



*fosters economic and social
development through education*

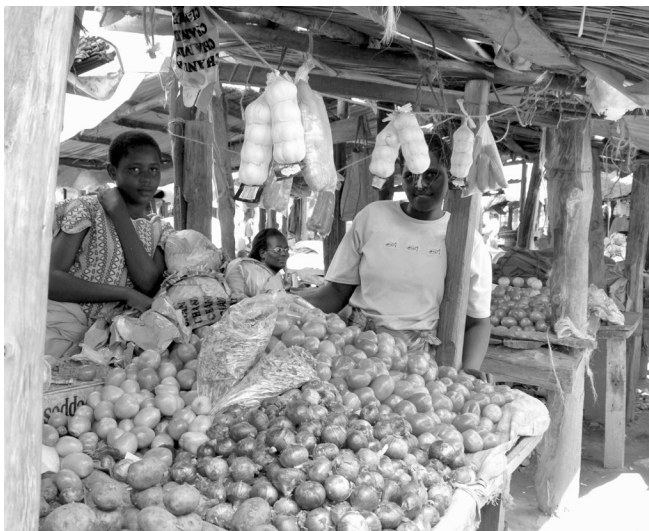


May 2009 Vol. 16 No. 01

Heartaches and Hopes

“To me, ACCES is just a parent who has replaced my lost mom.” This powerful statement, by a post-secondary student, aptly captures the critical role ACCES plays in the daily lives of more than 2100 Kenyan children, youth and adults who are actively being educated because of caring supporters.

This is the time of year for hopes and heartaches, when students, like the thankful recipient above, apply for dwindling post secondary scholarships. Their hope is that with an education, they will have the means to help their families fight grinding poverty. With similar trepidation to the older students, our level eight primary youth who successfully “sit the national exams” will soon be anxiously awaiting news that ACCES can support them with a sponsorship to local secondary schools. As well, another 1280 students in the eight-year primary school system worry about securing a place in next year’s ACCES classrooms.



Rising prices means fewer sales for fresh veggies



With 16-years of success, the reputation of the long-term commitment of ACCES to “assist Kenyans to assist others” is well known. Equally well known is the widespread and growing need of those in this rural area of western Kenya, who are scrambling to survive, as they face:

- inflated costs of basic food and living supplies
- damaged crops and moldy grain storages due to excessive rains
- increased unemployment that is beyond 40% in rural areas.

In primary schools the number one need, identified by the school community members last November, was for increased uji or porridge to stave off hunger. Since March, the one-cup of uji has been increased to two cups thanks to a generous donation.

With increasing needs, the direction and commitment of ACCES supporters in Kenya and Canada remains strong. The mission is clear: *to overcome poverty through education*, and the method of achieving this, through community partnerships continues to strengthen ACCES’ resolve. Three examples of the initiatives by Kenya community members and Kenyan staff are:

1. Active community management committees that guide each primary school and adult community program.

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2. The Kenyan Advisory Committee in Kakamega, which in February 2009 took leadership in the hiring of the new Programs Director, Lucy Teng-eye.
3. Kenyan staff who have recently initiated several grant applications. They have received a sponsorship for indigenous seeds and community training with the Kenyan Agriculture Research Institute. As well, from the Stephen Lewis Foundation, they are seeking support for our AIDS-survivor students.

The strength of ACCES' solid foundation has been just as evident in Canada. Donations from long-term supporters are steady in spite of the economic downturn. Volunteers and board members willingly stepped forward to assume greater responsibilities during the fall transition to our new executive director, Dale Albertson (the only full-time employee). Largely as a result of well-developed structures, particularly with communication and policies/procedures, ACCES programs and activities have continued in an uninterrupted pattern.

Other long-term supporters are school communities who have adopted ACCES as an expression of their curricular and global citizenship programs. Some

Surrey schools have helped ACCES students for multiple years such as: Bayridge Elementary with "Toonie Tuesdays", Semiahmoo Secondary with its "Change in your Pocket" project, and Crescent Park Elementary with its arts contributions. This year, Crescent Park's April musical, "The Tree Mother of Kenya" celebrated Earth Day by telling the story of Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Kenya's Wangari Maathai. Proceeds from the concert went to ACCES' Elufafwa school.

