



STOW NEWS....

January 2010

....is good news

Issue number 6



Dear Members

What a cold and snowy time we have been having - such a contrast to the heat and humidity of coastal Tanga region! I do hope you have all had a peaceful and happy Festive Season. I am really looking forward to seeing many of you at the STOW events this year and am so grateful to you all for your continued support to STOW.

We have just heard from AFRIWAG that their Program Officer, Margaret Ruhinda, retired on 4th January 2010. I first met Margaret in 1998 and she taught me a lot about valuing other cultures. She was a founder member of AFRIWAG. STOW wishes Margaret well in her retirement and appreciates all the hard work she has done to support vulnerable children over many years. AFRIWAG have appointed Fortunate Kayombo as AFRIWAG's new Program Officer.

AFRIWAG tell us: "Fortunate holds an Advanced Diploma in Community Development and Gender. Has a background in community work with knowledge, skills and working experience on support service programs, which she obtained while working with other service providers in the Orphans/ Most Vulnerable Children (MVC) program under Global Fund, she also has experience in facilitation and capacity building, report writing, coordinating programmatic activities, working with local councils, keeping records, and working with Home Based Care givers." This certainly is an impressive CV and we very much look forward to meeting her when we visit in May.



Sample mats from a small business

Our last newsletter told you about the positive results of the widows' loans. STOW has, since then, agreed to support a further 13 widows with loans to start small businesses. These new businesses vary from selling fried fish, clothes and goats to making baskets and mats. I'm really looking forward to seeing how they have got on and telling you all about them.

After our visit last year, the Trustees agreed to an aspiration that every STOW-supported child should have a mosquito net and a mattress. I know it's only meeting basic needs but my goodness what a difference this will make - especially the nets. So many days schooling are lost through malaria. As you know we've already bought and distributed



100 nets and 13 mattresses so far and hope that by end of the May 2010 visit all our children will have these.

On the left is Mahija clutching her new net still wrapped up.

Since our May 2009 visit we have bought 8 more bicycles. Two of our sponsored children will share each bike - so 16 more secondary school children will now



get to school on time! Abdalla (seen on the left with his new bike and an admiring audience) was walking for over 3 hours to get to and from school every day. He lives so far away that he picks up another sponsored boy half way into school!

Local news: last Easter I gave a talk to the Rotary Club of Saxmundham & District about the work STOW is doing. After that they contacted me to say that they wished to have an ongoing supportive relationship with us. As well as a generous initial donation - which we are using to update our STOW leaflet - from January 2010 the Rotary Club will be supporting an orphan at secondary school for

5 years. This is a wonderful long-term pledge. A commitment such as this is something that the vulnerable children we are supporting do not usually have.

Every time I write to you I have more stories of the generosity of our members. This winter one of our member's 70th birthday invitations said 'no presents, but donations to STOW'. We were absolutely delighted to receive a total of £190 - such kindness and a tribute to the "birthday girl"! Our last newsletter told of Paul's Everest trek and the £1000 he raised. I've just heard that there is another £300 on it's way - isn't that fantastic! I've also just learned that The Store in Saxmundham is to hold a charity fashion show on 26th March for 2 charities - one of which will be STOW.

In other newsletters you've read about the links between Saxmundham and Mwang'ombe Primary Schools. Drawings and messages from children at both schools are regularly exchanged. Elaine has put down her thoughts in a Tale of Two Headteachers, pictures of whom are on the back page.

Thank you all again so much for all your kindness, generosity and support - it is very much appreciated, not just by me but by all of us at STOW and AFRIWAG and the 200 children and their families that we are helping.

Best wishes for 2010,

Marie Adams - Chair and Founder of STOW

STOW INVITES YOU TO A.....



BEETLE DRIVE!

Friday 5th February

6pm for hotdogs, wine, beer & squash

6-30 Beetle Drive with a break for ice cream, cake & coffee

*St Johns Church Hall,
Saxmundham*

(Parking available up the church drive by the hall, or Waitrose)

Adults: £5, Children: £3-50
(minimum age 6yrs)

Tickets tel: 01728 663 583

WINE TASTING!



Friday 30th April

7.30p.m. at
*Saxmundham
Market Hall*

An opportunity to meet old and new friends, taste some fresh wines and have a go at the mystery wine competition

Tickets: £7.50
(tel: 01728 603348)

Proceeds from both of these events will go to STOW

SUCCESS STORY (see cover picture)

My name is Faraji Isihaka, I was born in 1984 in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam Tanzania. My father passed away in 1993 when I was in standard one, and then I was taken with my grandparents to Lindi. I completed my Primary Education in 1999. I went on to secondary school and it was when I was in Form IV at Eckenforde High School in Tanga Region that my life changed. My grandfather had an accident and he could no longer support me in my education, the worst challenges I faced was lack of school requirements including school fees and other statutory contributions.

In every special way, I extend my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to AFRIWAG who agreed to support me through STOW UK both materially and morally, particularly with their incessant effort to obtain for me the funds for school fees and other contributions.

In July 2006, my application to join the University of Dar Es salaam was successful and I was selected to pursue Bachelor Degree in Education at Iringa Campus. Again I was fortunate that STOW sponsored me. When I was in University during the holidays, I was volunteering so as gain experience, like using computer in various work. Now I am working with AFRIWAG, but my future plan is to continue studying, especially in the area under faculty of humanities and social science so as expand my knowledge. I once again send my acknowledgement to Mama Marie and Jeremy and STOW UK for their support both materially and guidance especially in my life. God Bless you all. I thank AFRIWAG and STOW for their cooperation.

