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ACCES' Newest Staff Member

At its June, 2007 Annual General Meeting, ACCES elected a new President, Maureen MacDonald. Maureen has been an ACCES Representative in Kenya, a Board member for several years, and a dedicated and hard-working proponent of ACCES programs. She writes:

Assisted to Assist

You are making a difference for generations.
- Enock Mambili

This simple statement by our Kenyan Director of Programs captures the essence of what ACCES supporters achieve through their generous donations.

During Enock's September visit to Canada, made possible by a CIDA grant, he inspired and informed many through his numerous eloquent presentations. For almost three weeks, he gave compelling descriptions of the life-transforming work of ACCES to both formal and informal gatherings, special presentations and as a guest speaker at nine schools.

A highlight of Enock's visit for the ACCES Board was his participation at the September Board of Directors' retreat. His detailed accounts of the barriers caused by grim poverty, the successful outreach of ACCES programs, and the possible

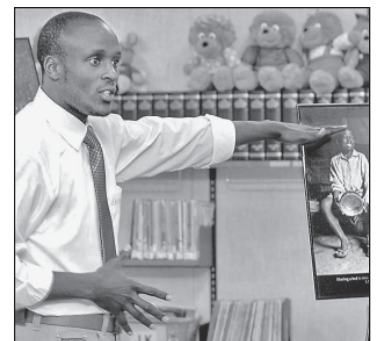
new directions to be taken by ACCES, provided valuable preparation for the Board when setting priorities for 2008. A sample of the emerging priorities are:

- meeting increased costs for post-secondary scholarships
- expanding support for secondary school students. Almost 75 new graduates from our primary schools (Grades 1-8) will be seeking secondary education in 2008
- broadening our donor base through an energized marketing plan

As the newly-elected President, I wish to convey my admiration for, and confidence in, the strong organization that ACCES has become.

In its fourteen years, ACCES' Kenyan programs have steadily expanded to educate and lift out of despair, not only growing numbers of children and young adults, but with the four new community centers that are under construction, families as well. Currently there are 1240 youth in our primary schools, 54 students receiving secondary/vocational scholarships and over 350 students receiving post-secondary scholarships. As well, there are many others gaining self-sufficiency through health and gender education, small business loans, and the recent adult literacy initiatives.

ACCES is built on a strong foundation with an active knowledgeable Board of Directors and an outstanding staff.



Enock Mambili at Ocean Cliff Elementary School.
Photo by Chung Chow.
Reprinted with permission Peace Arch News

We are also most fortunate to have the co-founders, Beth and George Scott, and Past-President Sandra Harper, highly involved both as volunteers and as Board members. The other Directors have diverse backgrounds and represent seven different communities – most are from the Surrey/Vancouver area, but one lives in Alberta and another is in Kenya.

This summer ACCES has taken a further step towards long-term sustainability. The office has moved from the Scott's kitchen table and Rick Juliusson's home office to 411 Dunsmuir Street, Vancouver. The location is a renovated not-for-profit building that is ideal for our needs, with extra services and a reasonable rent.

ACCES will continue to foster long-lasting life changes through its education programs because of its growing donor base, a dynamic Board of Directors and an exceptionally fine staff in Kenya that is skillfully guided by its Programs Director. The motto of our ACCES alumni scholarship recipients is "assisted to assist." Those in Kenya truly recognize the significant generational impact of our programs.

Meet the New President

Maureen MacDonald's background in senior management positions, on several executive councils and with international education, has ably prepared her for ACCES presidency. Since retiring from the demanding job of an assistant superintendent for the largest BC school district, Surrey, Maureen has continued to be active as a part-time university instructor and as an instructor of teachers in China and Korea.



Although these experiences added to her knowledge base, it is her six months as an ACCES agent in Kakamega, Kenya, in 2004, that has fuelled her desire to serve ACCES both as a member of the Board of Directors and a volunteer. Maureen says, "I may have left Kenya, but Kenya will never leave me." Maureen and her husband Lloyd plan to return to Kakamega for a visit in March 2008.

