

Friends of ACET Newsletter

Projects ..

Welcome to this edition.

This issue focuses on projects (physical) that ACET is working on in partnership with a couple of partners including the Friends of ACET Uganda. Many of these plans are included in the New Strategic Plan of the Organisation.

In this newsletter we continue to share with you staff profiles so that you get a better understanding of ACET Uganda as a whole.

As stated in the last Newsletter, ACET has a total of 25 staff in the 3 office bases located in Mbale (bordering with Kenya), Kitgum (bordering with Sudan) and Kampala.

ACET Nigeria and Dem Republic of Congo

ACET has selected Nigeria and DR Congo to focus on in the next 5 years as countries that would have strategic importance in helping to scale up the HIV/AIDS response on the Continent. In Nigeria, the registration process is underway while in the DR Congo the preparatory stages – identifying Board members, possible members of staff, are underway. Please pray for wisdom for the right people to be selected as Members of the Board and staff members. We need people that have the passion to see HIV/AIDS reduced on the continent, people that have a gift of working with others and also have the skills for building capacity in others.

1. KAMPALA – Nakulabye Junior School

A New Home sought...

This is a school that many of you have fond memories of. Well... following a number of visits by many of you, thoughts and ideas have been *oozing* back and forth. It was felt the Nakulabye Junior School, *aka, NakJus*, should get a new home. As anyone knows it's easier said than done. The idea was hatched, land looked for then ... first hurdle - payment. It so happens that the time between when the land was secured and when the money was needed was shorter than the time needed to raise the money! Through some creative means, the money was got but needs to be repaid.

Encounter with the *NakJus* Board...

A team of ACET staff held a meeting with the *Nakjus* Board. It was a meeting designed to get acquainted but more so to get a feel of the 'heartbeat' of the guardians of the school – the Board. The meeting was good, to say the least. We got the Board's original vision (to provide affordable quality education to the impoverished in Nakulabye community); we got a feeling of their dreams too (i.e. assisting children that cannot do homework at home because of their domestic situations - homes where children serve as waiters /waitresses to the wee hours of the morning); their desire to have a social worker that can visit children in the homes occasionally and also provide parents with tips on a variety of factors that affect the children's learning. The *biggie* was the issue of helping parents (of pupils in the school) with income generation support! We explored ways and means in which they could get to work on these.... they were conscious that all these developments would have to be phased and that they needed to broaden their scope of Partners.

Enter Phil

The internet is an interesting place for a variety of reasons. Through it we met Phil Stevenson, a friend of *NakJus*. While busy showing David Kabiswa a few tips on surfing, over a cup of coffee Cilla Oldfield came across Phil and his Primary School in East Sussex.

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Focus on Staff #1

Rita Muwugumya:

Rita Muwugumya oversees the finance and administration aspects of the organisation. Rita has been in ACET for the past 4 years and has worked to consolidate the systems. She is currently in the final stages of her ACCA. She is quiet but diligent. Being surrounded by the ACET team of staff – she is getting the infectious smiles too.. rare, but developing none-the-less!

Kitgum Staff:

The following staff work in Kitgum amidst the difficulties there.....despite it all, they continue to serve the people. They have been Manager, Richard Opio's support.

Please remember them in prayer!

Beatrice Apeso:

Beatrice Apeso is Opio's right hand. She has been in the Kitgum team since the office started in 1996. She has been a pillar of strength and indeed a lot of support to Richard. She is the Administrator of the office base and hence often involved in taking difficult decisions that affect staff lives, safety etc.

Godfrey Otto

Godfrey is the Programme Officer in Kitgum. Godfrey is a trained teacher whose degree of commitment and dedication as an individual was a key factor for his consideration when an opening emerged in ACET Kitgum. He is getting married this year... good for him!

Beatrice Adong:

Beatrice Adong is the Capacity Building Officer. She is very active in spearheading some of the development activities in the Internally Displaced People Camps (IDPCs) together with the Nurse and Field Officer. She has been with the team for the past 3 years and is seconded to the HopeHIV project. Her previous work experience was in Relief and Emergency work. This has been a great asset to ACET!

ACET News Snippets:

Another Visit from HopeHIV..

ACET Uganda received its second visit from HopeHIV in the course of the Financial Year, the first being in May 2005. We were visited by the Africa Director, Russell Davies and the Programme Officer Selina. The situation in Kitgum and the implications for future needs were explored. Due to the election 'fever' they were unable to travel to Kitgum.

