

## President's Message:

The motivation for many of us to donate to ACCES stems from our concern for people who are extremely poor and who, with our help, can make a satisfying life for themselves and their families. But our desire to help people in Kenya may also stem from concern for our own welfare, which depends more and more upon the welfare of people in all the countries of the world.

This interdependence is particularly evident when we look at the way uncontrolled population growth and the resulting environmental degradation in one part of the world affects life in every other part of the world. Predictions of population growth indicate that in the next twenty years, 9,950 births out of every 10,000 in the entire world will take place in developing countries (Ivan Head in "On a Hinge of History"). As people existing in abject poverty try to eke out their living from a leached landscape, seeking food, firewood, and forage, their rising populations consume the planetary forest cover. Scientists have warned us that if we ignore environmental degradation, all of us will be threatened by atmospheric changes such as global warming and ozone depletion.

Most of the students that ACCES sponsors come from Western Province in Kenya - the most populous area in that country, where 50 percent of the people are under the age of 15.

*"About half the population of Western Province lives in absolute poverty," states the Provincial Commissioner, Yusuf Haji. Though the province was agriculturally endowed, its rapid population growth "has generated poverty." The fast-growing population in the province has also intensified environmental degradation ("Daily Nation" November 23, 1995).*

And the UN tells us that low literacy, particularly among women, is the major cause of high fertility rates in developing countries ("Vancouver Sun", October 25, 1995).

Each ACCES sponsorship helps one person to find work and become a useful citizen. It makes one small change in the developing country by decreasing poverty, limiting population growth, and thwarting atmospheric decomposition. It makes a difference to us all.



**Beth Scott**  
**President, ACCES**

2441 Christopherson Rd.  
Surrey, B.C.  
V4A 3L2

Women account for 70% of the world's poor, and nearly 70% of all illiterates...When girls go to school, the knock-on effects in terms of lower fertility, healthier children and longer lives are striking.

The Economist,  
August 18, 1995

*As she walked along the edge of the beach one day, a young woman could see that thousands and thousands of starfish had been stranded on the sand as the tide went out. She saw that there was an old man on the beach, too, and she watched him reach down, pick up a starfish, and throw it out into the water. He did it again and again.*

*Amused at what she saw, the young woman went up to him and said, "What on earth are you doing that for? You can't make a difference that way."*

*The old man reached down, picked up another starfish, and threw it out to sea. "It made a difference to that one," he said.*

## Welcome, Diane and Joey!

ACCES has two new agents, Diane Bienvenue and Joey Goodings, who recently arrived in Kakamega after five months of travelling throughout Asia. They have both had previous experience in developing countries. Joey completed a Canada World Youth placement in Sri Lanka and a Civil Service International placement in India, while Diane completed a Canadian Crossroads International placement in Bolivia. ACCES is delighted that they are to be our agents for the next six to seven months.

(from our new agents) April 12, 1996...Hello! Bonjour! How are you? We're here!

After five months of travelling, it's a relief to finally unpack our bags and have a place we can call home. We arrived in Nairobi on April 1st and by April 4th we were in Kakamega. In the past week we've moved into our new home, bought groceries, met with John and Susan and about a dozen ACCES students, gone through the books, learned about each individual student, toured the town, met Beatrice, Anton, Ron and Nora, and said "Hello" or "Habari" to about 5,000 children. It's been a great week, and we're happy to be here....The training is going well. We are looking forward to assuming our responsibilities as the new ACCES agents...

Diane and Joey

April 21st, 1996...Our first day on the job as new ACCES agents will probably remain as one of our most memorable. Dianah Sigali, who has almost completed her studies as a primary school teacher, dropped by the office with a huge smile and a gift - 30 eggs - to show her appreciation for the assistance she has received from ACCES. We are really touched by this gesture because 30 eggs represents more than a day's wages for the average Kenyan.

We'd like to thank the out-going (in more ways than one!) agents from ACCES, John and Susan Sawatzky, for being so patient in going over all the administrative detail, taking us around the town, introducing us to people, feeding us tea and cookies, and making us feel at home here in Kakamega...

Diane and Joey

ACCES wishes you both good luck and "nice time" while in Kakamega!



John Sawatzky, who wrote this article, is a retired teacher from Richmond who, with his wife, Susan, were CHES agents in 1993-1994. This year, we are most fortunate in having this dedicated and hard-working couple as ACCES agents. They have been in Kakamega since August, 1995.

## MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGE

The academic hurdles facing university students in Kenya are challenging indeed. Many students in western Kenya come from very poor peasant homes where even basic necessities are scarce. The primary and secondary schools they attend are often overcrowded, under-equipped and under-staffed, with under-qualified teachers being required to teach a very demanding curriculum. To qualify for university, a student must graduate from high school with an average of a high B-.