ACCES Board of Directors 2007 - 2008

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(604) 576-0290

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Newsletter Editor

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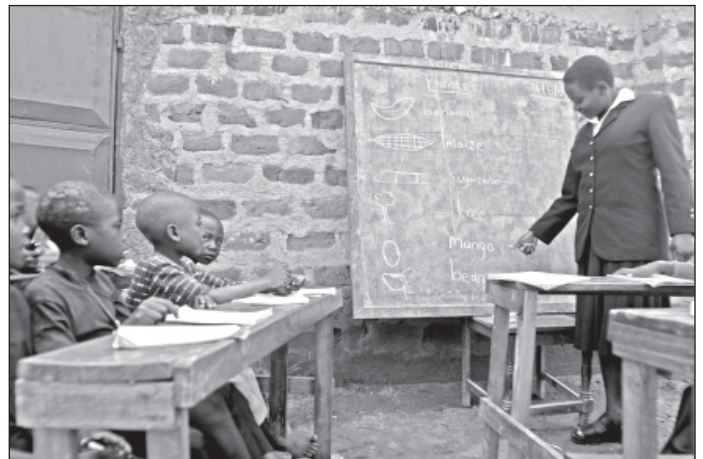
George Scott
Director

Eileen Malova
Director, Kenya

All Directors of ACCES are volunteers.

Please Note

Some renewals are due. If you wish to obtain a tax receipt for 2007, please give this matter your consideration.



Students Hold Medical Clinic

It's not a normal Saturday morning at Tumaini, a village deep into the Kenyan countryside, with fields of maize and sugar cane in amongst thatch-roofed mud huts surrounded by banana groves. Elizabeth, ACCES' Health and Gender Coordinator, has organized a free Medical Clinic for the villagers, held at our primary school.

At 7 am, Elizabeth is joined by Anne - ACCES' community nurse - and four other staff members from other programs who volunteered to help on their day off. They pick up supplies (drugs, rubber gloves, ointment, etc.) before heading out to the school. A tent with open sides has been set up in the middle of the grounds, with rows of benches placed underneath where elders could sit. Each classroom is divided with bamboo partitions into three or four examination areas.

At 10:45 am, a mini-bus inches its way up the deeply-rutted dirt road to the school with twenty-four doctors from Moi University, most in their final year of studies, along with four nurses from another institute and several other ACCES graduates eager to help. These young men and women have volunteered their time and skills to give back to the community, but even they are shocked by the number of people cheering their arrival.

The yard is a mass of humanity – mothers with their babies and toddlers, men and women of all ages, some very frail and propped up on sticks. Many have walked long distances for this rare chance to get medical attention. One woman, unable to walk, was brought in on a mattress.

The young doctors and nurses get to work, diagnosing ailments from infections, HIV, TB, and even miscarriages. Patients are then helped through the crowded courtyard to a make-shift pharmacy, with two large tables filled with bottles, boxes, and ointments. Volunteers count out pills and put them into little brown



envelopes on which are written the dosage and type of medication. Most of these medicines were donated by Kakamega shops, organized by ACCES Advisory Council Chairman, Pape Sembi.

By early afternoon, it's an ordeal to move anywhere in the crowded schoolyard. Both sides of the road are jammed with more and more people arriving. Across from the school, people are sitting under the trees, trying to find relief from the blazing sun while waiting patiently for their turns. But there is no rest or relief for the hard-working young volunteers, who make do with a banana and a warm Fanta to keep up their strength.

By dusk, the team is forced to shut down as the mud hut school has no electricity. Over 2,000 people have been served in one day. The exhausted volunteers and staff arrive back at the office about 6:45 pm, stopping for a well deserved meal before, for some, a long walk home in the dark.

A representative from the Ministry of Health requests a written report – it is obvious to her that there is a great need for a medical clinic in this community, and a report from ACCES might speed up the process. This is one very important example of the effect ACCES is having on the people of Kenya. The longer I'm here, the more our dynamic, hard-working, dedicated staff members and volunteers impress me. They are a wonderful group of young people, and their enthusiasm is contagious.

- written by Wendy Grant while serving as an ACCES Representative in Kenya

"Thank You, ACCES!"

