



Bringing wood to school; Rice, sweet potatoes, bananas and maize; 1200 children fed 5 days/ week

Annie & Peter biking

### December 2010 Children of Bukati (COB) Newsletter

Dear Donor,

The harvest from the school's new land fed all 1200 children, 5 days a week, during the third school term. Most of the 11 acres of purchased land is planted in maize, beans, peas, and rice. All of the children help in the fields to plant, weed and harvest the crop. Students who volunteer on Saturdays are given a meal that day too. The rice was sold as a seed crop. It is difficult to purchase rice seed in this region of Kenya and the harvest was more valuable as a commodity for sale than a source of food. The money was used to purchase beans to provide the children with more protein.

I visited Kenya in the heavy rainy season. Mid afternoon, the skies would open to torrential rains. We saw firsthand the magic of the system of swales that re-routes the rainfall from the entire school compound to new bananas groves, eucalyptus forest, fruit and nut tree orchards and finally to a fish pond. The water flowed perfectly from the highest point at the class rooms into the vegetable gardens, tree plantations and pond. Previously, the water flooded the soccer field (football) and then ran off onto the road, carrying precious top soil with the current. On the purchased land, the compost piles, created by the permaculture team, were spread over the land as fertilizer and to enhance the quality of the soil. The swales captured water from the road and the path that runs the length of the field. As the rain poured down, one by one, the swales filled with water, carrying it to the entire field. The swales hold the water between rains, enabling the land to be productive much longer into the dry season. Where the swales have been dug, the maize is growing much taller than in other sections. It is a vivid, living example of the benefit of water capture. The water flows through the series of wells to a large pond for more permanent water storage. The bottoms of the swales are planted with banana trees and the sides are planted with sweet potatoes. The vines from sweet potato provide an excellent source of protein for pigs.

**Bike for COB (Children of Bukati)** Annie Guimond and Peter Dewey biked across Canada, from Vancouver Island to PEI - raising money and awareness of the needs of the children who are being fed and educated through the Children of Bukati project in Kenya. Peter and Annie camped and cooked their own food during the 7500 km ride, completing the journey in a very austere manner. Half of the money raised by them was donated to Children of Bukati. The other half helped to defer the costs of their trip. Peter has volunteered at the Bukati Primary School five times since 2006. Thank you to each one of you who donated money in support of their effort, or donated service in lieu of cash or gave them a meal, a shower and a warm bed for the night. Thank you to Annie and Peter for raising awareness of these children and to those of you who supported their effort.

Please visit the website at [www.childrenofbukati.com](http://www.childrenofbukati.com) to learn more about the project.

As the Bukati Primary School continues to move towards self sufficiency, we have identified a new community of AIDS orphans needing food and an education. I hope you will continue to support COB in this new venture.



The Bwaliro Primary School has 854 pupils on 13 acres of land. It is situated 20 km from Bukati. The principal, Augustine Wasike, was the former vice-principal of Bukati. He started a grade 8 lunch program by asking the pupils to bring 5 kg of maize and 300 shillings (\$6) to school each term. The money paid for some vegetables and the cook's salary. Augustine and the students also planted 2 acres of cassava to supplement the maize (on the left of the photo above). Augustine initiated a tree nursery by asking students to bring tree seeds and animal manure to school. With no outside funds, he started the school on a journey towards sustainability. The infrastructure of the Bwaliro Primary school is shocking. Only the grade 8 classroom has desks. Everyone else sits on the floor. The floors are pitted, leaving bare dirt. Children's feet become infected with jiggers - a very painful problem where flea larvae burrow under the skin. The concrete floors need to be replaced to prevent these infections. There are only 3 functional latrine stalls for the 435 girls. There are other latrines that are falling down and although they are condemned, when the lineup is long, the girls use those too.

In October, there were only 117 AIDS orphans at the school. Within 2 weeks of announcing that we would help, 60 new AIDS orphans began attending. The school does not have a well, and the closest one, just outside the school property is contaminated with dead rats. We will begin the project at this school by providing food for a lunch program beginning in January. We will build a kitchen, dig a well, fix the floors of 3 classrooms, and begin a permaculture project. As we raise more money, we hope to fix the floors of the other classrooms, build desks and begin livestock projects. We expect this school community to be self sustainable in 3 years. The school has a board of advisors for this project including the principal, a teacher, the chair and treasurer of the home and school committee, and a member from the broader community. Dr. Florence Mutua made two trips from Nairobi to Butula to help to initiate the project. In November, Michael Nickels and Peter Dewey traveled to Kenya to upgrade the permaculture project at the Bukati Primary School and to begin the permaculture project, build a kitchen and dig a well at Bwaliro Primary School.

Everywhere I travel there is a lot of need and there are many communities where AIDS orphans are hungry and not attending school. The small boy at the top of this page is just one example. He was sitting at home on a school day, preparing vegetables for the noon day meal. Many farmers in other communities have asked me why we helped Bukati Primary School but not them. As a grass roots organization, run by volunteers, we had to start small. Bukati Primary School had 150 AIDS orphans in 2006 but today has over 800. We continue to help Bukati to the best of our ability but now have added the responsibility of Bwaliro Primary School. I expect that the Children of Bukati project will support over 1,200 AIDS orphans in 2011. I hope that you will continue with me on this journey. Together we are giving these children food, an education and hope for a better future.

May 2011 bring you good health, peace, love and joy. Sincerely Cate Dewey  
Thank you so much for your generous support. ([www.childrenofbukati.com](http://www.childrenofbukati.com))