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WHAT IS THE VIEW *from 30,000 feet, from the ground?*

Viewed from 30,000 feet, Kenya's problems seem almost insurmountable. In Western Province, small plots of land are carved into even smaller plots with hundreds and hundreds of people living on them in abject poverty. Seventy percent of the people are unemployed and one-third of the children do not go to school. Fifteen percent of the population is infected with HIV/AIDS and a huge death-toll has orphaned many, many children. Although the newly-elected government has declared "zero tolerance" for corruption, bribery is a way of doing business that will not easily be changed.

So what is ACCES doing there? What possible difference can our small society

make? We could easily be discouraged if we did not have the perspective from ground level where ACCES work is being done.

From that point of view, we see that more than 700 young men and women have received, or are receiving, post-secondary training with ACCES' help. In the Kakamega district, this is a significant number of educated people, many of whom are now helping their siblings and other youth to acquire an education. Again, from ground level, we see that in the primary learning centres, nearly 900 children, too poor to attend the public schools, are learning to read and write. They are being offered an education that will provide a chance for



A shamba near Kakamega

them to emerge from their brutal poverty.

Then again, HIV/AIDS awareness programs have made a difference to the lives of many people. In Uganda, where such programs were initiated sooner than in Kenya, the spread of this scourge has slowed. With its workshops and training programs, ACCES may be saving untold numbers of lives in at least one part of Kenya.

Please imagine a map of Kenya with a small detailed inset. It is in the detail that we can see the difference that ACCES can make. It is from the view at ground level that our continuing inspiration will come.

Beth Scott

Beth Scott
President, ACCES

2441 Christopherson Road,
Surrey, British Columbia,
Canada V4A 3L2



Welcome to Glory Musalia!



Glory is the beautiful first-born daughter of Everlyne and Derrick Musalia.

Everlyne has played a vital role in the operation of ACCES in Kenya. Hard-working, dedicated and knowledgeable, she has been the ACCES secretary in Kakamega

for many years. Everlyne is also the Executive Secretary of CAAA, our southern partner.

ACCES offers its sincere congratulations to the proud parents.

Glory Musalia has been enrolled in the Faculty of Medicine at Moi University for the year 2023!!

Every baby born into the world is a finer one than the last.

Charles Dickens

Our New Agent in Kenya

Dr. Sandra Harper, a retired school principal from the Delta School District, arrived in Kakamega in April, 2003 to be our new ACCES agent. She will remain there until September 30, 2003.

Sandra is a dedicated educator with thirty-two years of teaching and administration at elementary, secondary, university and adult levels. She has a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Curriculum from the University of Bradford, England, with a specialization in Assessment and Evaluation in Curriculum and Implementation. She has been a Principal in Delta School District, Principal of the E.S.L. (English as a Second Language) Sessional Program - Faculty of Mathematics and Science at Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, a developer of Educational Leadership programs and a published educational writer.

With her wide knowledge and varied experience in the field of education, we know that Sandra will be an invaluable asset to ACCES. **Welcome, Sandra!**

Our Returning Agents

Sarah Ford, our CIDA intern, will be returning to Canada in May, **Marie MacKay**, our HIV/AIDS facilitator, will be back in Canada in June, and **Barbara Scott**, our ACCES agent, returned home to Ontario in April. Each of these dedicated people spent six months in Kakamega. Thank you!



Teaching at Ikoli Secondary School

After giving an English workshop to high school teachers, **Barbara Scott**, our ACCES agent in Kenya, was invited by **Timothy**, one of the participants, to come to his school for the day to teach all the classes between Forms 1 - 4. Ikoli Secondary School is located up in the hills: a seven-kilometre climb after the first hour's drive in a *matatu*. Barbara wrote: "*I am terrified, but excited to be given such an opportunity. I am also very touched that Timothy liked the workshop well enough to ask me to do this. I hope I can last through nine forty-minute classes with total strangers in a strange environment!*" Accompanied by **Sarah Ford**, our CIDA intern, Barbara set out on her journey. This is an account of her adventure.

Timothy appeared out of the darkness shortly after 6 a.m., shouldered my yellow pack filled with teaching materials, plans and aids, and herded us along the quietly bustling darkened road to the *matatus*. It was refreshingly cool, and it was almost as if the darkness muffled sound. Even the blaring *matatu* horns were subdued.