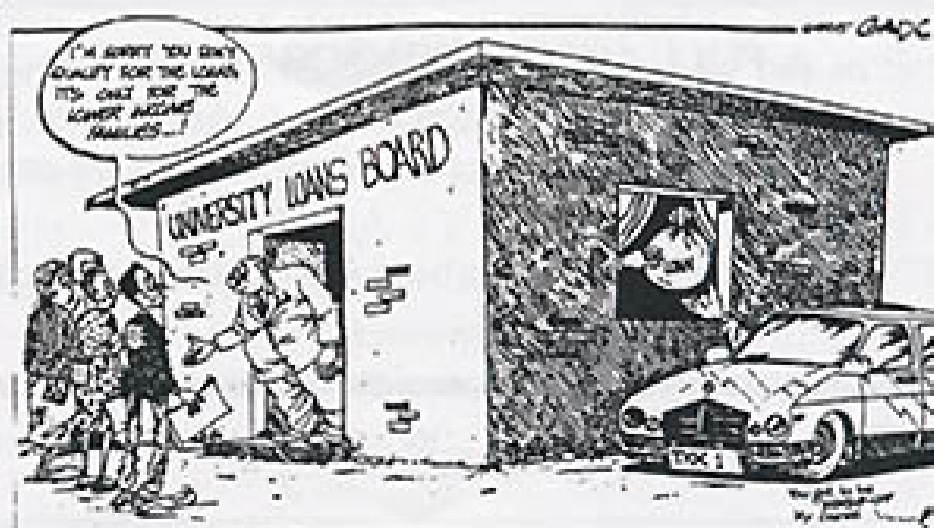
Jobs are very difficult to obtain in Kenya and, generally, do not pay well. A man can work hard all day for KSH50 - KSH100 (\$1.25-\$2.50). An untrained teacher may earn as little as KSH1000 - KSH1800 per month (\$25-\$45). Because of their financial difficulties, many students, who qualify academically, find that they are unable to continue their studies.

A few years ago, the government offered bursaries to many of those qualifying for university. However, all that has changed. Pressured by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reduce spending, the government has made major cuts to education as well as other areas. The annual cost per university student is now over KSH100,000. The government gives a direct grant for about half the cost. The remainder of the fees must be paid by the student. This is more than many Kenyan professionals earn in a year. To assist students, the IMF has funded a loan program administered by a new Higher Education Board. These loans of KSH42,000, KSH40,000, KSH30,000 or KSH25,000 are to be repaid after graduation. (It is estimated that repayment of these loans may take from ten to fifteen years.) This leaves the student between KSH11,000 and KSH14,000 to raise, provided the maximum loan is granted. At KSH40= \$1.00 Cdn., this may amount up to \$350.00, not a large amount by Canadian standards, but an almost insurmountable amount for a poor Kenyan student to raise.

An added problem is that there seems to be no consistent standard by which the loans are granted. Some students get the maximum amount of money while others are refused all assistance, even though the backgrounds of the student applicants are similar. The way in which loans are awarded, as well as the implementation of new fee structures, cost of meals, and room charges, have resulted in recent closures of some universities and delayed some classes by at least three months.

ACCES offers a lifeline to these Kenyan students - your sponsorship makes it possible for them to complete their education and/or training. Keep up the good work!

"Daily Nation" Nov. 15, 1995



## Cloning: START YOUR OWN CHARITY

ACCES, dedicated to providing post-secondary education to needy Kenyan students, owes its beginning to CHES, the Canadian Harambee Education Society. From CHES came the idea, the model of organization and operation, and the initial assistance. CHES, which for eight years had provided scholarships for secondary students, needed a society with similar goals to provide scholarships for students who had completed secondary school. ACCES became that society; hence the "birth" or "cloning" which created ACCES. Now ACCES wants to have itself "cloned". If you can think of any person who might want to start a society similar to ACCES, please have them contact George or Beth Scott.

In its brief life, ACCES has brought immeasurable pleasure and satisfaction to both its founders and all of the volunteers who are involved in the society. Most of all, ACCES has helped a number of young Africans become educated, productive, and employable members of their society.

## WORKING FOR LIFE

"The conditions we live in are not the worst of it", said the small wiry man, glancing sideways at the children playing on the dirt floor. "What is the worst is not having work, not having anything useful to do, nothing to build and live for - no dreams....I want to leave something behind....something for our children, something

that says we were here; that we contributed, that our lives were worth something."

These words, from a man in Peru, can be heard everywhere: in Africa, in Asia, even in Canada. People who have lost the dignity that comes from being free to work and build and contribute to life, family and community.

Work is often seen as employment, an income - the capacity to put food on the table and a roof over a family's head. And it certainly is that, especially for those who have nothing. But work is more than labour for hire and a meagre wage.

