



AMANI CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Newsletter

20 May 2001

Dear Friends,

Please forgive me for not writing our newsletter which usually goes out in November: my brother died unexpectedly in November of last year. I was at home for Christmas and for my granddaughter's wedding on 29 December at St Aldate's Church in Oxford. I left for Kenya on 2 January and finally came back to the UK at the beginning of March.



The Housegirls programme at Amani

2000. They are very popular with the community and we are expecting them back for further periods in the future. John continued working on the kitchen complex and doing some driving. Hazel has continued with HIV /AIDS and counselling.

On the whole whilst I was away from Kenya things continued smoothly although we continued to have serious financial difficulties owing to the 50 % cut in funding by our main donor, Bread for the World (owing to financial constraints in Germany). We are, however, very fortunate in being able to earn something for ourselves through the Seminar Accommodation.

John and Hazel Prestwich were out in Kenya from September to December



The HIV widows sing together in their own choir

During July 2000 we were visited by twelve members of the Youth



Housegirls learn to cook

Group from Hazlemere Church in High Wycombe. They had been allowed 50 kg of luggage each so were able to bring plenty of clothes, books, 2 large speakers from St Aldates Church, and other things for the HIV Orphans and Widows. Much of their time was spent in visiting orphans and widows and praying with them. Time was also spent with the young people in the JAM Club. Derek, the pastor from Hazlemere, and Jim Leftwich were asked to join the JAM Club's board of management. Arrangements were made to incorporate Kennedy Akoth (who had completed his training as a Social Worker) and now appointed to take charge of JAM plus the

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orphans and widows HIV/AIDS programme, to come onto the payroll of Amani. His salary is being paid by Hazlemere Church. At the end of their 12 days with us we went on a camping Safari to the Masai Mara for 2 days. Another group are coming this July - this time 16 people.

Our next visitor was my granddaughter, Susie Woolmer, a medical student, with friends from Bristol University. They started building a craft centre for the widows and others to sell their produce. This was later opened by the D.O. when he came to present the orphans with school uniforms that the widows had made. Susie's group were on their way to Uganda where Susie had previously taught during her Gap year.

My grandson, Jamie Feilden, also came to visit with a friend from Edinburgh University. They gave Jerry a goat which, in January 2001, had 2 male kids, much to Jerry's delight!

Jim Caulfield came again in January with his friend Fran for 5 weeks.

Whilst with us he investigated the possibility of obtaining water from another borehole behind Amani. Since then we have had a survey done by Rural Water and got permission to cross Kassim Owango's land. We have made out a proposal to pump water from the borehole using solar electricity. One of our UK Trustees, Alan Reed, who is a water engineer, has been very useful and active in organising this. He has put in an application to the Shell Energy Programme for funding. If the application is successful it will make a tremendous difference to life at Amani: not only in supplying both hot and cold water, but serving the compound as well as our neighbours. It would also save much expense and time in running two generators for 12 hours a day and wear and tear on the pick-up truck going backwards and forwards to fetch water.

THE AREA WE COVER

For the past 15 years we have covered a local area which includes about 70,000 people. We have given many opportunities to the farmers in that area. We taught PRA (Participatory Rural Assessment) which helps the people to assess their needs. We have decided to gradually withdraw from that area and have started doing PRA in the next door area, covering now some 120,000 people. Action Aid are contributing towards this. However, our major problem is the need for new transport. Our pick-up truck is due for replacement and we only have one motorbike. This has not been on the road since last year as we could not pay the bill for its repairs. The cost of a new one was to have been in the budget from Bread for the World but owing to their cut of 50% we cannot now afford to buy this. As we use the pick-up often for the HIV /

SPONSORED STUDENTS

PAUL HAS NOW FINISHED AT SCHOOL AND WOULD LIKE TO GO FOR FURTHER VOCATIONAL TRAINING. AT PRESENT HE IS HELPING IN THE COMPOUND.

A CONTRIBUTION WAS MADE TOWARDS TOM'S SON WHO HAS LEFT TO STUDY MEDICINE IN AMERICA. TOM WAS A PREVIOUS MANAGER FOR US.

JOHN OBONGO STARTED A 9 MONTH COURSE IN TOURISM.

We have made out a proposal to pump water from the

CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MADE TOWARDS SCHOOL FEES AND FURTHER TRAINING TO SEVERAL BOYS WHO ARE ORPHANS.

FIVE OF THE NURSERY SCHOOL PUPILS HAD THEIR FEES PAID.

JOSHUA FINISHED HIS COURSE IN OFFICE WORK BUT HAS FAILED TO GET A JOB. HE HAS HAD MANY YEARS OF HELP WITH SCHOOLING AND TRAINING SO IT IS VERY HARD FOR HIM. JOBS, EVEN WHEN YOU ARE FULLY TRAINED, ARE HARD TO COME BY.

SAMUEL WHO TRAINED IN



ENGINEERING HAS ALSO FAILED TO GET A JOB. THIS IS VERY DISAPPOINTING FOR THEM WHEN MANY YEARS OF STUDY FAILS TO FULFIL THEIR HOPES. MUCH OF THIS IS OWING TO THE DOWNTURN ECONOMICALLY OF KENYA AND THE RESULT OFTEN BEING THAT, DESPITE QUALIFICATIONS, UNLESS YOU CAN INFLUENCE SOMEONE NO JOBS ARE AVAILABLE.

We have a very serious and rapidly rising problem of

AIDS programme as well as our extensive other programmes, including the Seminar Accommodation, fetching water and field work, to have the pick-up in good order is essential.

