

Friends of ACET Newsletter

Fragile !!

Welcome to this edition!

For a while now, the **Peace Talks** have stalled for a number of reasons... mainly that the main arbitrator, Vice President of Sudan is not trusted as a mediator! More conditions are being set by the rebels ... as a precondition to resume talks.

It appears that there is a wave of suspicion that has arisen, which must be dispelled at all costs. We are asking that you pray with us that this is what will happen and that the two parties will get back to the discussion table.

We have seen people go back to their localities; we want to see that continue and not reverse.

Ben Kellard

Ben Kellard walked onto the scene, just when ACET was about to give up that they were not able to get the kind of person that was needed to help mentor the organisation.

Ben Kellard is a consultant with a lot of experience. He was on a one-year career break and decided he wanted to invest it in some meaningful venture. Uganda for some reason was on his mind. He shared it with some former colleagues who were at Ashridge Consulting, in the UK. These pointed him to Anthony Kasozi (who Ben knew, but for some reason hadn't thought of getting into contact). As God would have it, Ben met Anthony and the rest is history.

Ben has spent 4 months in Uganda with the ACET team. He came with the Ashridge level of professionalism and experience. Boy!.. It's been great and things will only get better!

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATE....

1. Nakulabye Junior School

ACET Uganda has a project committee for Nakulabye Junior School. The committee is headed by Emmanuel Sakira and 2 other staff that sit on it. They have regular monthly meetings. This frequency is likely to increase once the construction starts.

Progress:

- Project Management Committee in place;
- Master Plan has been developed and revised following the land survey - geotechnical report;
- Geotechnical survey took longer than anticipated and has consequently slowed the process)
- Bank account for the project has been assigned in Standard Chartered Bank. Both ACET and Nakulabye shall be mandatory signatories to further transparency and accountability;
- Adjusted project start date is planned for April 2007.

Next Steps (March-April):

- Costing of the project to be solicited from the architect and shared with the FAU and other key stakeholders
- Architect to make a presentation to the ACET Board of Directors;
- Plans to be shared with selected key stakeholders;
- Fundraising Plans and targets set;
- Phasing of the construction work into 3 phases.
- Phase #1 - Move to new premises January 2008.

For any enquiries please talk to Emmanuel Sakira, the Project Manager at Sakira.emmanuel@acetug.org. You could also link up with Robert Mortimer the FAU convenor in the UK RMort90756@aol.com

2. Kitgum – Resource Centre

Three cheers for Richard Opio and his team...

Hip, Hip!! Hurray! Hip Hip!, Hurray
Hip, Hip!... **HURRAY!**

The Kitgum team moved to their premises in mid December. The Resource Centre also has some offices attached. The training wing still needs a coat of paint and reinforcing of the roof for it to be fully functional.

The next phase is the furnishing of the Resource Centre with computers and then commencing the Youth Lifeskills education programme as initially intended.

3. Mbale – Sports Centre

Bigger Roadblock than was anticipated... the local councillor claims user rights over the land and even though the municipality disagrees, they are powerless to stop his claim or to help us go forward! The project has reached a significant roadblock at this point in time.

The team in Mbale have in the meantime approached the Municipal council, which has given us an alternative plan and location. This has been frustrating!

Staff Changes

It has been said that "growth equals change and vice versa". .. really? Well...

ACET is experiencing some staff changes, both outflows and inflows. **Irene Kisakye**, Programme Coordinator, moved to Samaritan Purse, and **Beatrice Adong** moved to World Vision International. **Julius** has joined the Kitgum Team and four others are bound to join in March 2007

From an ACET point of view, we are trusting God to replace the people that have left. They have left with a good track record.

ACET News Snippets:

Accident in Kitgum...

ACET Kitgum staff were involved in an accident in January this year. We are grateful to God that there were no deaths. The car overturned a couple of times. The driver tried to save some children that ran across the road as they were playing. **Consolate** had some internal injuries, has been in hospital for monitoring and is now back in office.

RPI Evaluation...

The RPI project is coming to the end (November 2006).

Enhancing Child Participation...

The ACET Kitgum/UNICEF project in Kitgum has taken off well. There have been 3 child play centres set up. The children were involved in the selection of the place that they wanted to have their play centre. Some peer educators were selected in the community and the programme is rolling out. The Children love it! The swings, the merry go-round, the slides and the climbing frame. This is the "In-thing" for the young people at the camps.

The adults are being wooed gradually. The child participation concept needs to be passed on in a non-threatening manner. A couple of models have been designed and shall be pre-tested in the next quarter.

UNICEF, and the Department of Mass Communication from Makerere University are eager to learn from this process. This has raised the stakes... and the pressure no doubt!

Phil Stephensen visits again..!

Phil Stephenson, headteacher of Silverdale School, Hastings came back to visit Nakulabye School and ACET in February. His visits are part of an exchange visit under the auspices of British Council. However, it appears that everyone that visits Nakulabye gets so touched that they pass on the story to another and consequently get converts! Phil came with a sports coach. There is a proverbial saying.. "Those that drink of the waters of the Nile some day will return!" Well, we wonder what Phil thinks about that!

Prayer Request:

A New Direction and Re-invigoration

New Capacity Needed:

ACET is embarking on a revamping and re-invigoration process that shall position it better for the next 4-5 years. The new strategic objectives are out, consultancy input has been received. We now are looking to God to provide the needed quality of personnel – both the skills and the heart! Please pray specifically that the coming quarter will help answer these needs.

ACET Mbale Corporate Dinner

ACET Mbale organised a large corporate dinner in Mbale. The event was very colourful and attracted a very large business community. It was the first time that they were being called and mobilised into an event such as this.

There was talk about a further continuation of the partnerships. ACET has been asked to see how it could further help the business community respond appropriately to HIV and AIDS both as a matter of social responsibility and also as a workplace issue.

Rotary Project Rolls out

The staff have moved from event to event, they have rushed from one Rotary Fellowship to another. The graphics designers and materials developers have moved from one developing leaflets, to developing banners, then to workplace placards and you name it..! That is how busy the Rotary project has rolled out. The partnership has increased ACET's visibility. Since everything in the project required an accompanying logo, ACET stood to benefit as well.

The schools competitions saw the young people write essays on the plight of the young girl in an HIV, AIDS era. Very interesting insights and thoughts.

Three Boda-Boda men have been trained and a formidable team of people now exists. These men were trained as peer educators and have already been assisting in educating other men – that make bricks in the valleys and other artisans. The men have also conducted public awareness talks, which have attracted a lot of interest and discussion. This experience has shown us the extent to which HIV& AIDS awareness needs to be carried out on a continuous basis

Partnership Box

Monitoring and Support Visits:

Christiana Brown, Tearfund UK, visited again... and is yet to visit again! Well, Tearfund UK is designing some country specific strategy and this calls for a lot of consultation. The strategy is to be completed by May 2007.

Baabumba, Christian Aid PEPFAR, Chief of Party visited Uganda. He held meetings with ACET management in January and then flew to Kitgum to assess the progress made in the implementation of the partnership. Mr Babuumba was involved in the accident with the Kitgum team. We are really grateful that nothing happened to him!

Entrepreneurship training, ACET staff received training from **Hope HIV** in the area of entrepreneurship development. This training will be a great asset in the new design that ACET has embarked on in Kitgum. This is designed to help the young people as they deal with decongestions, resettlement and a new beginning.