



Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife

May 2010

Little Things Can Make a Big Difference...

In six years, donations to Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife have amounted to more than \$180,600. The remarkable thing is that most of these donations have been \$100 or less! While larger donations are welcome and always appreciated, it's reassuring to know that little things *can* make a *big difference* in peoples' lives. The great impact of FKSW donors' generosity is clear in the following examples of completed and ongoing projects since 2004:

- ❖ 115 students receive primary school, boarding and secondary school scholarships
- ❖ 4 nursery schools and 1 primary classroom have been constructed to benefit 250 students
- ❖ 3 nursery school teachers receive a monthly salary
- ❖ 4 household wells have been retro-fitted to make them safe and clean
- ❖ 568 people have received services at two one-day medical camps held on Kokwa Island
- ❖ 40 women continue to learn sewing, spinning, knitting and weaving skills, earning about \$30,000 in the past 3 years
- ❖ 235 women have received training in gardening and chicken rearing and tend healthy gardens and flocks
- ❖ 535 people on Kokwa Island have clean and safe drinking water
- ❖ 6 primary school gardens and 4 community gardens feed numerous students and families
- ❖ 58 nursery school students receive a mid-morning snack and a nutritious lunch each day
- ❖ Several thousand Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in 12 camps in Molo received sanitary towels, soap, firewood, nursery school supplies and nutritious food during the 2008 post-election violence.



A home in the Il Chamus community of Kiserian



An old *mzee* waits to see the doctor at the Kokwa Island medical camp in February

Working in partnership with the Network for EcoFarming in Africa (NECOFA), a Kenya-based NGO directed by Samuel Muhunyu, FKSW uses your dollars to fund projects that focus on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, including income generation and the alleviation of poverty, food security and nutrition, education, health and hygiene, and clean water. Community members are involved in decision making and implementation of projects and every outcome is owned and maintained by the people themselves. Instead of charity, you are investing in the futures of men, women and children; in farmers, knitters, teachers, students, beekeepers, nurses and small business owners.

We are so very grateful that you are with us on this exciting journey! I wish I could take each of you to Kenya to meet those for whom your gifts provide hope and a vision of what is possible. Instead, in the next few pages, I'll share with you the ways in which you are helping to change the world...one community, one school, one self-help group, one clinic, one garden and one island at a time!

On behalf of FKSW and NECOFA, and of all the people in Kenya who benefit from your generosity,

Tumeshukuru sana kwa usaidizi wenu!

A Community Brings Us An Island...



Lake Baringo is one of only two fresh water lakes in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya. Surrounded by volcanic ranges that stretch as far as the eye can see, its beauty is breathtaking. Hippos and crocodiles share the lake with the largest variety of birds in East Africa. Ol Kokwa Island sits in the center of the lake, a twenty minute boat ride from the mainland. From the water, one sees the small thatch roofed homes of the members of the five Il Chamus villages on Kokwa speckling the hills and valleys.

The 300 residents of Kirepari village have only lived here since 2007. Welcomed by the residents of Kokwa after recurring attacks by a neighboring tribe threatened the security in their mainland village at Longicharo, they resettled on the north side of the island, leaving behind their homes and the nursery school that FKSW helped them build in 2004. Today, there is a new nursery school, a kitchen for school lunches, a water tank and toilet for the school, and a large community water filter. Fifty eight students attend the nursery school, taught by two certified teachers. The community is thriving. The resettlement to Kokwa introduced FKSW to the four communities already on the island. The residents of Kasian, Il Depe, Loruko and Il Mekuri asked to be included in our efforts and so we “adopted” the island...and with it a school, a dispensary and 900 additional residents! Here are some of the stories from our visits to Kokwa this year.

A Man Becomes a Farmer...