News from the Web

U.S. Army's 4-414th Civil Affairs Battalion delivered more than 1,000 books to rural schools near Tanga, Tanzania, August 24, 2009.

"Today we went to three schools ... two primary schools and a secondary school and did book drops," said U.S. Army Captain Bernice Logan, Team Four's team leader. "We work with the government officials of Tanzania to try and find out where the need is. Once we get a list, we put together a plan of action, call the headmaster or headmistress of the school and set up times to deliver the books."

The books were donated from various entities including Books For Africa U.S.A., the public affairs office at the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania and Combined joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA).

"A couple of months after getting here in Tanga, the Embassy said they had some books sitting in a warehouse. They asked us if we could use them, and it was perfect," said Logan. "Every time we go to a school and meet with the headmaster they ask us, 'Do you have any books?'"

According to Logan, many of the schools in rural Tanga lack the funding to supply the school with an adequate teaching staff let alone books. It is common for a school of 1,300 children to have only 22 teachers. That equates to more than 59 students per classroom. "They are lucky if they get one book per classroom and the teacher writes everything on the board and then they [students] copy that," said Logan. "Being able to provide these books allows the teacher the time to do more teaching instead of writing."

Looking forward to the monitoring visit in May 2010



I am delighted to have been asked by the STOW Trustees to go to Tanzania, to support Marie and Jem with this year's monitoring visit. I look forward to seeing for myself, and of course reporting back to you in a future newsletter, my own perspective about how the money raised by STOW members and supporters is making a real difference to the sponsored children and widows we support in this region of Tanzania.

As many of you will be aware my husband Martin is the STOW Treasurer, and we have worked closely together over the past year to help ensure, along with the other Trustees, that STOW's finances continue to be robust enough to

be able to support each sponsored child for as long as they remain in education.

This visit comes at an interesting time in my life, with our three adult children having largely flown the nest - although they flutter back from time to time. I have worked for many years in Norfolk and Suffolk in the social care field. This has given me a wide experience of both children and adults services and I hope this will help me make a useful contribution during this visit.

In preparation I am trying to learn a few words of Swahili, although languages are not my strong point. I am also doing some background reading about the culture and history of the Tanga region to help me understand the situation and people STOW is supporting. On a more practical level I visited the local surgery and had my first set of 'jabs' last week

I have never been to Tanzania, or anywhere else in Africa before, and I must admit to a feeling of enthusiasm, tempered by a little apprehension at the coming visit. If nothing else I am expecting to experience a huge difference in both culture and in understanding 'how things get done' there. As the number of children that STOW is now able to support has grown over the past four years, due to the generosity of STOW members and supporters, I am assured I will be kept more than busy during my time out there.

Pam Stevens

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COVER :
Faraji Isihaka graduates with a Bachelor Degree in Education. He is now working with AFRIWAG in Tanga.

SUPPORTING TANZANIAN ORPHANS & WIDOWS (STOW)
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS 1 JUNE 2009 TO 18 NOVEMBER 2009

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
Membership	740	AFRIWAG	4730
		"	30
Donations	3201.35		
Sponsorship	8675.83	Tanzanian trip 2009.	
		purchases for orphans	224
Carrington's Barn	1890.80	Carrington's Barn exs	124.04
Other events	224.50		
Bank interest	156.59	Printing	165
		Excess of receipts over payments	9616.03
	14889.07		14889.07
Balance brought forward at 1 June 2009			£27242.96
Funds in hand at 18 November 2009			£36858.99

Martin Stevens - Treasurer

NOTE: It's good to see from the Receipts and Payments above that our finances look fairly healthy. Our total budget for this year is about £22,000, which includes the extra mosquito nets, mattresses and blankets we wish to provide. Since these accounts were prepared, we have sent the first 2010 instalment of £13,200 to AFRIWAG. In addition, we always keep a reserve so we can at least provide schooling for our 200 children for another year, even if STOW had to fold for some reason. We have set this reserve at £16,000 for this year.

Jeremy Adams - Secretary



A Tale of Two Headteachers

While the Saxmundham head worries about snow, the Mwang'ombe head worries about rain and floods!

Mwang'ombe head – not enough textbooks, quality of teachers, 60+ pupils in a class, no Teaching Assistants. Physical state of school buildings. No Ofsted inspections, lot less paperwork, hardly any IT problems, hardly any IT!

Saxmundham head - new, well-equipped schoolbuildings,

interactive whiteboards and laptop computers, additional teaching support to help children in need, multi-agency professionals to provide family and child support, Ofsted to judge, frequent Government initiatives and policies to be implemented, trained teachers and skilled assistants.

Both are very concerned for the welfare of their pupils and their concerns are surprisingly similar with perhaps just a difference of scale – are they getting enough sleep, the proper food, settled home life etc? Corporal punishment is not banned in Tanzania so discipline problems are dealt with in an obvious way!

School life is really about creating excitement in learning, a safe and happy environment, and helping young people to develop into confident and independent adults, able to care for one another and take their place in the world. Saxmundham and Mwang'ombe may be on different sides of the world, but a school is a school, and children live and learn together. Across the miles, ways are being found to develop links for the future, and to help each community to know more about the other. Visits by Jem and Marie to the children in Tanzania, and the time they then spend at Saxmundham Primary sharing photographs and recounting what life is really like, bring the continents and communities together. Who knows which children may end up meeting and working together in the future?

*Elaine Hawes
Headteacher
Saxmundham Primary*