A laden matatu

We rode twenty kilometres past the market, the stadium, and Lurambi, toward the Kakamega rainforest and alighted at the junction just past the entrance to the forest. It was seven o'clock and cool.

Waiting for the *boda bodas* (bicycle taxis), we watched as the primary

school children began to arrive in small groups. They looked like small uniformed turtles with their backpacks, laden with books. Several stared at us, their heads still turned towards us as they walked toward the main road. Out here, despite the proximity of the forest, *wazungu* (white people) are still a rarity. Timothy told us that most children in his school had never before seen a white person.

We remarked on the clean smells of the countryside and Timothy began to speak of the hill country where Ikoli is located. He had been a town boy when he accepted this post at a poor isolated school, and had a great deal to learn about rural people and their ways. There was pride in his recounting of his transition from one who escaped back to town at the end of each week to someone who had become a member of the community.

Will he stay long? No. He has ambitions and doesn't want to spend his entire career teaching at Ikoli, but for now he is happy. He cares about his students and he wants to give them exposure to

experiences they would otherwise never have. That is why he has made the effort to bring us out for the day.

The *boda bodas* arrived and we climbed aboard. Timothy had talked about the seven kilometre climb, but he hadn't mentioned the state of the road or the steep descents into the river valleys or the stream fordings.

If you've never ridden on a *boda boda*, it may be difficult to imagine the difference between riding your own bike and riding on the back of one of these. The drivers are in excellent physical shape, strong and lean. They are riding single speed bikes over very rough terrain, carrying large loads of produce, luggage and passengers on padded seats immediately behind the driver. The bikes have been adapted to carry passengers. Usually, there are welded handles just below their seats and small foot-rests. Usually, I have ridden on bikes without any handles and more than once have been forced to let my legs dangle because the foot-rests caused my legs to cramp. Today, both handles and foot-rests were fine ... and thank God for that! This was the longest, roughest, most thrilling ride I've ever had on a *boda boda*.

On this ride we passed cane fields, forest, peaceful *shambas* with thatched roofed mud buildings, and rambled over bridges that crossed rushing brooks. Pedestrians, *boda bodas* carrying cargo and heavily laden donkeys shared the road, but very few motorized vehicles appeared.

We hurtled down hills at breakneck speeds, the driver following the topography of the rutted red road by swerving around the largest bumps and navigating between the ridges. Because I could not see what was coming up, these zigs and zags almost invariably caught me by surprise and I worried that I would unbalance us. I considered closing my eyes but decided against it, so I endured the kaleidoscope of bouncing images and terrifyingly sudden changes of direction, my knuckles turning white on the handles and my knees clinging as best they could to the

diagonal metal strip against which they resided. I felt great relief when we stopped at the bottom of steep grades to walk uphill.

The higher we climbed, the more beautiful became the countryside. Mist rose in swirls and the vistas grew in scope, fields and woods stretching out, green and fertile.

We stopped at a market bustling with activity and Timothy deposited us with his neighbour who runs an orphanage while he went home to pick up his bicycle and a load of books from the Teachers' Resource Centre.. He bought batteries for the tape player I would be using, and we picked up two more *boda bodas* for the final leg of the journey. From here on, the road was restricted to non-motorized traffic.

More rivers, donkeys, cane fields. Fewer rides downhill. More climbing on foot. It became even more peaceful as we went through shaded areas. Then we passed a noisy mill where they were grinding cane to create pebbly sugar used in candy-making. Another corner or two and there was a primary school with children staring and shouting, "Mzungu!" We waved and called out our *habaris* and *mzuri sanas*, and then there was a roadside restaurant on the left, a magnificent view of the surrounding hills and valleys before us, and the Ikoli Secondary School with its flag on the right.

I couldn't have imagined a more beautiful place to teach.

The main building is composed of a line of four classrooms with the staff room and the headmaster's office in the middle. There are two small outbuildings and a latrine. Basketball hoops and a flag pole are placed seemingly randomly on the grounds. We put everything in one of the outbuildings and went to meet the headmaster and the staff members who were working in the staff room. Then we entered our first class.

I won't go into detail about the teaching. Suffice it to say, I had generally overestimated the ability of the students and learned a great deal more than I taught ... I will do better the next time I embark on such a day.