My name is Samson Chebii. I live at Kirepari Village on Kokwa Island. I am a *fundi* (someone who has learned a profession or craft) of different things. I build with wood and I do roofing but I also use stones. I'm a mason. I'm also a farmer and a fisherman. I do all of these things because there is never a reliable source of income. Sometimes I have to work on the land, sometimes catch fish, sometimes building things.

Our people, the Il Chamus, don't usually do farming, but there was a time that NECOFA gave us an opportunity to visit a group at Kailer that had a community garden. We went, 2 men and 10 women and were able to observe what the group was doing. I also got some seed from one of the homes. I got support from FKSW and NECOFA...they gave me the moneymaker pump and the hose pipe so I could water my garden. I also initially received some seeds from them that I used to plant.

There are many stones on my farm. I usually hire people to come and remove stones and arrange them and look for soil to put on the land. We also use manure from the chickens and the goats. I grow green grams, sorghum, *wimbi* (millet), papaya, orange, *ndimu* (lemon), *malenge* (pumpkins), maize, tomatoes, cow peas, and other things. Mostly I use these products at the household level but now the produce has increased and I'm selling to the neighbors. On Fridays I take it to the mainland to sell and buy *unga* (flour).

Having this garden has really changed my life. I have 2 children and 5 orphans that my wife and I take care of. I'm able to support the 7 children. They are also schooling and I pay for exam fees and uniforms and pens for some of them, for those who are not under scholarship.

The challenges I've had are the goats were destroying the food while it was growing so I've built fences. I have used natural remedies to destroy the *ndudu* (insects). The pipe (hose) is short and cannot cover the land because it is growing.

“I’m wishing that my neighbors and the whole village will start farming so we can all have food.”

My neighbors have learned a lot from me because when they come for vegetables I engage them in the working and I give them vegetables for free. There is one young man who has made up his mind to work with me. I know that the person I'm training now will support me in my work. I'm wishing that my neighbors and the whole village will start farming so we can all have food.



Samson Chebii



Chebii in his garden on the shores of Lake Baringo

A Meeting Brings Five Communities Together...

Sixty seven children on Kokwa Island receive scholarships from FKSW donors to attend school. In February, Samuel and Thomson ole Tenges, our Kokwa Project Manager, convened a meeting at the Kokwa Primary School to discuss with community members the application process for selecting students for the primary, secondary and boarding scholarships. Attended by teachers from the nursery and primary schools, the headman from each village, representatives from the Kokwa Women's Group, the elected county councilor and the Assistant Chief of the area, this was the first time that members from all five villages on Kokwa Island had ever met to talk about anything! During the all day meeting, the group formed a new education committee whose responsibility it will be to oversee the selection process for new scholarships and to regularly monitor students' performance.



The new school committee met for an entire day

"This is the first time that members from all five communities on Kokwa Island have ever met to discuss anything."

***Joel Lechingei
Kokwa Education Committee member***

The committee plans to meet once each term and in November will select scholarship recipients for the coming school year which begins in January.

The participants were overjoyed by the success of the meeting and by the collaboration among them that had lead to important decisions about their children's education. Prompted by this success, they decided to create a second committee whose charge it will be to determine needs on the island and help the communities work together to address them.

A Women's Group's Woes Turn Into Hope for an Island...



no longer able to pay the rent on their small shop, asked for help. With great care, Samuel and Thomson told the group that they must first figure out how to work together so that each group member could benefit.

With Thomson's support and guidance over the next few months, the women resolved their issues and began to think about other projects they might do. The day after the education committee meeting, the women came together at the school to share their ideas. But they did not come alone. Accompanying them were the men from their communities, some of whom had attended the education committee meeting and were interested in the projects the women had chosen. They came to offer their support.