Maathai says, just like a caring parent, we need to work together. Her infectious determination is similar to that of ACCES—that is, to step in along side of marginalized Kenyans to bring a brighter future through education.



Maureen MacDonald
President, ACCES



"It is important to nurture any new ideas and initiatives which can make a difference for Africa."
Wangari Maathai

New Representative in Kenya



Karen Ford, a Business Banking associate at Vancity Credit Union, is the new ACCES Representative in Kenya.

Karen has been with Vancity Credit Union since 2002 working in many areas from the Branch network to Human Resources to Business Banking. Currently she works in the Business Deposits and Cash Management team within the Business Banking department as an Account Manager.

While in Kenya, Karen will work with the accounting department to set up new systems for tracking CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) grant funds in Kenya and will develop tools for more detailed tracking and reporting on CIDA funds and expenses. In addition, she will work with each of the program coordinators to help in their own budget and expense tracking.

Candace McLellen, who will travel to Kenya with Karen, works in Operations and Security for the Harbour Master's office at Port Metro Vancouver. While in Kenya, she will work with the Kenyan staff on increasing efficiency in the workplace.

Welcome to ACCES, Karen and Candace!

New Program Director

New Kenyan Programs Director Appointed

“Facilitating Kenyan Self-Reliance” has always been a cornerstone of ACCES’ philosophy and figures prominently in its Strategic Plan. ACCES has always believed that Kenyans have the capacity and commitment to assume positions of responsibility in their own neighborhoods and districts, to run development programs in their communities, to make decisions that are culturally appropriate and, eventually, become agents for social change.



ACCES is very pleased to announce that Lucy Tengeye, after an extensive search for the most suitable candidate, has been appointed the new ACCES Kenya Programs Director. She replaces Enock Mambili who was the first ACCES Kenya Programs Director. Prior to her new appointment, Lucy was the ACCES Scholarship Co-ordinator in Kenya.

Lucy is highly organized, efficient, ambitious and demonstrates excellent management skills, all necessary traits in her new position. Her appointment sends a clear message of ACCES’ belief in gender equality and reinforces ACCES’ support in this area.

New Scholarship Coordinator

ACCES is also very pleased to announce that Clarah Muyera, after a comprehensive search, has been chosen to replace Lucy Tengeye as Scholarship Co-ordinator. Previously, Clarah had been Office Manager for ACCES. Her new position is a blended one and will combine the responsibilities of both Scholarship Co-ordinator and Office Manager.



ACCES has every confidence that both Lucy and Clarah will provide strong and efficient leadership for ACCES in Kenya. Congratulations!

Farewell to ACCES Staff

In December, 2008, Enock Mambili, ACCES’ first Kenyan Programs Director (2005-2009) left ACCES to pursue a career in relief work in Somalia. During his tenure as Programs Director, Enock provided strong leadership in management and development and provided a sense of local ownership and responsibility to the Kenyan office. He was a dedicated professional.

When Enock visited Canada in 2007, he inspired many, both adults and youth, through his many eloquent presentations and compelling descriptions of life in Kenya, its poverty and the way in which so many Kenyans are affected by need and lack of accessibility to education. But he also moved many with his accounts of the life-transforming effects wrought by the work of ACCES. Enock expressed how he and other Kenyans felt when he said, “You are making a difference for generations.”

ACCES wishes to express its sincere thanks to Enock for his dedicated hard-work, vision and tenacity. You have made a difference in many lives, Enock! We congratulate you on your new position in Somalia and wish you well in your new adventures.

Thank you, Enock, and stay safe! We will miss you!

ACCES also wishes to express its thanks to Pamela Frydenlund our part-time Administrative Assistant (2007-2009) who has left to assume a full-time position in donor development and event management with the ‘Make a Wish’ Foundation.