Lunch was *ugali*, *sukuma wiki*, and tough chicken with the best juice I've ever eaten. It cost one hundred and fifty shillings (\$3) for all three of us.

Timothy asked if I would say something about HIV

AIDS. I was working with the Form 2's and using the personal ads from the local paper so was able to draw their attention to the number that noted the need for HIV testing. But I asked Sarah if she wanted to do that part with the last two classes. She did, and it was very successful.

When four o'clock came, we gathered our things together and went over to have sodas and *mandazi* in the staff room. The wash basin was passed, the prayer was said, and we started to eat and drink. The headmaster made a speech, as did Timothy and the deputy head. They made it clear that they would like to see more of us. Then we were asked to explain about ACCES and LIFA.

Later, we climbed back on the *boda bodas* for the ride back. This time, Sarah rode Timothy's bike with the bright green wheels. Our descent down the rock-strewn road was even more precarious and terrifying than the first trip had been and it was accompanied by Sarah's squeals as she hurtled down. Further on we got to a very long hill with fewer rock outcroppings where my driver was really able to pick up steam. Someone ascending the hill called out, laughing, "Pole, pole," and my driver laughed and said, "He means slowly, slowly." "I know," I said, "and please don't forget I'm a mzee." Either he didn't believe I was really an old woman or the wind rushing past his ears prevented his hearing, but he certainly didn't slow down.

We reached the market-place in one piece where Timothy put us into a vehicle travelling to the junction and I sat wedged between the door and a tiny Kikuyu man whose pores exuded alcohol fumes. He insisted he was very rich and wanted to welcome us to Kenya by paying for our fares. He flagged down the *matatu* for us and I finished the journey squashed between a sugar sack of fish and a breast-feeding woman holding a chicken which squeaked like a demented squeeze toy. When the woman disembarked she carried the still-nursing baby, the shrieking chicken and the huge sack of dried fish.

It was a good day.




Literacy for All (LIFA)

Beth and George Scott went to Kakamega in January, 2003 where they visited several of the ACCES Learning Centres. Before her retirement, Beth was a Supervisor of Instruction for the Surrey School District. She submitted this report.

In December 2002, the Kenyan electorate roundly defeated President Moi and his government. One of the first acts of the new President, Kibaki, was to declare that primary education would now be free for all children in Kenya. At first, we thought that ACCES literacy (LIFA) classes would no longer be necessary. Not so! Only a very few children at some of the Learning Centres have gone to the public schools. The reasons we have been given for this are:

- that the public schools are not able to accommodate all of the children at once;
- it will take some time before this new government policy will be phased in;
- that the LIFA classes are well-taught with reasonably-sized classes and good learning and teaching taking place.

Parents prefer that the children continue to attend the LIFA classes. An added bonus is *uji* (porridge) that the children are given each day as well as the medical attention that they receive.



We visited three of the centres. How great it would be if all of our donors could pop into these classrooms to see what is happening! We were quite euphoric after each visit. Real progress is evident in the vast improvement in learning, in teaching techniques and in the involvement of the parents. At one site, the parents have built two new

classrooms and at another site they have donated trees for desks that ACCES employed "fundis" to construct.

Two new sites have been opened this year, so that there are now eight Learning Centres in all, with a total of about 850 children attending classes.

There is still a great shortage of learning materials,

especially books, but LIFA is counting on CARE to provide more of these. We think that ACCES can also budget for more books. Please don't ask us arrange to send books to Kenya. The cost of sending books is prohibitive and it is far better for the children to learn from books produced in their own country.

Francis Butichi (an ACCES graduate) who manages the LIFA project, has secured funding from *The Commonwealth Education Fund*. This funding is being used to form a network of non-formal education groups such as LIFA that will advocate for acceptance and support from the Kenyan government and the public. Francis has shown outstanding leadership both in securing the funding and in forming the *Kakamega Non-Formal Education Network (KANNET)*. You can expect to hear more about this coalition.

Kudos

Over the past year, ACCES' activities have greatly benefited from volunteer support and commitment. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed their time and energy - your role is vital!

- ACCES received a Pin of Excellence in recognition of its Basic Literacy Project in Kenya and was one of the five finalists nominated for the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) first annual **Bill McWhinney Award of Excellence**.
- **Oceanside Middle School** students in Parksville sold baked goodies, hosted teas, mowed lawns, collected recyclables, and have done chores for grandparents to raise money to send a Kenyan student to a post-secondary institution. They have raised \$364.00 to date and there is money still to come. Their efforts *will* make a difference!
- **Lida Marasco**, our youngest ACCES donor, has won the White Rock Soroptimist *Violet Richardson Award*. She now goes into the regional competition and, if she wins, will participate in the Soroptimist International of the Americas competition which awards US\$10,000 to the winner. Good luck, Lida!

"The power of volunteerism lies in the fact that one person can make a difference."

Funding

The 'Glad News' Report

There is much 'glad news' to report!

First, in 2001, ACCES received \$144,497.00 from both our donors and other contributors, excluding CIDA. Comparatively, in 2002, ACCES received \$196,176.00 from these sources, an increase of 35 percent. This is a quite phenomenal achievement in the current difficult financial times.

Second, because of this generosity from the general public, ACCES is able to apply to CIDA, the Canadian International Development Agency, for \$200,000 per year in funding for the next three years. If ACCES is successful in its proposal which will be submitted to CIDA this fall, the new contract will begin in January, 2004 and extend to December 31, 2006.

Third, several members of ACCES are involving themselves in various speaking engagements, publicizing and highlighting the diverse activities of our organization. Lynda Turner has spoken on five separate occasions to her colleagues at Kwantlen College as well as nine times at Seniors' Centres. Karen Jensen has been very actively supporting ACCES by speaking to Rotary Clubs on thirteen occasions as well as twice to public school students. Beth and George Scott have made presentations to three Rotary Clubs and two Kiwanis Clubs. And, before leaving for Africa, the ever-active Marie MacKay spoke to three Rotary Clubs as well as arranging for the publication of articles about ACCES in the *North Shore News* and the newsletter of the Dr. Peter Centre. Thank you for your hard work and dedication!

Lastly, several Physics and Chemistry Faculty members are providing scholarships for university students in Kenya through ACCES. These donors have been obtained through Jane Jackson, an ACCES Board member living in Arizona, who wrote about ACCES in a list serve which communicates with American science teachers. Thank you, Jane!

The activities of ACCES are sustained and supported by the generosity of individuals who have made a choice to believe in themselves and the world and who, through their contributions, act on this conviction to try to provide a better future, through education, for those suffering the pain of poverty and abject need in Kenya.

HIV/AIDS Awareness Program

We are encouraged by the way that ACCES projects are increasingly being managed by Kenyans. This policy is being implemented with regard to the Learning Centres and now it is also being implemented within the HIV/AIDS education program. It has happened this way:



Marie MacKay, a registered nurse with very extensive experience in the field of Health, has, on behalf of ACCES, the responsibility of organizing and presenting information about HIV/AIDS to children, youth and adults in the Kakamega district. She has formed an alliance with a Community-Based Organization (CBO) that has existed in Kenya since 1997.

While attending university, Justin Mutobera, an ACCES scholarship student, formed a CBO to work with other students to help combat the spread of HIV/AIDS. In 2001, when he became a teacher in Bukare and Mumias districts (adjacent to Kakamega), Justin formed another CBO for the same purpose. This group is called "Students' Aids Intervention Prevention Education" (SAIPE). The group uses theatre (drama, song and dance) to educate the public. The theatre troupe has visited schools, public *barazas* (community meetings), churches, markets and national functions to reach out to the community. SAIPE has also organized workshops to build the capacity of its members on emerging issues in HIV/AIDS. Justin is passionate about his projects in HIV/AIDS Awareness Education and pleased to find that ACCES was willing to form a partnership with SAIPE.

Marie MacKay has already made plans for the work that she will do with Justin and SAIPE.

Education can lower risk factors for HIV/AIDS by giving young people the life skills they need to avoid infection. Educational systems can also be beneficial in dispelling myths about AIDS and teaching values, attitudes, behaviour and knowledge conducive to preventing AIDS. Through its HIV/AIDS program, ACCES is actively involved in fighting this scourge.

Several Rotary Clubs in British Columbia have contributed money to ACCES for both scholarships and the Primary Learning Centres. We are very grateful for their financial assistance and appreciate their generous support.

What is Rotary?