The women wanted to start a community garden in each village and provide chickens for every family so that people would have more food to eat and some to sell. They had already asked residents who had chickens to donate a few to a pool from which families without chickens would receive 3 hens and 1 cock to start their flocks. They were well on their way to meeting that goal! They had also begun clearing rocks from the sites selected in each village for the community gardens. Samuel asked how they, who had never farmed, would know how to raise vegetables, and a woman replied that students from the Kokwa Primary 4K Club Garden Project, supported by NECOFA and FKSW, were assisting them and that Chebii would come from Kirepari to share his knowledge. The most meaningful gift to the group, though, came from the six women in the sewing group who offered to donate the money they earned to assist the communities in their efforts.

A Medical Camp Provides Healing and Education...

On February 21, twenty nine local doctors, nurses, pharmacists, lab technicians and nutritionists, stepped out of the boats that had brought them across the lake to the Kokwa Island Dispensary. For seven hours, they attended to over 250 residents with a variety of health issues. Two barbers shaved the heads of 180 children and adults; nurses weighed, measured and examined babies and toddlers; forty adolescent girls learned to make sanitary napkins from gauze and cotton, and pharmacists dispensed medications. Doctors referred two children with TB and one young woman with a seriously burned foot to the Marigat Hospital and each has recovered well. Not a single person tested positive for malaria or HIV/AIDS. The turnout was even larger than at last year's camp, as residents were more comfortable with the procedures. Everyone was so appreciative of the services and the care they received throughout the day.



The nutritionist checks a baby

A Community Struggles to Overcome Great Challenges...



Kachiuru School Committee



Kachiuru Primary School, policeman and water tank

January 22, 2010

We leave Isiolo at 9 am after stopping at the police post to pick up two young officers armed with large rifles. They will be our guards on the 7 hour roundtrip to Kachiuru Village and a deterrent to the bandits who have been indiscriminately stopping vehicles on the isolated road we now follow. Large rocks jutting from the roadbed create an obstacle course for our car as we bump along in 100 degree heat. The windows are closed to keep out the dust which still streams in every crack and crevice. It sticks to us, turning us reddish brown. Camels herded by turbaned men with long sticks move to both sides of the road as we inch up behind them. An immense truck, open in the back to accommodate as many people as can crowd in, careens past going in the opposite direction, billowing clouds of dust obscuring everything in sight. Aside from a few Thomson's gazelles grazing on the brown grass, the only signs of life as far as we can see are birds and lizards. We stop at two police barricades on the way. The officers are in no hurry to stir from their seats in the shade. We wait while they summon the energy to lift the gates for us and then signal us to proceed. Finally, we see the barrier that marks the entry to the village and just beyond, the huts of the nomads who have stopped temporarily on their way to someplace else.

This is truly No Man's Land. The nearest water is 5 kilometers away. The villagers constructed a water tank from concrete and mud to catch what little rain does fall, but the top caved in and it's unusable. Nothing grows here but acacia trees and small bushes. In this community of tall, thin men and beautiful women, there are no jobs, no doctors, no electricity, little food. There is a school, barely.



"You're the only ones who come here to help us... and you keep coming back..." Kachiuru Primary School committee member

KACHIURU PRIMARY SCHOOL

TO - DIRECTOR FKSW-
FROM - Headteacher Kachiuru Pry School,
Mr. Joseph Muthee.

We thank you and your team for your visit to our school early this year. We have no words to express our happiness for the things you promised to do for us. We take this great opportunity to thank you and in particular for resuming the payment of nursery School Teachers who has already received her three months salary. We are glad that you are going to send the same for second term and other months.

Thank you also for the money you brought for the scholarships. Most of them have new uniforms and shoes. We are very happy about this. May God bless you as you source for other donors to assist us. Thank you for putting our interest first. Pass our love to all sponsors and in particular those of our school. My son Martin greets you. He says he loves you very much.

Thank you
WILLIE MUTHHEE
Kachiuru Primary School

Joseph Muthee



Meeting with the school committee

In 2005 FKSW helped the people of Kachiuru build a nursery school. The government added a second classroom, hired 3 teachers, and since then has done little else. Joseph Muthee, the school's dedicated Head Teacher, has been here since 2005. He's seen the other teachers come and go. They don't want to live here, even though the 250 students who come to class each day depend on them for their education.



