



982 Students currently attend Bwaliro Primary School



Strategic Planning to plan the Way Forward

### December 2016 Children of Bukati (COB) Newsletter

Dear Donor,

Augustine Wasike, the principal of the Bwaliro Primary School, wrote in a recent email **“the lunch program is the secret behind the students’ academic success”**. Thank you so much for your ongoing support of the lunch program for the children at this school. The lunch encourages the students to attend school. Currently there are 982 students enrolled in the school. That is an increase from 685 when we started the project at this school in 2009. In 2013 there were 901 students enrolled. Augustine has worked hard with the adults in the community to enroll all of the children by posting signs about the importance of school attendance and also to end ‘child labour’. The lunch program increases regular attendance of the students, improves food security in the community, and also reduces the numbers of children who are sick.

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reported that the maize harvest from the long rain season in western Kenya yielded low to average amounts. This harvest occurs in August and September. Unfortunately the rain that was expected in October and November (short rain season) did not come. This drought will result in severe food shortages for our families in the Bwaliro Primary School community. They depend on this second harvest to provide food year round. Kenya will have to increase food imports of maize and beans that will result in higher food costs. Our lunch program is more important than ever!

The cost to support the Children of Bukati project has risen substantially over the years because of the current low value of the Canadian dollar. Over the life of the project, the relative value of the Canadian dollar (\$ CDN) and the Kenyan Schilling (KSH) has changed dramatically. Currently, one Canadian dollar buys 77.5 KSH, last year it bought 78.3 KSH but in 2011 it bought 92.5 KSH. Our expenses also increase as the numbers of students grow. That is a good problem to have ☺ ! The purpose of this project is to encourage all of the children in the community to get an education. Lunch is provided to the children who are attending.



New student at Bwaliro studying



Sheep grazing at Bukati



Plenty of grass at Bwaliro



Sesbania trees – leaves provide protein

The following describes how your money is spent. There are three school terms per year. The community has the least amount of food in the January term. This year, students will be provided with a lunch for 56 days during the January term. On each lunch day, the school cooks and serves 110 kg of beans plus 100 kg of maize. Beans and maize cost 120 KSH and 100 KSH per kg respectively. So one day of food costs 23,200 KSH or \$300 CDN. The other expenses for the lunch program over the school term include 30,000 KSH for salt, oil, plus soap that equals about \$387 CDN. Finally, the school hires a person to prepare and cook the lunches. She is paid 3,500 KSH per month (\$45.16 CDN) for the each of the three months of the school term for a total of 10,500 KSH. In summary, the lunch program for the January school term will cost approximately \$17,286 plus bank fees that include additional exchange rate fees and the costs for the transfer of the money.

I continue to give presentations to community groups to share the story of the Children of Bukati. If your group is looking for speakers, please consider inviting me. One such opportunity put me in touch with two groups of women in Ontario who do the work of "Days for Girls". This is an international organization of volunteers who sew re-usable menstrual kits for students in developing countries. The next time I travel to Kenya, I will bring kits made by these Ontario women.

The high school and university sponsorship program has been very successful. There have been 17 students who have graduated from high school and another 4 are expected to complete Grade 12 this month. We currently have 4 students continuing in high school. We currently have 3 university students being sponsored and have had 3 students graduate from university. It is so wonderful that through your donations, these children are creating a future of opportunities.

It gives us great hope for the future of these communities where most children will complete primary school and some will finish high school and a select few will graduate from university. Thank you for your ongoing support of these children and their community.

If you would prefer to receive newsletters via email, please contact us at [info@childrenofbukati.com](mailto:info@childrenofbukati.com). Please be assured that we will not share your email or home address with anyone. We do not wish to burden you with unwanted mail. If you wish to be removed from our records, contact us at [info@childrenofbukati.com](mailto:info@childrenofbukati.com) or Children of Bukati, c/o Marg Baker, 6156 Eramosa 3<sup>rd</sup> Line, RR 4, Fergus, ON, Canada, N1M 2W5. If you have donated through Canada Helps, you will have already received a tax receipt by email. Otherwise, your receipt will be sent in February. Donations are accepted by cheque made out to Stone United Church with COB on the memo line. Please mail the donation to Marg Baker (see address cited in this paragraph). Credit card donations are accepted through Canada Helps, on-line via the website. Thank you for your ongoing support of these children and their community. Sincerely, Cate Dewey ([www.childrenofbukati.com](http://www.childrenofbukati.com))