Evaluation of RPI

The ACET programme, the Resource Provider Initiative that is done in partnership with Tearfund UK, supported by DCI (Development Cooperation Ireland) funds, was evaluated in February 2006. The meeting was a good eye-opening opportunity and promises to yield good insights and development/ modifications in the way the programme model currently stands. We are hopeful that this will lead to an eventual scale up of the programme activities across Africa.

A big meeting in Nigeria:

Patrick and Sheila Dixon visited Nigeria for 2 working days to discuss the 'formal' birth of ACET Nigeria. ACET has been working with SUWA (Scripture Union West Africa) headed by Sam and Rhoda Udanyi - and felt the need to grow so as to provide much needed services in the region. David Kabiswa and Paul Mershack were in the discussions too.

Patrick preached at 2 Church Services in Jos and was also able to visit a community group responding to HIV/AIDS, that has been motivated by Patrick's book *AIDS and You*. It was a huge motivation for them to interact with Patrick himself and to meet Sheila.

Staff experience the coldest week in English Winter.

David Kabiswa, Paul Kato and Emmanuel Sakira were in UK in the last week of January to meet with Tearfund over the future of the existing consultancy partnership. The review went well.... but the weather didn't. The 3 soon understood the meaning of the word '*cold*'.. a word we so easily play around with. How flippantly we often use it! Scarves and gloves couldn't sufficiently keep the cold away all the time!

David travelled to Cambridge to visit Bill and Cilla Oldfield. While there they made a number of visits and talked about the Nakulabye School project. David had a wonderful reunion with Paul and Angie Clark, after 10 years! In London, Robert organised a series of events.

Prayer Request: **CAMP Decongestion**

A policy has been passed to de-congest the camps. Please pray for the people and households of Northern Uganda. Many want to go home and leave the camps. They feel trapped because the stories of occasional ambushes being done by the rebels dash the peoples confidence about what should be done next. They are uncertain about the security guarantees, are tired of living without aim and hope, and just 'hanging around'.
What does the future hold?

(Nakjus from page 1)

The school were doing an education project with *NakJus*. They too had found *Nakjus* on the web! Robert, being as active and resourceful as we have come to appreciate, traced Phil, who drove for nearly 2 hours to attend an FAU meeting that evening at Hampton! A connection had been made and cemented.

We met Phil again in Uganda. He had already fallen in love with the place as he had been warned! The school loved him and they exchanged lots of ideas. He met the Board .. and also squeezed in a visit to the Source of the Nile!

Construction Costs:

ACET is looking for £49,000 sterling. The land is taking £16,000. The buildings (4 blocks) will need £16,000, construction of the Vocational section for girls, nursery school and overheads another £17,000. Please contact Robert for drawings, an artistic impression and more details. The most urgent need now is money for the Land.

2. KITGUM – Resource Centre

Kitgum is growing in scope and strategic positioning. The work carried out in the region is being seen as an exemplary model of working in IDPs in an innovative manner. Orphan Affairs council models have impressed people about the capacities of young orphans to mobilise themselves, reach out to meet the needs of others and then be a source of advocacy at Camp and District level! Some of these outcomes have exceeded what we imagined. Kitgum is now constructing a **Resource Centre** in partnership with Christian Aid UK. This will be a youth hub where they can catch up on schoolwork, have guidance and counselling sessions, structured lifeskills sessions and also computer and other facilities. These are needed to help the young people who have lagged behind for so long. The centre shall also provide other services like VCT and shall be a link to others in the community.

3. MBALE – Sports Centre:

A sports centre shall soon be under construction. ACET has bought the land and is processing the land titles deeds. The construction is estimated to take about 90-120 days. This sports centre is being done in partnership with Tackle Africa, a UK based charity.

The sports centre shall have a couple of other services attached to it. The initial thought is to have lifeskills development sessions, counselling and later on the provision of testing and support services for the young people. All these aspects are being considered strategically by management and shall be presented to the Board in their next meeting at the end of this quarter.

The funding for the sports centre has been secured as a phase 1 target. The next phase is to equip the centre. Budgets and fundraising targets are being finalised so that as the fundraising drive gets underway the construction goes on. We will let you know of the needs and developments.