



Thank you for your support of the Children of Bukati project. We are now supporting 408 AIDS orphans and destitute children. Your financial support has made it possible to supply three lunches per week starting January 2008. This is of particular significance because this is the time of year for drought and intense heat. There really is little food available until the harvest in June



The projects aimed towards sustainability of the program are flourishing. The school has a corn grist mill, pig and chicken projects, maize and bean crops and tree seedlings. Napier grass has been planted to feed a cow to be purchased when the forage is ready. The roadway leading up to the school buildings is lined with a fence that has been planted by a row of eucalyptus trees. Each tree was planted by a grade 7 or 8 child who is responsible for the watering of the tree.

There is a large chicken coup with a lovely, fenced-in area for the chickens to roam freely. The coup has a special lower level with a nesting box for the hens. The original flock was 78 chickens, but since then many hens have nested and more than doubled the size of the flock. There is a beautiful pig barn situated under some mango trees holding 1 male and 3 female pigs. The largest female was to give birth in December. I am particularly pleased to see that the pigs have shelter, a ready source of food and water and that their manure is being used to fertilize the crops.

The corn grist mill is up and running at the end of the school yard. It is grossing 350 ksh (\$7 per day). To add to the income, the school buys bags of maize and sorghum to grind and sell to community members walking home from work. It is the ultimate "fast food".

There are 4 plots of maize and a similar number of gardens with kale. Two of the maize plots have kale interspersed between the tall stalks. The principal told me that grade 4 children are learning first hand about planting and tending to the gardens, controlling pests and fertilizing the land with animal manure. Growing crops and animal husbandry are part of the standard primary school curriculum. The teachers are using the gardens and animal programs to illustrate their lessons.

Several seed beds made of dirt and manure are in another corner of the school yard. There are 1000 avocado tree seedlings, 100 eucalyptus trees and 2000 softwood tree plants. Kale seedlings are also grown. The trees are put in small plastic bags with

soil and manure for the seedling to develop further. Trees will be planted around the perimeter of the 5 acre school ground. Surplus tree seedlings are being sold in town. The vice principal supervises these seedling gardens.

Children who are part of the “program” are invited to volunteer to work with the pigs, chickens, trees, crops or flowers. These children are mentored by teachers and are learning first hand how to raise livestock and crops in the best possible manner. These will provide life skills needed as adults living in this rural community.

As can be expected, life is not completely rosy. In June, the shaft of the water pump at the school broke. This is the only source of clean water in the community. There is a big demand for water at the school because of the lunch program. The corn grist mill requires many gallons of water to run and of course the gardens, pigs and chickens all need water too. The children were being asked to bring water to school each day. The grades 6, 7 and 8 children were often missing the first two class periods of school so that they could transport water to the school. The pump cost approximately \$500 Canadian dollars to fix. The government only provides the school with \$80 per year to maintain the pump. In July, that \$80 had already been used. After much discussion with the principal and the chairman of the school board, I decided that our funds should be used to fix the pump. The community depends on this source of wholesome water and the success of the COB project at the school also depends on water. I hope all of you who have donated to the project agree with this decision.

One more problem is the issue of firewood. The children are being encouraged to bring firewood from home to make the lunch meals. However, firewood is scarce and bringing wood from home is causing community discord. At times, the children are taking wood from neighbours’ properties. We discussed the possibility of purchasing 3 industrial sized solar cookers to use for the program. The sun shines most days and is very intense. I think the solar cookers would not only be environmentally friendly but would once again be a model for the community. Unfortunately, the solar cookers are approximately \$2,800 each so we need to do a lot of fund raising if we are ever to be able to afford them.

Canadians have also put huge amounts of time, resources and creative energy into this project. A newsletter was written by Jane, a donation card envisioned by Randy and a website designed by Doug. If you have access to the internet, please visit the web site ([www.childrenofbukati.com](http://www.childrenofbukati.com)). We now are able to accept donations by credit card via the internet. These donations will receive a tax receipt via email shortly after the donation is made. Those donating by cheque to “Stone United Church” will have a tax receipt mailed the following January. Children, university students and church members have held garage sales, sold soup and baked goods, held raffles and bridge parties, and sold used toys, furniture, books. Many people donated to the project in lieu of Christmas presents and others have donated in a loved one’s memory. People across Canada have hosted presentations and currently the children are being highlighted by having their drawings displayed at the Waterloo Children’s museum.

We have accomplished so much in just 1 ½ years it is just amazing. We have promised this community to continue and escalate our support over the next 5 years – at which time they will assume the program. If you have donated to the project in the past year, you will find a tax receipt enclosed. If you wish to be removed from this mailing list or if you wish to receive future information by email – please contact us at

[info@childrenofbukati.com](mailto:info@childrenofbukati.com). If you wish to host a presentation or if you have a creative idea for fund raising, please contact us with your ideas. If you wish to contact us by mail, please send your letter to Children of Bukati, c/o Cate Dewey, R.R. #1 Rockwood, Ontario, N0B 2K0.