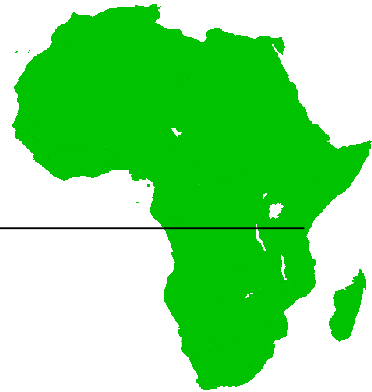


PROJECT'S PROGRESS



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 2004

TEN YEARS ON ...

September 2004 marks the charity's tenth anniversary. After ten years of making great progress the charity is not only consolidating its work to date, but is placing an increased emphasis on training: more training for the people working on the projects to help them to do their jobs more effectively; more help to the primary school teachers who are in the schools within the cluster of Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre.

IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

This is an area that will now have much of our attention, and into which we are putting effort and resources.

Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre (TRC) has eight primary schools within its cluster. A new Centre Co-ordinator, Mrs Eliwangu Sandi, was appointed by the District Education Office in August 2003. Mrs Sandi had been a primary school headteacher for many years and is very experienced, especially in the teaching of English and mathematics.

In September 2003 Mr Geoffrey Dixon came for a further visit of 3 months.

Geoffrey is a volunteer with British Executive Service Overseas (BESO), and his first visit in autumn 2002 had resulted in a report which identified the need for various skilled volunteers. Geoffrey is a retired primary school headteacher with experience of teacher-training. He worked with Mrs Sandi in four of the TRC's cluster schools. Initially they held two seminars introducing all the teachers to the work to be undertaken with them in their schools and the methods to be adopted. The aim was to develop teaching and learning skills, and to establish a framework for future further training and development.



Geoffrey introduces new teaching methods

Mrs Sandi and Geoffrey visited each school for one whole day each week. They worked

with the teachers; presenting demonstration lessons, sharing lessons, and observing lessons so that the teachers could experience and understand the kinds of development that would benefit the children. At the end of each day all the staff would sit together to discuss the issues raised and to set tasks to be pursued before the next visit.

The responses by the four schools varied according to the headteacher's leadership, the interest and motivation of the teachers, the attendance, the teacher-pupil ratios and so on. Individual progress by the teachers varied widely, but some schools and some teachers made good progress. This is a long-term matter, and time and continued effort will be needed before any real results are seen. However, Geoffrey's visit was an excellent start in our programme of in-service teacher training (INSET) and we are delighted that BESO have funding for Geoffrey to return later in 2004 for another 3 month visit.

Meantime Mrs Sandi continues to visit those four schools to observe and give help to the teachers. She has also been working with teachers of Standard I and II in the eight cluster schools, so that pupils are given a better foundation particularly in mathematics.

In January Eleni Pithis returned for her fourth annual visit. Eleni works with the primary school teachers helping them with the teaching of English as a foreign language. She gave 5 seminars to teachers from 22 primary schools, and her methods, identical to those of Geoffrey, are producing results. After four years Eleni is noticing that the teachers are gaining in confidence, are realising the benefits for their pupils, and are now ready to try new methods in the classrooms. Eleni cannot stay long enough to do follow-up work in the schools, but this year she worked on a new programme for some of the local teachers so that they could try to learn more English and teaching techniques from the gap year students.

COMPUTER TRAINING FOR TEACHERS AND OTHERS

The new Guerba Computer Centre is up and running. It was built and equipped with money from a climb of Mount Kilimanjaro organised by Guerba World Travel Ltd on which 14 climbers took part in October 2002. Guerba World Travel Ltd and the Marangu Hotel very generously covered all the expenses of the holidays and the climbs so that every penny of sponsored money came to the charity. The money raised has enabled a two-storey building to be built. The ground floor is finished and furnished, having the computer room, a seminar room, an office and store, and a room for some of the children's Acorn computers. The first and second floors are built but unfurnished, and will be a large hall/seminar room and accommodation for visiting adult volunteers.

