

KAASO June 2007 Newsletter

Government School in Bikira

For some time now, Dominic has been the Director of the Government School in Bikira, in addition to working at KAASO of course. Over the past year or so he has implemented goals, staff and teacher accountability (which can be lacking in government schools), and given the opportunity for innovative and inspiring teaching techniques to be implemented. Volunteers were welcome to visit and work with the teachers and administrators of the school. Ryon, for example, would go and assist on occasion. In recognition of Dominic's good works and recent graduation, he has been named Director of a larger government school a bit further away. I congratulated Dominic on his promotion and asked him if his longer commute was acceptable. He let me know he and his family were very pleased and that his compensation package is well worth any longer commute. He sounded so happy; I wished I was there to share in the excitement and joy! Congratulations Dominic!

Volunteer Arrivals and Departures

Kirsty N. from the UK is the most recent arrival. I called the morning after her arrival at KAASO and she was resting, but everyone was already so excited about the creative ideas and art projects she had presented to them the day prior. She has amply added to their existing supply of colored papers and will likely make good use of their other arts and crafts supplies- colored pencils, markers, papers, crayons, glue, scissors, etc.

Sue of Australia arrived prior to Kirsty N. She is an experienced nurse, manager and consultant who has worked with HIV positive patients. She arrived after spending time volunteering at another KWW project, The El-shadai Family Foster Home in Jinja. She is known and valued at both projects for her knowledge, caring ways, attentiveness, and her general willingness to help out in any way possible. She's been a tremendous asset and support.

Mallory and Paul of Canada, were the most recent volunteers to leave KAASO. Paul has done fantastic work teaching math to the P7 class. As older volunteers will recall, this was Dominic's primary teaching work at KAASO, and with the addition of new teachers as well as the difficult exams the Primary 7 class need to pass in order to move forward to good schools, the volunteer's assistance has been most helpful! Mallory has developed a reputation as a busy and hard worker! She did a tremendous amount of work coaching the girl's netball team and getting them into competitive shape. Everyone has been quite impressed and grateful! Paul and Mallory's diligence will be missed.

I called just prior to the departure of Rens, from the Netherlands. He was instrumental in starting the volunteer assistance in teaching math in the P7 class and Rose and Dominic were so pleased with his time at KAASO. I called while he was at the market in Kyotera buying food items to make spaghetti and sauce for dinner for Sarah, Rose, Dominic, and the other volunteers. What a giving, fun, and wonderful farewell gesture! You can tell something of his generous spirit in this gesture.

Kim is back at the project after a bit of time away and, in addition to her tremendous enthusiasm, brought back a couple laptops! Kim feels supporting KAASO deeply in her heart and would like to start greater efforts to see the project succeed to higher levels. She'll be at the project long term and is continuing the long and inspiring efforts to adopt her daughter.

Upcoming volunteers include Kirsty P. of the UK (yes, two Kirstys, both of the UK, at the same time), Chetana of the USA who is coming from traveling in India for some time, and Frouke from the Netherlands!



Wouldn't you like to join a group like this?



A volunteer bedroom

Donations

Thanks in large part to Mallory's work developing a top girl's netball program, the people of KAASO are requesting track suits; essentially sports outfits in a variety of sizes for the girls to wear while training and competing. Shoes and gym bags to carry the shoes and suits in are also newly added to the list. If you can consider bringing this donation, try to bring a variety of sizes and any shorts should not be too-short as exposing the thigh is generally not considered appropriate. For those who can bring these items and wish them to match the "school's colors", blue, red and purple can be considered "KAASO colors". While a donation such as this may not seem as necessary as bringing the much needed monies to support KAASO's on-going building projects, it does much to indicate the importance and equality of girls. It's very validating of their labors and indicates to both sexes and genders that girls and their efforts are equally valued.

KAASO's Future

In the past month I was able to catch Dominic at a time when we could have a lengthier talk about his vision for KAASO. With each term new students, new faculty, new buildings, and the expansion of KAASO continue. Currently the school has over 500 pupils, and a year and half ago it had a little under 200. For rural Uganda, that's a tremendously fast growth rate! I asked Dominic where his vision for the on-going growth of KAASO is leading.

Dominic would like the school to reach well over 1500 students in as quick a time as possible. Uganda President Museveni supports a relatively close primary school that is known for its size and excellence. It's enrollment? 1500 pupils. Dominic would like KAASO to become the competitive rival of this school. In truth, his vision is that KAASO become known as the top primary school in the region for its size and excellence. The development of KAASO should continue for some time further it seems!

Dominic's drive to succeed and become the best at any endeavor shine through his goals and volunteers will be instrumental in seeing it come to fruition!

For now, the building projects continue at KAASO and volunteers who have the means and desire are encouraged to forego bringing tangible, material donations (except specific requests, as above, of course) and contribute extra monies to construction projects. One exciting new project, another in a series of tremendous project support offered by Rotary Clubs around the world, is bringing running water to KAASO! The pipes have been purchased and are already being laid! It's very exciting news and KAASO is extremely lucky to have the enormous and on-going support of the Rotary Club. Amazing assets not available to many such projects, such as the bore hole, the pig farming, the community library including books and building, and others in addition to this most recent effort, have all been accomplished due to their support. It's quite a wealthy project comparatively!

The new kitchen, the classrooms, and the latrine are still in the process of being completed, but all are quite near. The latrines have actually been in use as they were desperately needed, but need some

additional plastering work to be considered “complete”. The KWW fees and extra monies volunteers have donated in addition to raising once they get back home are a tremendous asset when expanding the project. Truly, without the monies volunteers bring in, the expansion of KAASO would not be possible!

Volunteer Coordinator

I’ll be in Uganda from late July to mid-September and will of course spend part of that time at the KAASO project. I’m looking forward to reporting to you from Uganda!

That’s all for now! As always, let me know if you have any questions or concerns!

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