James Haga, a CIDA-sponsored intern, recently spent eight months in Kakamega collecting data to evaluate the ACCES scholarship program. He writes:



I would like to share my deepest thanks with everyone at ACCES for helping me experience the best year of my life thus far. When I was accepted for the CIDA internship position in 2006, I could not have imagined how much the experience would mean to me, professionally and personally.

My time in Kenya challenged me like never before in my twenty-one years, humbled me as each of us should be humbled, provided me with deep and lasting friendships, and inspired me to not only continue with this kind of work, but to pursue it with even greater spirit. Those I worked with in Kakamega amazed me with their work ethic, strong character and commitment. ACCES is truly involved in a special community.

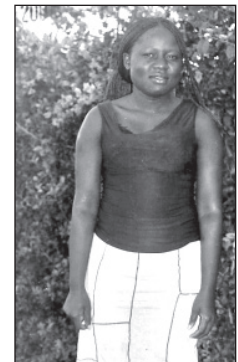
I look forward to continuing my relationship with ACCES. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to be involved. Asante sana!

Esther Nabwiie Munika is now entering her 3rd year of academic study in the Bachelor of Education, Science program at Kenyatta University. She expresses her appreciation of the support she receives from her ACCES donor.

I take this opportunity to thank the almighty God for life which enables me to tell you that I am fine and pursuing my dream of becoming a substantial woman in Kenyan society. I am working hard to achieve success so I can help others. One thing I have learned about success is that one has to be persistent, patient, and take past failures, not as burdens, but as challenges.

Throughout the process, one has to have mentors. I want to thank you for being part of my life. Throughout my university education, you have always been there for me - morally and academically through financial aid.

I thank you and may God bless your life.



Ottawa Welcomes ACCES

ACCES was honoured to be one of 20 development agencies selected across Canada to participate in a 2-hour meeting with the new Minister of International Cooperation, the Hon. Bev Oda. Executive Director Rick Juliusson explained how progressive CIDA grants have supported ACCES' growth from a small, local initiative to its current position with multiple integrated programs, greatly expanded reach, and strong Kenyan governance and staffing. He thanked the Minister for her commitment to continuing the government's effective partnerships with NGOs like ACCES.

Rick Juliusson and Enock Mambili (Kenyan Programs Director) led a very interactive 90-minute discussion about ACCES' overseas projects

with several staff members of CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). ACCES' partnership with CIDA continues to strengthen through these communications, and confidence in ACCES grew immensely after CIDA officials met Enock. One CIDA member commented, "Your programs are in good hands!"

ACCES was also able to display its "Canada Cares" photo exhibition at York University in Toronto. We extend our thanks to Pablo Idahosa, Director of African Studies, ACCES supporter Bryan Massam, and personnel at the CIDA head office in Ottawa for their support.

Canadians in Kenya

To support its excellent Kenyan Programs Director, Enock Mambili, and his staff, ACCES continues to send Canadian volunteers to Kakamega for short-term assignments.

ACCES' New Representative in Kenya

Susan Thompson, a senior Fisheries Biologist with the Yukon Department of Environment, is the new ACCES Representative in Kenya. Susan previously worked in Kenya with CHES, Canadian Crossroads International (teaching) and at a fish farm project.

While in Kakamega, Susan will be part of selection panels for scholarships and business loans, will conduct a financial and program audit, assist with the creation of 2008 work plans, and work with Enock Mambili to design and conduct staff training sessions.

ACCES Welcomes Youth Interns

Two interns, funded by CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), are currently working in Kenya for several months on behalf of ACCES.

Katie Turnell is a graduate of the University of British Columbia who has worked in Nepal and Uganda and now, Kenya. Her experiences in these countries confirmed her desire to pursue a career in International Development.

While in Kenya, Katie is working with program staff to strengthen information outreach materials and curricula, particularly in the new community-based programs such as Gender Equality, HIV, small-business and adult education.

Astrid Mrkich, a graduate of Carleton University and a teacher, has taught at a primary school in Kenya while living in an orphanage of approximately 60 children, both boys and girls, and all orphaned by HIV/AIDS. These experi-

ences have inspired her to pursue a career in International Development.

At present in Kenya, Astrid is researching education options for students graduating from elementary school so that they can make informed education decisions. This research will also enable ACCES to make informed decisions about developing and improving its burgeoning secondary program.

Welcome to ACCES, Susan, Astrid and Katie!

Karibu Kenya!

Is this your year for an African safari?

“Karibu Kenya” – these are warm words of welcome and joy you will hear often when you visit Kenya.

There are only a few spaces left for the June 2008 Kenya safari being organized by Elizabeth Peerless. Visit LIFA schools, see how ACCES is working, explore the local markets and townships and find out about the history, geography and social conditions of the area. The Kakamega Rain Forest, and Masai Mara National Reserve with its multitude of wild and magnificent animals, are both amazing places and a “must” on everyone’s list of places to visit.

Kenya is a land of pure magic with friendly and hospitable people just waiting to welcome you. Please join us!

To learn more about this trip, contact Elizabeth at eeperless@shaw.ca or 522-3101



KENYA: Our Global Friend Comes to BC Schools

There is great excitement at ACCES. \$75,000 has been awarded by CIDA for the final development of an innovative intermediate curriculum unit, *Kenya: Our Global Friend*.

This teacher's resource, a kit based on BC Ministry of Education's Social Studies and Language Arts curriculum outcomes with a focus on social responsibility and global citizenship, was developed over the past two years by Sandra Harper, Anne Low, Maureen MacDonald and Alice Tiles.

It contains integrated lessons, a comprehensive DVD to support a virtual field-trip and a new novel, *Breaking Out*. This latest novel by Sandra Harper is about a family's grim struggle in rural Kenya.

Presently, groups of teachers in Delta and Surrey are field-testing *Kenya: Our Global Friend* and, later this year, this teacher resource will be distributed throughout BC. The kit will enable students to gain an inside look at life in parts of western Kenya and build an awareness of the international development work of non-governmental agencies such as ACCES.

The project's goal, made possible by the CIDA grant, is to produce a published version of the kit that teachers throughout the province can use to enrich the intermediate curriculum. Thanks to the support and encouragement of leaders in Surrey and Delta school districts, the project is well underway to meet its ambitious target.

ACCES in Action Launched

On September 13, several ACCES supporters – some long-standing, some new – came for the inaugural meeting of *ACCES in Action*.

Together, this group decided upon concrete ideas to support ACCES' fundraising and publicity efforts in Canada. Some volunteers signed up for working groups, some committed to individual actions,

and some contributed ideas to advance ACCES' mission. Future plans include:

- holding introductory "Field Trips" in peoples' homes and workplaces
- helping with the annual fund-raising breakfast (Vancouver) & lunch (Surrey)
- submitting relevant articles to local newspapers and media
- developing a campaign to involve corporate funders
- running garage sales, dances, stamp collecting, dog walking, etc.
- arranging for ACCES speakers at schools, clubs, or workplaces

Have ideas or energy to share? Please contact Beth Scott at (604) 538-7267 or acces@shaw.ca.

The Fun Raisers' Dance

The Fun Raisers, a group of dedicated women with a belief in, and a desire to raise funds for ACCES, is a wonderful example of how a concerted effort by volunteers can contribute significantly to ACCES attaining its goals.

Who are the Fun Raisers? They are a group of eight women who worked together on the same school staff and decided they wanted to raise money for ACCES and have FUN doing it. And have they have had fun in their first year together!

On September 29th, the Fun Raisers held a dance to raise money for ACCES, featuring a live band, great food and a raffle of gifts generously donated by local merchants. Renting halls, getting insurance and wading through the complexities of the liquor laws and the food safety laws posed many problems but the Fun Raisers managed to sort everything out, raising \$1800 for ACCES. An annual event?

ACCES offers its sincere thanks to the Fun Raisers!



You Asked....

How are Students Selected?

When I visited Kakamega in November 2007, I had my first chance to participate in the selection of post-secondary scholarship students.

As a visitor, I played only a very small part in the monumental and heart-breaking task of processing 341 applications and selecting only 40 students to receive scholarships. The other 100 new scholarship students, plus the 300 returning students, had already received their scholarships earlier in the year.