The incomparable Mike Clarke volunteered to help for a third year, and had purchased, packed and freighted for the charity 8 flat-screened computers, 2 laptop computers, a black and white laser-jet printer, a colour laser-jet printer, a scanner, a digital projector, 9 chairs on wheels, a filing cabinet, a generator, and even a vacuum cleaner to ensure minimum dust damage once in use!



Brenda Allan in the new computer room

Mike installed all the equipment so that the suite is networked, and the generator fitted to provide back-up supply when the mains electricity fails. He worked with our new Centre manager, Tony Fred, a graduate from Dar University, so that he could understand

all the programming and maintenance requirements.

British Executive Service Overseas (BESO) supplied us with another volunteer, Brenda Allan, a computer trainer who designed a series of courses, test and course materials, and marking schemes. The first courses at the beginning of March this year were run free of charge to invited headteachers and the Principal of Mshiri Vocational Training School. They enjoyed learning in the smart new computer room on such fast machines. They were all determined, and consequently they picked things up quickly. Some have even started touch-typing using the Mavis Beacon Programme. The courses are now open to others, and Tony already has several pupils who have finished secondary school, and some more teachers. Those from primary schools are offered discounted rates. In addition Tony offers secretarial services. Schools will be helped considerably by the computer centre as so many of their administrative tasks ought to be computerised to save time. Until they have learned sufficient skills to produce the documents themselves Tony can help the teachers produce them, and he is working on a series of templates.

The computer centre should create a stream of income; paying for itself and then helping with costs elsewhere on our projects.

Whilst Mike Clarke was in Marangu he also checked on the Acorn computers that he installed over the last two years for primary school pupils. These are still very popular with their educational yet amusing programmes. We have three part-time Acorn teachers who ensure that as many pupils as possible have sessions on the computers and pass through their structured courses so that the pupils learn, although they think it is all just for fun.

ANOTHER SPONSORED CLIMB – FOR A NURSERY SCHOOL

Guerba World Travel Ltd organised another climb of Mount Kilimanjaro that

took place at the beginning of March 2004. Again Guerba World Travel Ltd and the Marangu Hotel covered all the costs of the holidays and the climbs for the 7 participants, so that all sponsorship money came to the charity. The climb raised £19,266.81 and will be used to build a small nursery school as part of Mshiri primary school. The building will have two classrooms, an office and store and an inside lavatory for staff. The foundations and structure will be adequate for a three-storey building, but we will only build a single storey with a slab roof, leaving future users the opportunity to build upwards.

The climbers were all connected with British Airways, and two of them came from America and one from Canada. They visited the charity and some of its projects on 4th March the day before starting their climb.

Guerba World Travel Ltd, for the 8th time, gave 20 pupils and two teachers a week long safari in the Serengeti, using one of their safari trucks. As ever, it was a trip of a lifetime for those involved, seeing lion and cheetah in abundance. The animals were the highlight, but the food was ranked as a very close second! Guerba are giving another Serengeti safari in October this year.

YOUNG UK VOLUNTEERS ENTHUSE THEIR PUPILS

Since 1998 we have had groups of 'gap year' students helping to teach English as a foreign language in village primary schools. They are trained in the UK how to teach English to Tanzanian primary school pupils, and teach from Standard I (7 year olds) to Standard VII - the final year of primary education when pupils sit national examinations to determine who can go on to a government secondary school. This year we have four classes of Standard VII which are the first to have had a gap year, native English speaker every year since Standard I. We are hopeful that their examination results will show an improvement over other Standard VII classes. We have reports from

the primary schools in which our gap year students teach that all the pupils are affected by their presence, whether they are taught by them or not. They are enthused to try to speak better English, and are motivated by the sport and other extra-curricular activities they undertake.



Standard VII pupils learn from Joan, their gap year teacher

In April 2004 we held our second re-union in London for all our past volunteers. This was well attended, and had the added excitement of Kauwerd Kimaro being present. Kauwerd is an evangelist in the Lutheran church in Marangu, and the gap year students had identified him as someone who could benefit from a visit to the UK and learn from it, and so help his work in the parish. To this end it was at their expense that he came and stayed with several of them in their homes, being shown various aspects of British life.