During her time with ACCES, Pamela contributed much to the organization, helping to make it stronger and more efficient by stream-lining and standardizing the Scholarship program, and improving both record keeping and office communication between Canada and Kenya.

Thank you, Pamela. We wish you well in your new position!

Linda's Story

By Mo and Tony Rainbow

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

(from "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" by
Thomas Gray)

One morning we were sitting in our apartment below the ACCES office in Kakamega when a dozen giggling girls gathered outside on the verandah. Curious, we went to find out what was going on and discovered Lucy Tengeye, the ACCES Scholarship Coordinator, examining their report cards. She told us that at the end of every school year, in late November, our scholarship students are required to bring their report cards to the ACCES office to verify that their marks for the year are high enough to warrant being sponsored by ACCES for another year.

Later, when Lucy was busy in the office, five girls from a different school arrived and while they sat down to wait for her we asked them how they had done during the year. These five class-mates had started at the same secondary girls' boarding school in January 2008 and they had just completed Form One. Of the 150 girls in their form, all of them, except for our five, had previously attended government primary schools.

It is the practice in Kenyan schools to rank students (the Fraser Institute would be so pleased) and these girls were both excited and proud to tell us their ranking

The first four girls we spoke to ranked from 12th to 28th in Form One - they were all in the top twenty percent! We thought that this was very good, indeed. Linda, the fifth girl, was sitting very quietly with her eyes cast down and when we asked her rank, we couldn't quite hear what she said. Or rather, we weren't sure that we had heard correctly. Leaning forward and lifting her chin, we asked her rank again

and she shyly repeated "First". Hesitantly, she gave us her report and sure enough, in bold numerals at the top it read 1/150. With a small smile, Linda shyly accepted our congratulations.

Linda is fifteen and comes from a very poor family in a small village. Because her parents could not afford school fees or a uniform, she had never attended primary school until an NFE (non-formal education) centre was established by ACCES in her community. Once she started her schooling, Linda became immersed in her studies and scored well in her KCPE, the national examination that all Kenyan students, ranging from those enrolled in the non-formal education sector to those enrolled in the best government schools, must pass in order to be accepted at a secondary school. It is difficult for ACCES students to do well because ACCES schools have a shorter school-day than formal government schools - many ACCES students must work to help support the family. They also have a shorter school-week as Friday afternoon is reserved for cleaning out the classrooms and spreading cow dung on the floors so that it can dry before Monday. This is necessary to keep out worms and parasites that accumulate in the dirt floors.

Linda has three more years of secondary school studies, and if she continues to achieve high marks, she will be invited to study at a very good university. When asked what she wanted to be when she had completed her studies, she proudly said that she wanted to be a doctor so that she could return to her village and help people.

After the girls had departed, we recalled Gray's famous poem and how it applied to Linda. If ACCES had not opened the school in her community, Linda would never have attended school and by now would probably be married with a child, working hard at fetching water, cooking, tilling the ground of her shamba and seeing to the myriad other tasks that the



women in Kenya perform on a daily basis. Her entire future would embody hard physical work, having numerous children, and perhaps, sharing her husband with one or two other wives.

But now she has started on her journey to become a doctor. Maybe her goals will change, but, thanks to ACCES, she has revealed an intellect and a desire to study that makes anything possible. We both feel that with determination and hard work, there is every possibility that Linda will achieve her goal.

What a tragedy it would have been if this little flower had blushed unseen, and wasted its sweetness in the desert of a remote Kenyan village. How sad it would have been for her personally, and what a loss for Kenya and the world at large!

A Helping Hand

It is generally recognized that helping someone to become self-supporting is considered to be the highest level of giving. This is a basic tenet of ACCES as evidenced by its many programs for children, youth and adults that enable them to become self-sufficient and thus improve their lives and the lives of their families.

There are eight degrees of giving, each one higher than the next:

1. to give grudgingly, reluctantly, or with regret
2. to give less than one should, but with grace
3. to give what one should, but only after being asked
4. to give before one is asked
5. to give without knowing who will receive it, although the recipient knows the identity of the giver
6. to give without making known one's identity
7. to give so that neither giver nor receiver knows the identity of the other
8. to help another become self-supporting, by means of a gift, a loan, or by finding employment for the one in need.