Both the Agriculture Department and the Livestock Department need motorbikes, especially as we hope to start a new programme in ten Primary Schools to give them a zero grazed cow to help them pay for the education of their many orphans. As well as that it is planned to give oxen and ploughs to groups of widows. These programmes will need to be closely supervised.

HIV / AIDS PROGRAMME

This has continued successfully headed up by Kennedy and his 3 volunteers together with the widows. Janet Akech has continued with networking and organised a residential conference to teach peer counselling to 20 delegates from different organisations. This was paid for by Action Aid. Janet has been asked to be the Secretary of the District HIV / AIDS programme and was invited to go on a conference in Washington DC as a delegate from Sub-Saharan countries. This was initiated by Samaritans Purse, the development agency of the Billy Graham programme. She has also been to Mombassa to an international conference on HIV / AIDS where she made good contacts.

We have a very serious and rapidly rising problem of orphans and widows. This time last year I remember hearing the figure of 200 orphans in our area. Now it is over 800. HIV widows are dying as well as many young people in their 20s.

Hazlemere Church have been a tremendous encouragement, raising money and offering to pay for Kennedy. They raised enough at a Harvest Thanksgiving at a school to fill the pick-up with food at Christmas for the orphans and widows, and to bring exercise books, biros, etc to distribute when four of their congregation came out in February.

Jim Leftwich, a retired Managing Director, has offered to monitor the finances of Amani and to fundraise for us. This is a great encouragement. Praise God! The other members of the team have also encouraged us greatly, and in areas I was very glad to get help in. Jim and his wife spent a further ten days at Amani during April / May.

AGRICULTURE



CHARITABLE GIVING

IF YOU ARE A TAX PAYER PLEASE REMEMBER THAT WE CAN CLAIM TAX BACK FROM THE GOVERNMENT IF YOU LET US HAVE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS. THIS WILL HELP CONSIDERABLY TO BOOST OUR INCOME. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP IN THIS WAY THEN PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR UK TREASURER, JONATHAN KEMPSON. YOU WILL FIND HIS CONTACT DETAILS ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NEWSLETTER. THANK YOU.

In December 2000 Amani had its annual two day show which is a major event in our calendar. Many people came and were impressed by what we are able to do. I was particularly impressed when I got back by the efforts that the pig production unit had made using the slurry and water from the unit to grow magnificent vegetables! They were very proud of their efforts. The pigs are doing well, although the egg laying hens have now been given up and concentrated on instead at the Kirongo site.

Our heifer cow is now in calf and is due to calve down in a very short time.

NURSERY SCHOOLS

Kirongo have 75 children and Kachieng 27. Kachieng parents often feel they cannot pay the fees of £2 a month. Anne and David Chambers gave money to buy the food for the children's breakfasts among other things. We have also put in guttering to catch rainwater and supplied them with a PVC tank in which to store it.

NEW TRAINING KITCHEN

The Beson Foundation have offered to contribute further towards the training kitchen. They have made a grant for the terrazzo flooring, the gas range, and the gas cylinders. The wood fired stoves have been moved to a separate building which saves all the smoke and dirt in the old kitchen. The wall has now been taken down between the two kitchens. We have a group of Oxford University students coming in August with an organisation called TravelAid. We are asking them to tile and paint the new training kitchen and to raise the money to pay for it. They will also be doing other things like visiting schools and working with the young people.

CARPENTRY

Apollo has been doing good work. He has suggested that he could train six orphan boys in a 2 year course. Tools with a Mission have offered to give six sets of tools for the apprentices and we hope that the Hazlemere group will be able to bring them out for us. One person has already offered to sponsor for the first year. This is very encouraging.

PRAYER NEEDS



God has been wonderfully faithful despite our weaknesses. During a very difficult time of lack of money and disruptions by one very small group of people, we drew together in a very close way. Each day God spoke through scripture and encouraged us. Just before I left we had a big meeting with all the clans, Bishop Wasongo, the DC, the DO, MPs and many others. I have since been assured that all is peaceful now.

Sam wrote “Katinda issue is a gone case because the entire Kachieng Community has risen up against them.” A lot of pressure has been put on me by everyone not to leave.

***“without suffering
there is no glory”***

One sentence which stood out in my mind during Spring Harvest was “without suffering there is no glory”. Often only in retrospect does one see the value of persecution and suffering.

We are very grateful for the sacrificial and generous giving of so many. I never cease to be amazed at how money comes in, just when it is in most need. Once again one very generous anonymous donor from Sovereign Giving gave £5000 for which we are so grateful. I am really praying for God’s guidance and to know his priorities.

I am now planning to go to Kenya for two months at a time with four months in the UK in between. My next visits to Amani will be from 27 June to September 2001 and then from January to March 2002. I have my computer and can keep in touch by email:

elizabeth_amani@hotmail.com. Amani now has email, despite often having no telephone! The email address is amani@africaonline.co.ke

With much love in Christ,

Elizabeth Feilden (Co-ordinator)

PRAYER REQUESTS

PLEASE JOIN US AS WE PRAY FOR:

- THE NEEDS OF THE ORPHANS AND WIDOWS
- THE NEED FOR TRANSPORT
- THE NEED FOR OTHER PARTNERS
- COMPLETION OF THE TRAINING KITCHEN EQUIPMENT
- THE FINANCING OF THE PROPOSED SOLAR PROJECT FOR WATER AND LIGHTING
- PEACE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY