

EDUCATION UGANDA NEWS

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WHO ARE WE ?

The charity Education Uganda was established in 2007 by a group of experienced educational professionals to help improve the quality and standards of primary education in Uganda.

We are working through an expert Ugandan coordinator and an effective Ugandan management committee to train teachers at over 400 primary schools in the use of individual blackboards (slates) to teach 200,000 children in the rural, isolated and impoverished Kasese District of western Uganda. The technique is similar to the successful use of individual whiteboards in English schools. The project is supported by the Kasese School District and the South Rwenzori Diocese. The project coordinator and management committee regularly communicate with and are accountable to the charity's trustees.



Slates ready for use

VISIT TO KASESE SUMMER 2011

Chris Lloyd - Chairman, Education Uganda

This summer as the chair of trustees I visited the Kasese School District to undertake several tasks:

- To walk in the Rwenzori Mountains: an ambition I had fostered for 5 years. As a result the walk with several friends earned £2500 in sponsorship for Education Uganda.
- To supervise the distribution of the 90,000 new slates and to ensure that they are being well used and stored in schools.
- To visit new project schools and encourage them.
- To distribute and organise training with 2 donated multimedia projectors for use with previously donated laptops to show the training DVDs for teachers of P2, P4, and P6 pupils in the use of slates.
- To promote the twinning of my own school with a school in the Kasese School District, bringing the total of Hampshire schools twinned to just under 20...a fantastic achievement.
- ...and finally to attend a scheduled E.U. management committee meeting at which I received reports, provided advice and engaged in discussions on the future aims and direction of the project.

It was at the management committee meeting where I received a welcome endorsement from the Bishop of South Rwenzori, one of our Ugandan patrons, who said that Education Uganda was providing the best run project he had ever known in the diocese, with clear aims and outcomes, all in agreement'It flows straight with easy to follow activities'



Distributing
Slates

I received the impressive report from the project coordinator that the project has now reached over 300 schools, nearly three-quarters of the schools in the district. The slates are being used effectively and there is now the opportunity to raise standards of teaching and learning with the training manuals, one for each teacher, left last October, and the training DVDs alongside the face to face training which has been in place since the inception of the project.

VISIT TO KASESE SUMMER 2011 - continued

It was a whistle stop tour, with 12 schools visited in 3 days. What was most impressive was that although the trip took place in the school holidays, in each school a large number of pupils turned up in immaculate school uniforms with nearly all the staff in each school. Slates, packs of chalk and other gifts including pens for the teachers and most able pupils from a personal donor, were distributed and several of the schools came forward with requests for twinning with English schools. In some of the schools there was evidence that the current twinning is already having a positive effect in terms of teacher aspirations and curriculum breadth.

Although this was a short visit, my lasting impression was of a project in really robust health with hardworking staff and really committed schools where positive changes are taking place. The charity is very highly regarded locally, and Education Uganda is becoming synonymous with quality education, opportunities for children and raised staff morale.

We are planning to celebrate 5 full years of the project, and coming within sight of training all the schools in the Kasese School District next July with a special trip to Uganda to run a major event for project school headteachers, and discussions on where we go next. If you wish to join this trip, noting that participants pay all their own expenses, please contact me as early as possible. Thank you for all your support, in the past, now, and in the future.

Finally I should like to welcome Hilary Powell as a newly appointed Education Uganda Trustee. Hilary, a Hampshire school assistant head-teacher, has considerable experience of Ugandan primary schools.



Kamaiba School accepts slates



Welcoming UK visitors

A DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIP

John Wilkinson, Trustee

It is difficult for us to imagine what it must be like to leave your isolated village, home and family and then fly by aeroplane for the first time to visit England – a different culture and climate and so far from home. Such was the experience for Defrose, Betty, Susan and Jesophat in July 2011. These are four teachers from Kagando and Kitalikbi Primary Schools in the isolated and poor District of Kasese in western Uganda, visiting their partner schools of Shakespeare Junior, Eastleigh and Calmore Infant, Totton, to share practice and to gain ideas. Was this a culture shock? Well if it was, they didn't show it.

They started with an induction session at Winchester University led by Trustee John Wilkinson, followed by a tour of the city and its Cathedral. The rest of their two weeks was spent with host teachers in their partner schools, where they talked to children about their schools in Uganda and assisted in teaching. They also had the opportunity to visit other twinned schools in Hampshire where they were received with much enthusiasm. On the middle Sunday they attended All Saints Church in Compton, Winchester, where they sang a close harmony song most movingly and where they were warmly welcomed. They then enjoyed a family lunch in an English garden.



Ugandan teachers enjoying English hospitality

The teachers' comments indicated that this had been a packed, enjoyable, informative and profitable visit. They picked up many practical ideas about teaching, learning and organisation. They realised that in the environment around them at home they have many natural resources which they can use to enhance the learning and play of children. The teachers returned safely to Uganda happy and fulfilled by a successful partnership visit, yet grateful to be back home with their families.

