on our website.



The new workshop with accommodation being built behind

Having accommodation will not only help the training centre to have more pupils, but will also help us to promote the GCC for residential courses.



Gilbert, Philip and Tumanieli in the new workshop

The new carpentry workshop, built near the training centre, started operating in February 2006. Mike Clarke had procured the donation of the machinery and was on site to install it. Mike was joined by Philip Sewell, a cabinet-maker from Leicestershire, who volunteered to help train two local carpenters, Tumanieli and Gilbert, in the use of the machines and with design ideas. The

workshop is now running as a small business for the two locals who take a percentage of the turnover. In this way the remaining percentage is an income for the running of the training centre. Third year carpentry students at the Centre will have designated training on the machines as well.

HOW THE PROJECTS RUN

Our website will soon show photographs of all those who work on Village Education Project (Kilimanjaro) projects. Sadly, Josiah Kessy, our education adviser, retired in March 2006 because of ill-health.

We have four main offices: the Teachers' Resource Centre with its co-ordinator Mrs Sandi; the Guerba Computer Centre with Tony Mollel as manager; the Vocational Training Centre where Mr Mariki is principal; and our Project Management Unit run by Dilly Mtui the overall co-ordinator of all our operations. The heads of these four centres meet once a fortnight to review their work and to plan for the fortnight ahead. They also meet once every quarter after producing a quarterly report on the previous three months and a plan for the ensuing quarter.

At the Guerba Computer Centre Tony has four staff; his assistant Martina, and three part-time teachers of the Acorn computers. The Vocational Training Centre has six teachers and two people working in the craft shop and café. Mrs Sandi has a librarian who works full-time at the Teachers' Resource Centre. The Project Management Unit is responsible for the housegirls and watchmen who help to look after all visiting volunteers, and staff who assist our building/renovation work, buying of supplies and transportation. In total we have 26 staff.

Our financial needs are changing as the emphasis of our work alters. We are using professional specialists from the UK for some of our teacher-training work. We are lucky that all of them give their time and expertise without charge but we need to fund air tickets, insurance and other incidental costs. Aspects of training on our 'whole school development' programme are best carried out by Tanzanians, and good organisations such as MS Training Centre for Development Co-operation charge commercial rates. However, investing in their expertise should be value for money in the long-term. The accommodation building at the Vocational Training Centre needs to be completed with all furniture and fittings ready for a maximum of 60 students. We will then seek a manager to run and oversee the accommodation and boarding, and to manage all supplies and administration for the training centre. Whilst we strive to run income-generating projects to help the computer centre and vocational training centre neither centre is wholly commercial, and we have recurrent costs such as the fee for the satellite connection and staff salaries. Despite the encouragement for our work from the authorities concerned the financing of it must come from us. However, unlike 'throwing money at Africa' we do offer defined and monitored progress. Your funding is needed and valued more than ever.

Thank you for all your kind and generous support, and best wishes to those who have future fundraising plans – notably two of our trustees and their sons, the Todd family, who climb Kilimanjaro in October 2006. Read all about the climb at <http://www.justgiving.com/ToddFamily>



Helping the primary school teachers is a priority

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 _____ 2006*
All donations I make under the direct debit mandate/banker's order below* *please delete if not applicable
All donations I make on or after the date of this declaration.*

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: _____

Signature: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____
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◆ **BANKER'S STANDING ORDER MANDATE**

I (full name and title) _____

of (address) _____

instruct my bank (name) _____

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to pay the sum of £_____ starting on _____*
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

**please complete or delete as applicable

Signed (signature) _____

Date _____ Account Number _____

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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