**Kachiuru Scholarship recipient
Challa Abdullahi age 9
January 2010**

Recently, the community built a separate nursery classroom. They wanted to use the two previous classrooms, which are connected, for grades 1-8. Walls made of iron sheets divide each classroom in half for two grades per class. There are not enough desks for all of the students and most sit on the dirt floors. The teachers have few materials.

Fifteen students here receive scholarships through FKSW and for the first time ever, they greet us in English and answer simple questions. They giggle and shake our hands, proud of their blue and white uniforms. In spite of the conditions, they are learning!

During our meeting with the school committee, the members asked if we could help with the following:

- ❖ Desks and benches
- ❖ Concrete for the floors
- ❖ Nursery teacher's salary
- ❖ School lunch for 250 children and a cook
- ❖ A new water tank
- ❖ Toilets
- ❖ Additional scholarships
- ❖ 4 new classrooms



Challa in 2005

Other News

- Marty Smith and Dee Riley created and taught a class at Roosevelt Middle school last term called "Kenya Dig It." Students studied Kenya, created books for the students at Kokwa Primary School and raised \$1200 for student scholarships at their Taste of Kenya event in March. The Roosevelt choir sang songs, in Swahili! It was a great event!
- Our partners at NECOFA participated in a fundraising campaign with Global Giving (www.globalgiving.org) and succeeded in raising over \$5000 to assist families affected by HIV/AIDS with better nutrition. Thank you for your help!
- If you'd like to send a letter or photo to a child that you sponsor, Gwen will take it to Kenya in September. Just send it to FKSW before September 12th.

\$100 can do so much!

For only \$100 (or a bit more or less) you can provide:

- ❖ Scholarships for 2 children to attend primary school for one year (\$100)
- ❖ Seeds and garden tools for 2 kitchen gardens...each garden will feed one rural family for one year and provide extra produce to sell (\$95)
- ❖ 1 rooster and 3 hens for each of 4 families on Kokwa Island to start a flock (\$90)
- ❖ 100 insecticide treated bed nets to help prevent malaria (\$100)
- ❖ 3 month's salary...one term... for the nursery school teacher at Kachiuru (\$90)
- ❖ 10 bags of cement for the floor at Kachiuru Primary School (\$100)
- ❖ 10 desks and benches for Kachiuru and Edonyio Sidai Primary Schools (\$100)
- ❖ 1 metal bunk bed for 2 girls at Kokwa Primary School (\$113)
- ❖ 1 boarding scholarship for one girl for one year at Kokwa Primary School (\$125)

25 students need scholarships; 100+ families need bed nets; 26 girls need beds, and many students sit 5 to a desk.

It will take more than 10 bags of cement for classroom floors and teachers need salary for 3 terms each year.

Most of these expenses are ongoing, so more than one donation per item is a good thing!

Kidogo kidogo hujaza kibaba...little by little, we fill the can!

Asante sana!!!!



**Thank you so
much!!!!**

Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife

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Fathers



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A School Wins First Place In a National Competition...

Michinda Boys Primary School was one of many schools in Kenya visited by judges from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Gender and Social Services in February to determine the best school garden program in the country. Supported by Slow Food Central Rift Convivium, the Network for Ecofarming in Africa (NECOFA) and Friends of Kenya Schools and Wildlife (FKSW), the goal of the 4K School Garden Program is to teach students, through hands-on experience about food, agriculture and the environment. The children learn food production skills; rearing of small livestock; processing and value addition; culinary skills; environment conservation; management and utilization of renewable energy and leadership skills. FKSW has provided funds for training and for the school's very successful chicken project!

After two visits by judges, with a full day of activities on the second visit, the Michinda School Garden Project was judged the best in the country! Congratulations to all who have made this such an exemplary project!



Michinda 4K Club members explaining the compost manure making process to the judges