The selection team consisted of the Scholarship Coordinator, the Programs Coordinator, a representative from the Kenyan Advisory Council who volunteered five working days to help, the Canadian Representative, and several staff members and interns who assisted when needed. Together, they ensured that a fair and transparent process was followed to select the students who are the most (a) high achieving and (b) financially needy.

High achievement is measured by grades received in the national high school exams (KCSE). Assessing achievement is not an easy task, however, because students from better schools get better instruction and better results, and have fewer distractions from their studies (household chores, family obligations).

As a result, wealthy Kenyans are more likely to qualify for University and for government subsidies and loans than poor youth from rural areas. The selection team therefore adjusts grades, so that a B from a district school scores the same as a B+ from a provincial school, or an A- from a national school.

Financial need is also extremely difficult to assess. Whereas in Canada we would look at the family's income tax returns, in Kenya we are often looking at parents' death certificates, outstanding fee balances from previous schools, the number of siblings being sustained on a half-acre plot by the grandmother, and background reference letters from the local chief or government official.



Applicants who have scored higher than the minimum cut-off marks are invited for interviews. Two ACCES members then meet with 90 graduates to verify their information and paper-work, adjusting scores as needed. While the occasional applicant is found to have lied or embellished their information, the majority have proved themselves to be extremely bright, motivated, and in genuine need of assistance. Without ACCES' support, there would be no way for these impoverished students to continue with their studies.

It is out of this pool of applicants that the entire selection team makes its final choices, based primarily on the objective scores assigned, but also adjusted to account for the subjective human element and to ensure gender balance.

The entire process is documented for the next Canadian Representative and me to audit, ensuring that the selection process is fair and in accordance with ACCES procedures.

Although ACCES sadly must turn back many deserving students, we are confident that the ones we do select are truly the young people who will use their education to better the lives of their families and communities. Imagine their joy upon receiving the news - "Congratulations – you're going to University!"

In each newsletter, Executive Director Rick Juliusson addresses an issue or question posed by supporters.

ACCES Has a New Office

September 21, 2007 was an auspicious date for ACCES- it was the day of the official opening of our new office. This event is an important milestone in the history of ACCES, marking a stage of growth where it needs strong systems to support its donors and programs. The office has allowed ACCES to:

- hire a part-time Administrative Assistant to provide professional, efficient services
- host volunteers and interns
- have all files in one place for efficient reference and secure back-up
- host meetings and welcome visitors

Thanks to a low non-profit rental rate from our landlords (the 411 Seniors Centre) and continued volunteer support, we have accomplished this move and still kept ACCES administrative costs below 10%. These costs are covered by CIDA grants and designated donations, so 100% of your program donations are still going directly to Kenya.

Please contact us if you would like to visit our office.

ACCES' New Office

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e-mail: info@acceskenya.org
web: www.acceskenya.org

Glennis Kuhn: We Miss Her!

by Beth Scott

Do you miss her, too? For five years, a cheery greeting warmed our home office each Monday and Thursday morning as Glennis smiled her way in to take care of your business and ours.

Many of you have phoned to talk to Glennis about your donation, your student, or a particular project with which you were involved. All of your requests

or questions were important to Glennis and everyone was treated as part of the ACCES “family”. We would hear a “Thanks, dear” or “I’ll find out and call you back” and we would know that Glennis had taken care of one more query.



As the ACCES organization expanded, it pushed itself right out of our home in Surrey and into a downtown office. Glennis knew this change was inevitable and that the increased number of hours of work and the long commute into the city would not suit her life-style. But, she wants you to know that she will always be part of ACCES. And, we want her to know how much we appreciate the work that she did for us.

Thank you, Glennis, for your unfailing commitment to ACCES and the “personal touch” that you brought to everything you did. We will miss you!

ACCES' Newest Staff Member

ACCES would like to welcome Pamela Frydenlund, its new part-time Administrative Assistant. Pamela brings to this position a wealth of operational experience and a strong commitment to global and African development issues.

In 2004, as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer in Ghana, Pamela saw children desperate to go to school but turned away for lack of funds. This need for access to education ignited her passion for African issues and development.

Pamela, who has a two-year-old son, is an active volunteer for a number of organizations.



Welcome to ACCES, Pamela – we know that your expertise and knowledge of Africa will be invaluable to our organization.

