



Tree nursery



Students help to dig swales



Swales to capture water



Building compost piles

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

Dear Donor,

A mere THANK YOU is not adequate to express my gratitude for your generosity in supporting these school children. Although at times the challenges of this project seem overwhelming, the encouraging notes that you send, your creative ideas for fund raising, and your generosity trump everything. We are progressing towards sustainability; expanding the livestock operations and developing the land.

Nick, the principal of the school, echoed my sentiments in a recent email: "Thanks a great deal for being responsive to our needs. Your participation in the school programs has created a big positive impact that has brought about success in all aspects pertaining to education." The numbers of students at the school continue to rise. There are 140 children enrolled in the kindergarten. The increases in the older grades are mostly AIDS orphans moving into the community. When a child is newly orphaned, if the child has a relative in the Bukati school zone they move so they can attend this school. It is the only school with a lunch program for orphaned children.

Through the determination and drive of Rev Doug Sly and his colleagues at the Rotary Club of Qualicum Beach Sunrise the money for 18 new latrines has been raised. The school has begun the construction and hope to have the project complete within the month.

The Children of Bukati has engaged the hearts of many Canadians. Groups and individuals have put their passion, enthusiasm and talent toward raising money in their own unique way. The Eramosa Public School 'adopted' the Children of Bukati as part of their Character Education program. They held a 'Breakfast with Santa' event and the children donated money to COB in lieu of teachers' gifts. One little girl asked her friends to donate to COB in lieu of birthday presents at her party.

Michael Nickels from Seven Ravens Farm on Salt Spring Island, BC began the school's permaculture project in November 2009. We are fortunate to have Michael's expertise. He has completed similar projects in many countries and continents around the world. Michael was assisted by Patrick Mwangi Kariuki, a Kenyan, who has worked with Michael for 10 years. Peter Dewey, who had apprenticed with

Michael for two months, volunteered his time for the project as well. The students from grades 4 to 8 and their teachers worked with the team so they could learn as the project evolved. We are currently raising the funds to pay for this work. The permaculture project will ensure that the land provides food for the lunch program, fodder for the livestock, trees for the whole community and a source of income for the school. One key component is the water capture using swales and fish ponds. Through this system the land will be kept moist through the dry season and the torrential rains will be redirected to decrease soil erosion. This project will serve as an educational opportunity for the children and adults in the village. They will learn sustainable, organic farming methods that include irrigation and soil enhancement through composting and intercrop planting. There will be bee hives and an expanded tree nursery that will include a wide variety of tree species, providing nuts, fuel, fodder, fruit, building materials and shelter. Many thousands of trees were planted in the school yard itself. Hundreds of cooking bananas trees were planted to take advantage of the water running off the roofs of the school buildings and the water pump. Nick recently told me that “the pupils will dig the land with hoes after the tractor has ploughed to make the seed bed fine. They will then plant, weed and harvest the land. Hence, most of the work will be carried out by pupils during weekends and holidays. They will grow maize, beans, rice and vegetables for the lunch program and napier grass for the cattle.”

The school attendance is outstanding amongst all children. The lunch program gives the children the energy to walk to and from school and the desire to learn. Each year, the school improves in its overall standing in the region. In 2006, it ranked below the average school. Last year the Grade 7 students' national examination scores were the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest out of the 67 schools in the district. The most successful grade 8 graduates are supported in high school. We now have 8 sponsored children in high school, as well as several other graduates of Bukati Primary, who are being funded by their own families.

In April 2010, Annie Guimond and Peter Dewey will bike across Canada raising money and awareness of the needs of these children in Kenya. Peter Dewey is a national level trampolinist who has volunteered in Kenya and at the Bukati Primary School four times since 2006. Annie Guimond, is an expert in trapeze and martial artist who trains in Quebec. They will camp and cook their own food during the 7500 km ride, completing the journey in a very austere manner. All money raised by them, above their costs, will be donated to the Children of Bukati. You will be able to take this journey with them by following their blog. We will have a link to their website from [www.childrenofbukati.com](http://www.childrenofbukati.com). Annie and Peter are currently collecting pledges. If you wish to support this team, please send your donation either through Canada Helps or to the address listed below. Please put Bike for COB on the memo line or in the message section of Canada Helps.

If you have donated through Canada Helps, you will have already received a tax receipt by email. Otherwise, your 2009 tax receipt is enclosed with this newsletter. If you have comments or questions or wish to receive future newsletters by email, or wish to be removed from the contact list please contact me at [info@childrenofbukati.com](mailto:info@childrenofbukati.com). Donations are accepted by cheque made out to Stone United Church with COB or Children of Bukati on the memo line. Please send to Cate Dewey, RR 1, Rockwood, Ontario, Canada N0B 2K0. Credit card donations are accepted through Canada Helps, on-line via the website ([www.childrenofbukati.com](http://www.childrenofbukati.com)).