SCHOOLS' EXCHANGE VISITS

Hilary Powell - Assistant Headteacher, Shakespeare Junior School

Shakespeare Junior School and Calmore Infant Schools have been twinned with schools in the Kasese district for 4 years and in 2011 completed a second set of successful teacher exchange visits. The visits were funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) through their Global School Partnerships programme and allowed 4 UK teachers and 4 Ugandan teachers to spend 2 weeks in their partner schools.

The visit in April 2011 was my third to Uganda and I spent the majority of the time in Kitalikibi Primary School which is twinned with Shakespeare Junior School. In the first few days I visited classrooms and observed teachers, many of whom were enthusiastically using slates with an ease and proficiency which confirms these tools are now a very regular feature of their classroom practice. Watching fellow teachers work, regardless of location, is a privilege and an opportunity to develop professionally. Inevitably comparisons were made, particularly by my colleagues who had not been to Uganda before, between the teaching styles in our two schools and we often wondered how the lessons would have been different if we had been stood at the front of the class. On further reflection however we realised that such comparisons have to take into account the very different lifestyles of our Ugandan colleagues and the impact this has on their teaching.

Most Ugandan teachers walk to and from work which can take several hours on rural paths and is likely to include at least one substantial hillside. After a journey such as this most UK teachers would not consider a day of teaching until after a rest in the staff room and several cups of coffee!

Class sizes are in the region of 80-100 children and often have two teachers who share the teaching of the curriculum. Class sizes are often an understandable cause for complaint among Ugandan teachers and our initial response was to suggest splitting the classes in half with one teacher who taught all lessons. If the solution was that simple, however, it would already have been tried. Firstly there are no more classrooms on site, since 4 collapsed last year and there is no money to replace them. Secondly having 2 teachers in the classroom allows one to lead the lesson (often in the subjects of which they have most knowledge) and the other to deal with questions, misunderstandings and the rare incidents of poor behaviour. The second teacher also uses this time as a valuable opportunity to prepare their own lessons and mark books. For UK teachers most marking and lesson preparation is done before and after school, including some evenings and weekends. For most Ugandan teachers however this isn't an option as time spent at home is filled with tasks vital for the wellbeing of their family. Most have plots of land which is hand cultivated to provide food for the family and can also generate some additional income. Preparation and cooking of food, washing clothes and caring for large numbers of children are all done without the many timesaving tools we take for granted. It would therefore be virtually impossible for a teacher to do lesson preparation at home, let alone taking 100 books to mark!

We concluded that before making any judgements about our Ugandan colleagues' teaching we should consider how our own teaching would differ under the same circumstances, i.e. if we walked 2 hours to school, taught 100 children in 30C temperatures, walked 2 hours home, dug a plot of land, planted seeds, prepared a meal and hand washed the clothes of 6 children. It's a humbling comparison...

A NEW PATRON FOR EDUCATION UGANDA

We are delighted to welcome Her Excellency Joan K.N.Rwabyomere, the High Commissioner of the Republic of Uganda to UK as one of the Patrons of Education Uganda. The High Commissioner has taken a keen interest in the work of Education Uganda since it started in 2007 and has met with the Trustees on several occasions. Because of our links, she has also become a firm friend of Winchester University. She is also closely linked with the Queen Elizabeth Country Park in Hampshire as it is twinned with the Queen Elizabeth National Park on the edge of the Kasese District in Uganda.



UK teachers meet colleagues from their twinned school



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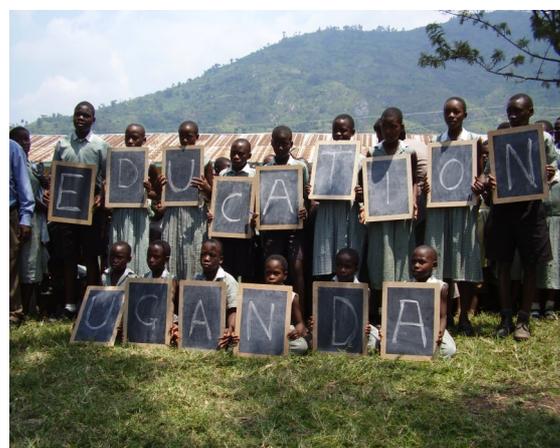
Website
www.
educationuganda.org

*Improving Primary Education in
Uganda*

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE WORK OF EDUCATION UGANDA

Each school as it comes into the project needs a minimum of 450 slates, and six cartons of chalk for the year.

- 450 slates cost £150.
- 6 cartons of chalk cost £100.
- Hence each school needs a gift of at least £250.
- The target for another 100 schools in 2012 is £25000.



Is there any way that you can assist in this important work?

Please help by requesting an Action Form and sending your donation or standing order to Education Uganda

Patrons

Her Excellency Ambassador Joan Rwabyomere

Ugandan High Commissioner to UK

Rt. Rev. Jackson Nzerebende Tembo,

Bishop of South Rwenzori Diocese, Uganda

Trustees

Chris Lloyd, Retired Headteacher

John Wilkinson OBE, Retired Asst. Director of

Education for Hampshire County Council

Alan Josling, FCCA, Treasurer

Mark Torokwa, Business Consultant

Hilary Powell, Assistant Headteacher

Education Uganda is a registered charity

number 1121842