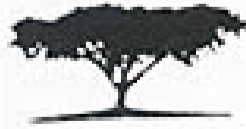
Work is economic, it is social, it is political and it is spiritual. Above all, work is the opportunity to create and build, to make something, to express oneself through physical and mental effort, to express oneself in a community, an economy, in a society.

Work situates us, places us. Work is reciprocal; it takes something from the social and physical environment and creates something more - something more that includes ourselves. It is a relationship with the environment, an accommodation and contribution.

Work comes from freedom, and leads to dignity. In doing so, work recreates freedom. In this sense, work is at the heart of what it is to be truly and fully human. *"Inter Pares"* Bulletin, September, 1995.

A FULL ACCES SPONSORSHIP IS \$360.00 PER YEAR  
 100% of your donation is sent to Africa for scholarships.  
 Administration costs are obtained through other means.

ACCES is happy to accept post-dated cheques for all sponsorships



**HARON OGENDO** is one of the first CHES/ACCES students to complete his course and gain employment.

This account was written by Peg Klesner, who has been an agent for both CHES and ACCES in Africa.

## ♥ HARON ♥

In the early days of CHES, an agent named Jesse Hunter (now living in Parksville), slipped on one of the slippery clay roads and fractured her ankle. Rather than choosing to return to Canada, she decided to remain in Kenya and cope as best she could. At that point, she was living at Ekambuli school in a tiny house with no electricity, water or indoor bathroom. Over the next few weeks, she was able to survive with some level of comfort, due to the efforts of three CHES students who also lived at Ekambuli. They came regularly each day to light her lamp, cook her meals, carry out the honey pot, and generally cheer and entertain Jesse with their company. As a result, Jesse stayed, recovered, and returned to acting as the Ekambuli CHES agent.

One of these students was Haron Ogendo. Although Haron was not a strong academic student, he was as thoughtful and helpful as all of the boys who assisted in Jesse's care. Because of their kindness, it was decided that these boys would receive continued support from CHES in furthering their education.

By the end of the year it appeared that Haron's education needed to be directed towards a mechanical (or Juakali) training rather than continuing in Ekambuli Secondary School. Nora Harrison conferred with Haron, searching for a technical school where he could become trained as an automobile mechanic. They finally located a local trades school that appeared to offer courses in automobile maintenance. It was located in the education district where CHES is located, so in January, Haron enrolled.

During one of Nora's follow up visits, Haron

complained that there were no cars to work on, and that most of the instruction was theoretical. When this was confirmed, they began to search for an institution that would actually provide "hands-on" experience. By this time, Haron had made close friends with another student named Wycliffe. It was decided to move both of them to a technical college in Kisumu. During this period they also searched for housing that would fit into their CHES budget. The first choice was a tiny one-room house that was fine as long as it didn't rain. During the first rain, water poured through their door, so Wycliffe got permission from his cousin for them both to stay at a house that was in the process of construction.

Over the next year, Haron and Wycliffe completed Level 3 Mechanics, then waited for their results on the government exam. After a few months working as volunteers with a local Juakali mechanic, Nora arranged for them to work as apprentices in a garage in Kisumu. Finally, following a trip to Nairobi and a generous payment of "chai", Wycliffe received his certificate. Haron had to repeat his practical exam, which he passed successfully. They then registered for Level 2 instruction in Automobile Mechanics which they completed during the 1994 year.

ACCES by this time had become Haron's sponsoring organization, but Haron's loyalty to his original sponsor, Belle Colton, survived. The following are some excerpts from his letter to her in September, 1995.

*...Though it's beyond my expression, I only thank you to have helped me this much, that's why I am surviving*



Otherwise, after a long job hunting, I am fortunate to have got a chance with the Kenya Tea Development Authority (K.T.D.A.), after an interview I did in April. I joined the company in May, though my salary has not yet sent. I hope it's coming at the end of this month. I would have written if the salary would have come in time. (Ed's note: no shillings for envelope or stamp). The company took me to a scale of grade III but I will survive with the little pay for my living till I do my grade II and I. This is only to show you where I am and my present life, but I will write you again when I hear from you. I borrowed some money to bribe in order to get this chance but I'll try to clear half of it when my salary comes. You'll hear from me again as time advances.

Warm wishes for the best of your everything. Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,  
 Ogendo

Haron's determination to succeed was often measured by his tenacity in repairing "George", the Landrover, owned and occasionally operated by Marnie, one of the CHES agents. The repair opportunities were never-ending, and so was Haron's willingness to persist. There are some hilarious accounts of his adventures with "George", such as when he reversed into the security wall! Apparently his driving lessons were not as successful as his mechanical courses?

