



## ***Breakfast Club, Tanzania***

### ***Newsletter June-July 2007***

May was our first full calendar month at Mangamba Primary School and was a great success. We have recently compared the attendance records from the start to the end of the month and these have increased by around 10-15% depending on the age group in question. Generally, the attendance records of the younger children have increased more dramatically, particularly heartening since it is the younger children will benefit from the project for the majority of their school life. We hope that this is a trend that will remain, since our commitment to the school is long-term.

Primary schools in Tanzania are on holiday for the duration of June, which gave Rob the opportunity to clean the room in which the children are fed and prepare for the handover to Romy, who took over from Rob at the start of July. Romy is going to run the project for the next year, she has excellent Kiswahili and will be a great asset to the Breakfast Club team. The July newsletter will include an interview with Romy, offering her opinions of the project and her visions of the future of Breakfast Club during her year as Project Manager.

### **Recent Fundraising Events and Activities**

At Breakfast Club we receive great support from all of our donors and from people organising fundraising events. Recently we had a stall the *Africa Oye!* Festival in Liverpool and sold various pieces of Tanzanian artwork and jewellery. Despite a terrible weekend weather-wise, we managed to make £300, which we were all really pleased with. Katy (Programme Director) was on a two week holiday from Tanzania and attended the event, along with two of our trustees and various other people involved with the project in some capacity.



Our new Project Manager Romy Campbell, her brother and a friend, recently cycled 100 miles in 6 hours, an incredible effort. They have managed to raise somewhere in the region of £1400, a staggering amount of money. These two events, added to the monthly and one-off donations we have recently received help us to feel totally established and able to start implementing some of our long-term strategies aimed at ensuring the self-sufficiency of the project at Mangamba Primary School. Furthermore, we can even think about branching out to further schools in the region. Further events are planned and will be covered in the next newsletter.

### **Interview with Wahab Issae, the Regional Education Officer (REO) of Mtwara**



Below is a transcript of an interview with the REO of Mtwara. He has been extremely helpful and insightful regarding the problem of hunger amongst school children and how to combat this. In the past he has worked with researchers from Oxford and Harvard Universities.

**Question:** Wahab, what do you believe are the main benefits of the work that Breakfast Club is doing at Mangamba Primary School?

**Answer:** Well, first and foremost I feel that providing food at school will have an extremely positive impact on the level of attendance at school. My previous research points to the fact that fewer than 20% of school children in the Mtwara region receive food before school. Providing food at school will also increase parental encouragement to attend.

I also feel that giving children food at school will increase their attention rates in class, leading to a greater understanding of what is being taught. However, this relies upon the food being of a high nutritional content, which I know is true of the food that you are providing.



**Question:** We provide an uji porridge made up of millet, rice, dona (a highly nutritious type of maize), sugar and milk, what impact do you think this is having on the general health of the children?

**Answer:** I would say that the food provided is improving the health of the children. They will be more resistant to diseases and should grow at an increased rate.

**Question:** We have some ideas concerning the future of this project and other projects of this nature, for example planting fruit trees at the school or providing bees nests. How else do you think we can ensure long-term sustainability?

**Answer:** In principal this is a good idea but you would need numerous nests to be completely self-reliant. However, bees nests and trees are a good idea because children can learn some useful skills at school which will benefit them later in life. The children can plant and maintain the trees and be taught beekeeping as part of their *stadi za kazi* (study of work) classes.

In the Arusha declaration of 1967 Julius Nyerere, “the father of the nation” (Tanzania’s first independent leader), proclaimed that “education for self-reliance” is a means by which Tanzania can reduce its dependency on imports and external support and this element of your project fits into these goals. Nyerere declared it crucial that children are able to put into practice in society what they learn in school.

**Question:** One of our original aims was complete self-sufficiency in the long-term, can you think of any other ways we can help to increase self-reliance at the school?

**Answer:** If your ideas with fruit and honey are a success the only other elements of the project you need to consider are the milk and the *uji* mixture. It may be possible to buy cows so that the children can rear them and to ask parents to provide the bulk of the *uji* mixture. Since you are now using more of the very cheap but highly nutritious *dona* in the mix, it may be possible to use this as the main ingredient in the mixture.