The fee paid by the gap year students to come on the project pays each year for two school outings. In August 2003 42 pupils from Standard IV at Samanga primary school went to Pangani for four days to camp by the Indian Ocean and to see the sea for the first time. This was, again, most successful, and had the now annual disco-dancing competition which all the pupils enter with enormous gusto, driven on by tempting prizes of torches, socks, balls and water pistols.

In February 2004 58 pupils selected from Standard IV in eight different primary schools went to Lake Manyara National

Park for an overnight trip. Unfortunately the lions were elusive, but a cross, stampeding elephant provided a lasting memory for them.



Gap year students' picnic in Lake Manyara National Park

VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING

Our small vocational training school, Mshiri Vocational Training School, has had two visiting volunteers this year. In September 2003 Abigail Amos, a volunteer with British Executive Service Overseas (BESO), came to assess and advise on the products of the art & craft course. Abigail has experience of similar work in other parts of Africa, and was quick to try to narrow the product range, promote local materials and improve the quality of the items. Abigail also made suggestions for changes to the syllabus, as the national Vocational Education Training Authority does not provide one for art & craft.

In January 2004 Martine Stevens came for 3 months. Martine is a secondary school art teacher, and she implemented many of Abigail's suggestions to very good effect. Martine also worked on new designs for greeting cards and has produced a very simple and stylish new range. The art & craft workgroup - a group of 8 girls who have already completed the course - are busy making various items, and their quality control is improving.

The school had a donation of more sewing machines, and the students competently make primary school uniforms for sale, also cushion covers, bags, skirts and other items

made from the fabric they have tie-dyed themselves.

Unfortunately the Village Crafts Shop may have to be relocated because of a scheme to widen the main road at Marangu Mtoni. Martine designed a new shop with more display space, and a bigger area for the café. We hope to build this in time for the tourist season in September 2004. The popular café now brings in a healthy income along with the art & craft sales.



Masonry students begin plastering

The carpentry and masonry students are busy building a new staffroom and principal's office at the school, including ceiling, window and door frames. Later on they will make the furniture.

The school is preparing for Val Moore to visit in October 2004. Val is a trainer for The Prince's Trust, and hopes to prepare materials suitable for teaching business skills to the school's students. They need to know the rudiments of running a business with basic accounts and planning skills.

STAFF ON THE PROJECTS

The charity sponsors the salaries of 23 staff on its various projects. These include night watchmen, house-girls for volunteers, teachers at Mshiri Vocational Training School and staff at Mshiri Teachers' Resource Centre. All of these come from five different villages in the Marangu area, and are a team dedicated to help the work of the charity. There are monthly staff meetings, and for the last two years all have enjoyed a

Christmas party to which their spouses are invited. In September 2003, after many requests, and as a bonus for much committed hard work, all the staff went for the day to Tarangire National Park. Many of these adults had never seen their country's wild animals before and they all thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Following more requests, at the monthly meeting in March 2004 a doctor from the teaching hospital, KCMC, in Moshi gave a talk on caring for victims of HIV/AIDS which was very practical and informative. At the insistence of the younger members all staff now have a uniform. This was chosen by them and sewn for everyone by the tailoring teacher at Mshiri Vocational Training School, Paulo Mamma.



Staff in their chosen uniforms

In addition we have had the good news from the Ministry of Education & Culture, through its District Education Office in Moshi Rural, that Dilly Mtui's contract which enables him to work as our invaluable Project Co-ordinator has been extended for a further 5 year period.

In the UK two new trustees were appointed in June 2003. Sandy and Geof Todd had been helping with administration for several years, and now bring the number of trustees to six. They instigated the idea of the 10th anniversary dinner and are organising the event. Also in June 2003 Dame Judi Dench very kindly agreed to be the charity's patron. To have such a renowned and prestigious name is a great compliment to us.

OUR BUILDING RENOVATION WORK CONTINUES

The first phase of our renovation of Mbahe primary school is complete. The school looks wonderful, and the classrooms are bright and clean with gloss paint, noticeboards, and new tables and benches.