With the help of ACCES, your gifts may be doubled and redoubled as Kenyan students, through education, become self-supporting.

“The manner in which it is given is worth more than the gift.” *Pierre Corneill*

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

The Sustainers Circle Luncheon

Eaglequest Golf at Coyote Creek
7778 - 152nd Street, Surrey
12noon - 1:00 pm

This will be the fifth highly successful Surrey Luncheon Ask Event. This lunch, and the early November Vancouver Breakfast, are two essential events to inform and inspire participants to make pledges that can sustain ACCES for future years. These events are sponsored and therefore free for the attendees.

Currently, table hosts are inviting folks interested in learning more about the life transforming work of ACCES in Kenya. This is a time to hear directly about the progress of our Kenyan programs and view the newly produced ACCES video. If you would like to attend and perhaps bring a guest, please telephone Lloyd MacDonald at 604-240-6516 as soon as possible.

Saturday, May 30, 2009

Piano recital “Music for Kenya”

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church 2350 - 148 St., Surrey
7:00 to 9:00 pm. Door opens at 6:30 pm. Cost is:

\$5.00 Students
\$10.00 Adults

For further information, please contact:

info@acceskenya.org
or call 604-688-4880



Seeing Canada Through Kenyan Eyes



While in Canada last June, Joseph Mutamba, LIFA Program Coordinator in Kenya, spoke very eloquently of the importance of ACCES in the lives of thousands of Kenyans of all ages during his numerous presentations.

This is his account of some of the impressions he formed while in Canada.

Upon my arrival in Vancouver, my eyes noted the beautiful scenery, a combination of nature and human invention. There were cars everywhere, which together with the tall buildings and well-maintained roads, seemed to add to the beauty of the land. But surprisingly, NO PEOPLE!

As the beautiful sights passed before me, the image of Kenya, a country crying her heart out, kept coming to my mind. The image of women with baskets on their heads walking to and from the market, children playing and singing by the roadside, some of them still looking after animals, young boys and men pedaling their bicycles down a tiny lane beside the road, boys and girls trying to outdo each other in the streets by shouting as loudly as they could, trying to woo customers: “Haya beba beba leo...” “Shati shilingi hamsini...” “Macho yachondio bahati yako...” (“Hey!



Downtown Kakamega at mid-day

carry, carry today...” “a shirt for 50 bob...” “Your eyes carry your luck...”). So different from Canada!

Nature dictates that we take experience from what we do, see, read and hear around us. Going to several Canadian schools took me back to when I was at the University and was confronted by a confusing situation: what is the difference between schooling and learning? Now once again, here I was in a similar situation. In Canada, learning seems to be natural, freer, larger, and pleasurable. No uniforms, school sessions between 8.00 am and 2.30 pm, fewer courses, fewer examinations and above all, adequate learning and teaching facilities - something that is usually a luxury in our Kenyan schools! The differences between the Kenyan school system and that of Canada are loud and clear.

I learned with great interest that people in Canada live longer and are much stronger than in Kenya. While the average life-span of a Kenyan is 55 years, in Canada people often live into their nineties. Seniors, (as they are called) seem to be more active and more outgoing than the youth and adults. They are the ones jogging in the morning and riding their bikes on the roads. Society attaches more respect to seniors. I vividly

remember the image of a senior in her nineties crossing the road one morning against the red light. I was surprised. No honking! No hurling of insults! That simple!