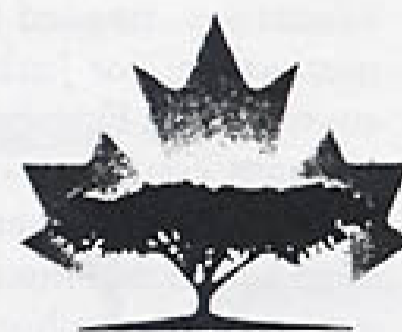
Haron is one of our first CHES/ACCESS students to complete his course and gain employment. He is a great example of the opportunities that develop when CHES and ACCES provide support for education and training. He is committed to seeing that other students also have that chance. Like many other Alumni Association members, he is looking forward to sponsoring their first CHES scholarship student in the near future.

"Warm wishes for the best of YOUR everything", Haron - and NICE TIME!

**ACCES BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Beth Scott	President	(604) 538-7267
George Scott	Vice-President	(604) 538-7267
Gwen Murray Newsletter Editor	Secretary	(604) 535-9766
Susan Sawatzky	Treasurer	(604)278-4661
Nora Harrison	Director	(604) 929-5776
Peg Klesner	Director	(604) 926-3018
Festus Litiku	Director	(254-2) 726-354
Eileen Malova	Director	Kenya

All Directors of ACCES are Volunteers



## SEEDS OF CHANGE

*Our students are the "seeds of change" in Kenya, a developing country of about 26 million where subsistence farming is the norm, the average yearly income is about \$340 Canadian, and the key to old age security is having a son. ACCES is vital to their obtaining an education. The following are excerpts from some of their letters:*

... Firstly, I thank you earnestly for your continuous and generous aid towards my education. I am grateful for all that you do in connection with my college studies. Thanks a lot!....I have just completed my second stage in accounts (KATC II) I hope that with good results, then I'll begin on CPA I (Certified Public Accounting)....All that you did for me and you've been doing towards my education is more than what an average father can do for his son. You are more than a father!

...Paul

*(enrolled at RIAT Polytechnic Institute in Accountancy)*

...I would like to express my gratitude for the efforts and interest you have shown through ACCES in helping to prepare for my future by helping to finance my education. This is the most vital thing that any young man requires

...Ernest

*(enrolled at Kenyatta University - Education)*

....I thank you for starting ACCES which now gives more hope to our future, especially in our country Kenya, where every job opportunity is based on one's educational level...Now I have been admitted to Mosero University where I am taking Educational Arts...I am just happy that at least I have gotten a chance to have such a course because now I am assured of getting a job after clearing...I'm so glad and encouraged because of you for I know that you will not leave me and I thank you for that...I will work hard to achieve my aims.

...Zipora Amaklu

*(Amaklu is supported, through ACCES, by the Outreach Committee of the Knox United Church of Parksville)*

...My father was a cook for a mission hospital in Nairobi. He died when I was two years old....I went through primary education safely and succeeded to secondary school...When I joined college it didn't take long before the fee increased by 9700 Kenya shillings. This had to bring alsas (ed.: "ulcers) in my stomach since I had no one to help me...

...I had started to give up the struggle when I came across a beautiful house at Secherai market with the word "CHES" (Canadian Harambee Education Society) written on the gatepost...I entered inside and got Madam Nora Harrison who was so welcoming in talking friendly and promising too...Nora had to work up and down and helped to raise the amount needed...Now I am through with my course, I am a trained teacher...Praise goes to CHES and ACCES for having made it possible for me to complete my course and be a teacher. Long stay CHES and ACCES; long stay Nora Harrison; long stay the Canadian teachers. *Help us Kenya teachers to be teachers of the required status!*

...Alfred

*(has completed his course in Education and is now a trained teacher)*

**The direction in which education starts  
a man will determine his future life.**

*Plato*

**"What Africa needs is practical solutions."**  
*UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali*

**ACCES IS GROWING**

ACCES was incorporated in October, 1993. It is encouraging to look at both its growth and the results of your support in the last two-and-a-half years.

DATE	SPONSORS	STUDENTS	GRADS	WAITING
Nov/94	46	50	0	--
May/95	65	62	0	--
Oct/95	70	99	9	--
May/96	77	88	13	14

The "WAITING" column gives the number of students who have not yet been "called" either to university or job training, but who are assured a sponsorship.

The discrepancy between the number of sponsors and the number of students occurs because some sponsors give substantially more than the usual \$360.00, which means that more scholarships can be given than the absolute number of sponsors.

In summary, we are growing: more sponsors, more students, more graduates. Congratulations to all of us!!

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The third Annual General Meeting of ACCES will be held on

**Saturday, June 15, 1996**

at

**2:00 p.m. in the afternoon**

at

**2441 Christopherson Road,  
 Surrey, B.C.  
 V4A 3L2**

Supporters and interested persons are welcome.  
 Please let us know if you plan to attend.  
 Phone: 538-7267 or 535-9766