Their motto - "Service above self"

Rotary is an organization of business and professional leaders united worldwide who provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world. In more than 160 countries worldwide, there are approximately 1.2 million Rotarians who belong to more than 30,000 Rotary clubs.

The main objective of Rotary is service - in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world. Rotarians develop community service projects that address many of today's most critical issues, such as children at risk, poverty and hunger, the environment, illiteracy, and violence. They support programs for youth, educational opportunities and international exchanges for students, teachers, and other professionals, and vocational and career development.

In 1985, Rotary created PolioPlus, a program aimed at immunizing all the world's children against polio. The eradication of the polio virus is expected by 2005, Rotary's 100th anniversary. To date, Rotary has committed more than \$462 million to the program and over one million Rotary volunteers have donated time and personal resources to immunize children throughout the world.

Rotary club members share their collective expertise and skills to implement dynamic and sustainable programs in a wide range of humanitarian service. Like ACCES, Rotary is concerned with effecting change within the community and shares its vision of a better world.



ROWLES INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*RIEF strives to eliminate
poverty through education*

RIEF provides long-term funding for ACCES.

You can plan now to make a gift of cash or property by including **RIEF** as a beneficiary in your Will or life insurance, naming **RIEF** as the owner and beneficiary of a new or existing life insurance policy.

By these and other options, you can reduce, quite significantly, the tax paid by your estate, or gain tax credit at the present time.

The **RIEF** charitable registration number is **#88659 4670**. **Donations are tax-deductible.**

For more information, consult your tax advisor or lawyer.

Contact: George Scott Phone: (604) 538 -7267

Do you want to make a gift to ACCES and, at the same time, experience significant tax savings?

Do you have shares that have appreciated in value and now have a tax liability due to the capital gain? Sooner or later, you will have to pay tax on the appreciation at the rate of 50%.

If the shares are donated to **ACCES**, the tax payable on the appreciation of your shares will be reduced to 25%. In addition, the tax receipt that you will receive for the full value of the shares gifted to **ACCES** will offset the tax payable on the remaining 25% of the capital gain. Thus, the gifting of appreciated publicly-listed shares is a very efficient way of giving.

However, it is always wise to consult your own professional advisor to determine the applicability in your own particular circumstance.



ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the governance of ACCES, the number of Board members may reach a maximum of fifteen (15) members.

At a recent ACCES Board meeting, I was once again appointed Chairman of the Nominating Committee to bring recommendations for potential Board members to the Annual General Meeting on **Saturday, June 21, 2003.**

I am pleased to place the following names in nomination for the ACCES Board of Directors:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| • Beth Scott | • George Scott |
| • Louise Deagle | • Diana Douglas |
| • John Keenleyside | • Don Larson |
| • Marie MacKay | • Lida Marasco |
| • Gwen Murray | • Erik Olgaard |
| • Jim Rhodes | • John Sawatzky |

Also standing as out-of-Canada members:

- Jane Jackson (Arizona)
- Festus Litiku (Kenya)
- Eileen Malova (Kenya)

All of the above have consented to allow their names to stand for office. At the Annual General Meeting, any member in good standing has the right to propose the name of another member in good standing for the office of Director.

All members will have full voting rights at the ACCES Annual General Meeting. Any person who has made a donation of \$50.00 or more to ACCES is deemed to be a member with all the rights and privileges that attach to membership pursuant to the by-laws of the Society.

Jim Rhodes
Chairman of Nominating Committee

Special Notice of Motion

At a Special ACCES Executive Meeting held on April 26, 2003, it was moved by Jim Rhodes, seconded by George Scott, *"that ACCES increase the number of members on the Board from fifteen (15) members to eighteen (18) members."*

This motion will be presented and voted upon by all members in good standing at the Annual General Meeting, to be held on June 21, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. at 2441 Christopherson Road, Surrey, B.C.

A FULL ACCES SCHOLARSHIP IS \$400 PER YEAR.

100% of your donation is sent to Africa for educational purposes.

ACCES is happy to accept post-dated cheques for all scholarships.

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

William Butler Yeats

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The tenth Annual General Meeting of ACCES will be held on

Saturday, June 21, 2003

at

2:00 p.m. in the afternoon

at

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

All supporters and interested persons are welcome.

Please let us know if you plan to attend!

Phone: 604-538-7267 or 604-535-9766