Many of the people actively involved in ACCES are either seniors or fast approaching that status. I was touched by their level of commitment! They work at fundraising with such vigor, convincing prospective

A Reminder to our American Donors

American supporters of ACCES can receive tax receipts for any donation made to ACCES. This has been made possible, at no charge, by KESHO, an American-based non-profit organization supporting students in Tanzania and Zambia. 100% of monies designated for ACCES will be forwarded to either ACCES Kenya or ACCES Canada. Donations can be made by making a cheque payable to KESHO and sending it to ACCES.

donors that money donated to ACCES will be well-spent on impoverished Kenyan children whose backgrounds are constantly haunted by the ghosts of poverty. ACCES truly exemplifies the words of Terry Fox, the celebrated Canadian hero, *“This hurting must stop!”*

What did I learn from my trip to Canada? Three things come to mind:

1. Life, which is hope itself, is built on positive optimism connected with possibility. We need to take personal responsibility and strive to influence others in the right course of life.
2. We need to be more concerned with allowing learning to take place as opposed to educating in what we think kids want to learn.
3. That poverty isn't the opposite of riches. But rather the lack of it...

...to know, to be, to do, to work together and how to change the world around me...”. Yes! This was the lesson!

*“Dreams and dedication are a powerful combination.”
William Longgood*

Where Are They Now?

Since ACCES first began offering post-secondary scholarships, many of our graduates have succeeded in their chosen careers against seemingly impossible odds. They have epitomized, in so many ways, the resilience, tenacity and commitment necessary to accomplish their goals. ACCES continues to play a vital role in the education and enrichment of the lives of thousands of Kenyans, both young and old.

Jeremiah Mmasi is an exceptional blind student who, against tremendous odds and sustained by his belief that *‘disability is not inability’* has graduated from university with a Bachelor of Education degree with a focus on working with Special Needs students.

But in Kenya, as in many other countries, including Canada, it is not always easy to get a good job in your own field. Now, good news has been received from Shelagh Godbolt and Lois Fenna, his remarkable sponsors, who sent ACCES the following e-mail about Jeremiah:

“I am just delighted to tell you that after almost a year of seeking work since his graduation as a teacher of Special Needs students, Jeremiah has been hired at the Kenya Institute for the Blind - a government teaching position in Nairobi! “

Well done, Jeremiah! ACCES offers you its sincere congratulations.

Francis Butichi is another remarkable ACCES graduate. After completing a Bachelor of Education from Kenyatta University, Francis became ACCES' first Project Manager, and later became the first ACCES' Program Coordinator where he was responsible for overseeing the early literacy classes. During his time with ACCES, Francis showed outstanding and creative leadership.

After leaving ACCES, Francis continued his career in relief work, holding responsible positions in such perilous and threatening places as South Sudan and Darfur, North Sudan, where he was an Education Program Manager.

Francis is now completing a Master of Arts degree in Humanitarian Assistance at Tufts University, Boston. He will graduate on May 17, 2009.

Francis' career has demonstrated a compassion for the human condition and an awareness of the fundamental necessity of a good education. You, too, Francis, have made a difference in the lives of many.

ACCES wishes you well in your future career, and congratulates you on the completion of your studies.

“He who has imagination without learning has wings but no feet.” Joseph Joubert



Election of Officers

As Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, it is my responsibility to bring recommendations for potential Board members to the Annual General Meeting on Saturday, June 13, 2009.

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

Brian Bennest	David Connop
Jack Grant	Sandra Harper
Kim Jakeman	Don Larson
Maureen MacDonald	Leigh Sauder
John Sawatzky	Elizabeth Scott
George Scott	John Welsh
Edward Youngberg	
Ron Grantham (Alberta)	Eileen Malova (Kenya)

All of the above have consented 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 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.



Sandra Harper
Chairman of Nominating Committee

ACCES Annual Barbecue

ACCES Foundation's major fund-raising event of the year

Bring your friends and join us for the 9th Annual ACCES Barbecue.

Delicious food and lots of fun!

Saturday, August 15, 2009, 5:00 pm
2441 Christopherson Road, Surrey, BC

Cost: \$60 per person (Tax receipt for \$35)

All supporters, friends and relatives are welcome. Please let us know if you plan to attend!

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

Annual General Meeting

The sixteenth Annual General Meeting of ACCES will be held:

Saturday, June 13, 2009, 2:00 pm
2441 Christopherson Road, Surrey, BC

All supporters and interested persons are welcome. Please let us know if you plan to attend!

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

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