Mbahe primary school is transformed

Phase two, for which we have funding, is to build a meeting/dining hall, new kitchen hut, and to install electricity so that Acorn computers can be available for the pupils to learn and enjoy.

We have started our 9th school renovation at Matala primary school. A group of climbers, living in Dubai, came to climb Mount Kilimanjaro and raised money for this project. The school is in a dilapidated state, and also suffers badly from white ants or termites. We know of no sure way to combat white ants, but we are, as far as possible, avoiding the use of wood. We will have metal windows and doors, and metal tables, but we have not decided yet how to tackle the ceiling as ceiling boards are another favourite with white ants.

We have had the benefit of groups of volunteers doing manual work from two UK organisations - Madventure, and Quest Overseas. These groups have come with money to pay for all the building materials, to pay for local workmen to work alongside them, and for other minor projects. They have employed students who have completed Mshiri Vocational Training School's carpentry and masonry courses, as well as other young workmen.

Madventure sent us a group in July 2003 who worked in Mshiri and Masia primary schools and built a school lavatory block, plastered and painted woodwork of a dining hall, and built outside walls. A group in January this year built a very large lavatory block at Lyakirimu primary school.

Quest Overseas sent us two groups in January to March 2004 who built a nursery classroom with office and store at Ashira primary school. They not only built it but painted it and furnished it, and started to renovate the old, disused dining hall. We look forward to more groups from both organisations in July 2004.



Villagers admire the new nursery classroom

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD AND TEN YEAR CHECK-UP

Hearing Katy Allen interviewed on BBC Radio 4's Midweek in October 2001 prompted Alex Warman to contact the charity to see if he could volunteer his services. Alex is a professional photographer in Bristol, and after years of trying to find time to get away he came to Kilimanjaro in December 2003 for six weeks. Alex worked tirelessly taking photographs of all aspects of the charity's work, and this has provided us with a wonderful set of pictorial records for our 10th anniversary.

After Geoffrey Dixon's initial report prepared for BESO in October 2002, BESO identified the need for a volunteer to review the project, especially the management and human resource aspect, and to suggest means by which any required improvements

may be made so that the charity's work can be replicated across a wider area.

As a result in November 2003 Dr Rosemary Squires came to Marangu for a month. Dr Squires has years of experience working on and advising projects for such as the British Council and the EU, in Tanzania, Nepal, Sudan et al.

In her month she all but tore us apart and put us back together again, and gave the most critical, constructive and helpful review.

Dr Squires' overall recommendation was for a period of consolidation and the strengthening of management. She reported, after experiencing the rural environment and the middle management and other staff, 'the project must work with what human resources it has. To replace the inadequate with more capable people would be difficult if not impossible. As a result every project activity from forward planning, to writing a report, to pruning a rose bush becomes essentially a training activity. The most important role of the project management is effectively as a training organisation... Overall it would be to its advantage if the project saw itself as having more of a support and training role with a definite determination to increase local capacity... There is already pride in being part of the project among junior staff... Overall the project activities have been effective in meeting its objectives. The primary school renovation programme has certainly improved both the learning environment and children's access to text books, better equipment and improved nutrition. The English language teaching has significantly contributed, as has the Teachers' Resource Centre.



'A very significant, but not explicit, contribution is made by the technical and professional volunteers, the market value of contributions of time in 2003 amounted to some £50,000.'

Following on this expert analysis we have new systems in place, many more yet to be adopted, and much more work ahead to ensure that we promote 'best practice' across all our activities. All of this is important if our work is to be long-lasting, and to be replicated in other areas.

We have come a long way in 10 years. Work in education, we feel, cannot be properly reduced to programmes of 5 years or other finite periods, but is a continuous process of awareness, development and change. We are satisfied that, in our first 10 years, we have started that process, that our work is recognised, and that we have the local support to carry on and build together.

We would like to thank all our donors for their support of our projects over the years, especially those who donated at the very beginning when we had no track-record. Without that support we could not be looking back over 10 years, and whilst, of course, the large donations are wonderful for any organisation to receive, we value most highly the 'widow's mite' and the desire of all our supporters to provide education and hope to the village children of Kilimanjaro.

Thank you all so very much for helping us to come this far.

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.