

Kibaale Children's Centre (Rakai)

Box 1658, Masaka, Uganda

August 2001

Dear friend of Kibaale,

Let me take this opportunity to thank each one of you who are supporting the work here at Kibaale Children's Centre. Indeed it is a privilege to be involved in the work of our Lord by assisting those who are in need.

Growth

This year has been a year of tremendous growth and blessings at K.C.C. As the school year began in Feb., we were able to expand the Nursery/Kindergarten School from one class in each grade to two classes. We will continue doubling each grade from Primary 1 to Primary 7 over the next seven years as these Kindergarten children are promoted. We also added a second class of Secondary 1 students and will add a second class over the next three years up to Secondary 4. A bricklaying program, which is being attended by about ten young men, has been added to the Vocational Training Centre. Our student population in Kibaale Community Schools now exceeds 500!

Within the schools we continue to add and improve programs. A scouting program is a popular addition to both Primary and Secondary schools this year. The Primary school did very well in the annual Music Festival taking third place in county competitions. I was told that years ago at the music festival our school was pitied as the students came across as "poor little orphans". This year the talk at the festivals was, "Watch out for Kibaale Primary!" Our students have confidence and ability equal to any others. The secondary school has also had quite the accomplishment. After dealing with more than two years of red tape, the Secondary school has been awarded certification as an exam centre. Previously, our Secondary 4 students had to board for three weeks at Masaka Secondary School (distance of 70 kms) while writing their government exams. Now they can write exams on their "home turf." We are confident that our students will prove themselves academically this November. Our teachers have also been improving. Currently we have 5 teachers taking further education during the term breaks. Two teachers have also just returned to us after completing full-time courses of study. Library services continue to expand as well. Last January we combined our three libraries (Primary, Secondary, and Community Teacher Resource Centre) into one location, which has become a real focal point on the campus.

The clinic is also expanding its services in order to meet the needs of the community. The clinic was established a few years ago to provide basic medical care for our students and staff, but has grown to become an integral service in the community. Patients will walk for miles, even passing by other government operated clinics (many do not have sufficient medications) to be treated at Kibaale Community Clinic. One of our teachers told me that they once asked a man from another community why he came all the way to our clinic. He told her that it was because he felt like our nurses really cared about him and that they didn't ask him for a bribe in order to be treated. Our three nurses treat over 1500 patients each month. Often we had to drive patients to Rakai Hospital for simple lab tests and other treatments. Due to a donation from Calvary Pentecostal Church (England) we have renovated and expanded the clinic to include a lab, which should be fully operational in a few weeks.

We were very happy to implement a long-awaited community loan program through Kibaale Community Development Projects. Small business loans are being given to women in order to enable them to better support their families. Most of the women are widowed and have been struggling to survive on subsistence farming. A loan of \$200 can provide the resources to expand their farms, open a restaurant, begin a trade business, open a retail shop, and other opportunities. Many women are on the waiting list and we are eager to help them as soon as money allows.

These expansions have fueled the need for more staff. We are very thankful for the new staff (now over 50) that have joined us this year and who are proving to understand and support the vision of K.C.C. We are also thankful that, due to generous support of donors, we were able to build two houses for the headmasters of the Primary and Secondary schools. They, along with their families, were thrilled to leave their 2, 12' x 12' rooms and take up residence in their new, three bedroom homes.

Needs

Though conditions for many families in the Kibaale area are improving slightly, the need is still very great. We face tremendous pressure from the community to accept children into our schools. It is our primary goal to accept those who are orphaned and in great need – those who would not be able to go to school if they were not supported through Kibaale Children's Fund. There are many needy children who do not yet have a sponsor.

Just last week I attended yet another funeral – this time it was the mother of two of our primary school students. Their father had died a few years ago (most likely from AIDS), and now, their mother. Standing by the graveside were these two boys and eight other young children. I discovered that the grandmother was now caring for her ten grandchildren, as their parents had all died. Unfortunately, this is a very typical situation. The KCF program offers hope for these families. Education is highly valued and if you asked these children what their greatest wish is, their reply would be, "to finish school". Your sponsorship is considered to be a lifeline. As I travel around the area I am often sincerely thanked for what Kibaale Children's Centre is doing in this community. The Primary

School just completed an outreach program where each class visited very needy people in area. One teacher reported to me that her class visited an elderly couple and the students hoed in the garden, washed clothes and dishes, added new grasses to the thatched roof, and other tasks. They purchased a few things for the couple, including a pop bottle full of kerosene for their lantern. The old man clutched the bottle and shook his head in disbelief, saying he hadn't been able to afford kerosene for more than three years.

Gifts

I would like to make a comment regarding gifts that you may wish to give to your sponsor child. Many of you enjoy giving Christmas gifts to your child, which is wonderful, but not as important in this culture as in Western culture. Birthdays are generally not celebrated and often dates of birth are not known. You are free to give a Christmas or birthday gift, but if I may suggest that a gift related to school may be even better. You could give a congratulatory gift to your child for completing another year of school (early Dec.) or, for beginning the next year (early Feb). A card wishing them well on their final exams (Nov.) would also be highly appreciated. Though gifts beyond monthly sponsorship are not expected, you can either send a financial contribution through the Pacific Academy office, or, you may mail an appropriate gift (sweatshirt, sweater, rain poncho, t-shirt, school supplies). Cash will be used to purchase a gift here in Kibaale (goat - \$30, cow - \$90, blanket - \$10, shoes - \$10). A photo of yourself is greatly treasured, but please refrain from sending photos of your houses, cars, etc. Also be careful with saying anything like, "I hope to visit you one day", unless you are very certain you will do so. Your child will take it as a promise. Remember to allow a few weeks for your gift to reach your child.

KCF Staff

The KCF office was very blessed to have Marina Horban volunteering to oversee it from September 2000 up until June 2001 when she returned to Canada. Thank you Marina! This coming September, Rebecca and Stephanie, graduates of Pacific Academy in Vancouver, Canada, will be joining the Kibaale family and will be assisting in the KCF office.

I wish I knew how to accurately express what is taking place here in Kibaale. Truly this whole community has been positively impacted by the love shown here through sponsors, prayer supporters, donors, and volunteers and staff from within and outside Uganda. May your life be enriched because of what you have given.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Ammeter
Director
Kibaale Children's Centre