



FUM

Helping with the development of the people of the Tabora Region of Tanzania

Newsletter

Registered Charity Number 265345

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A Message from the Honorary Secretary

Dear Friends and
Supporters of FUM

At this time of financial difficulty, I would like to thank you for your continued support during 2011. As we move towards Christmas, I hope that you are able to continue with your giving and maybe even consider increasing your contributions towards our projects in Tabora Region.

Being able to email the newsletter to so many supporters is saving us a great deal in postage and, if you receive the email version, you have the added benefit of seeing the photos in colour. If you are not yet receiving an emailed copy and would like one, please let me have your email address.



I remind supporters that the annual statement and our accounts are always available for inspection on the Charity Commission website <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk>. We are a registered charity No. 265345 and by typing that number into the search box at the website you will find our details. If you do this, you will see at a glance our donation history for the last five years and as you will see, we have managed to maintain our level of help to our friends in the Tabora Region.

Our support for the FDCs in Sikonge, Urambo and Mwanhala continues. Mwanhala thrives under the direction of Mama Malyeli. Sikonge and Urambo now have new principals in place: Mr Mguba at Sikonge and Mr Sabuni at Urambo. During a summer visit to Tabora (more of that elsewhere in this newsletter) I was able to see Mama Kanoni who was the Principal at Sikonge for many years and was able to present her with a gift on behalf of FUM (photo on front page). Sadly I did not meet Mama Kisinga, who has just retired from Urambo FDC, as she is now living in Kigoma, but we have sent her a present too. All three FDCs are in good shape as you will learn from the report by Di Cooper.

This summer Jo Taylor, our officer who looks after health matters, was in Tabora with Di and me. We all three went as part of the Cranbrook School expedition to Mwanhala; you will find a report on this in the newsletter. Jo was able to take the opportunity to tour around all the

Mother and Child Health Clinics with which we are associated and has posted pictures of all these on the website. Her report can be found later in the newsletter.

As if this weren't enough, FUM also arranged for Alice Roucoux, a volunteer from Tools for Self Reliance to travel with the Cranbrook group and visit the three FDCs where she spent her time overhauling the college sewing machines and giving training in their maintenance. She was faced with discouraging stocks of broken machines, particularly in Sikonge FDC, but in the short time she had in

**“Thanks to you,
we are now
supporting one
hundred children
through
their secondary
schooling”**

each place, performed miracles. We are most grateful to Tools For Self Reliance for yet again loaning us the services of one of their volunteer workers.

The secondary school bursary scheme is drawing in ever more needy children. Thanks to you we are now supporting one hundred children through their secondary schooling. As always, the need is far greater than our funds can manage so, if you would like to sponsor a child through secondary school,

a child who would otherwise not be able to afford to go, please contact Jenny Wills at dothewillsy@hotmail.com. If you cannot send email, simply contact any one of the officers and we will pass Jenny your details. The cost of being a sponsor is £60 per annum but we do ask that you agree to maintain your sponsorship for the five years. Another possible way to sponsor young people is to support a trainee nurse at Nzega Hospital Nursing School. Their course takes two years for which they need sponsorship at £100 per year. Those young people sponsored through nursing school by FUM supporters or by the Kingsbridge-Nzega Friendship group are asked to work in the Nzega District for five years after qualification. Please be in touch with Jo Taylor if you, or a group of you, would like to sponsor a nurse.

We continue to encourage young people to visit Tabora and work as volunteers in schools and hospitals in the Region. On the FUM website can be found the full report from Amy Baigent who this July spent her medical elective working in Nzega Hospital with Jennie Overend, another medical student from Sheffield; an abridged version is in this newsletter. Thanks to them both for the work they did in Nzega. They have now qualified and are starting their first appointments; we wish them every success.

I spent most of my time while in Tabora with a group of Cranbrook students in Sikonge FDC and in the village of

Utimule, so I was in Mwanhala for only two days. While there, I was pleased to see our borehole still providing clean drinking water to the village after two years of use. In 2009 I agreed with the village water committee that they should set up a reliable way of paying for the water they use so that a fund could be set up to pay for essential maintenance, so I was pleased to discover that the system was up and running and that a substantial amount of cash had been banked. I held another meeting with the village water committee at which we all agreed to go ahead with the idea of linking the borehole to the village piped water scheme. This will happen over the next few months, but this is dependent on the results of a yield test to be conducted on the borehole, which will ensure that it is capable of supplying sufficient water.

With so much that is positive happening, it was a shock when we were informed of the death of our good friend Chris Lowey. I had had a pleasant lunch with him in the Morogoro hotel in mid July, talking about FUM projects and receiving his advice on the way forward. It was clear then that Chris was unwell, but he gave no indication then that his condition was serious. Chris joined FUM as a technical tutor working on maize mills in vil-

lages around the region. For many years he has been a good friend and staunch supporter of FUM and has helped hugely with school and other visits to Tanzania; we will miss him hugely. A tribute to Chris from Martin Gilbert is in this newsletter. We learned at the end of August that our dear friend and colleague, Mr Masatu, had been taken seriously ill. Latest news is that he is making a slow recovery. We pray that he will soon be back to his usual, cheerful self.

FUM is approaching fifty. There are only two years to go so I urge you all to try to attend our 48th AGM. This will be in Kalendar Hall in the centre of Exeter on the afternoon of 14th April 2012, and will be noteworthy because we will be welcoming guests visiting from Tabora, invited to the UK as guests of Cranbrook School, which will be well on its way towards planning its 2013 expedition to Tabora. It is always fascinating to hear the reports of our Tabora friends unfiltered by transmission via an intermediary. Please come.

Best wishes

Rod Smith



Please come to the
48th
FUM AGM
 which will be held at
2.00 pm
 on Saturday
14th April
2012
 at
Kalendar
Hall,
South Street,
Exeter,
Devon.

Secondary School Sponsorship Project
Would you like a Christmas Gift idea?
See page 8

News of the FDCs

Di Cooper (FDCs Liaison Officer)

In July I had the opportunity to accompany the party of Cranbrook students visiting Tabora region. This was my first opportunity to meet the Principals, staff and students at each of the FDCs and it was a most enjoyable and informative experience.

The facilities and physical position of each college is quite different: two (Sikonge and Urambo) are sufficiently near the local town to benefit from electricity supplies and some water provision, though the 'supplies' are certainly not consistent. This year the very poor rains mean there are major difficulties in water availability, both for day-to-day purposes and to enable the generation of electricity through hydro-electric power at the Rufiji River hydroelectric power station. Electricity rationing is a regular occurrence. Mwanhala FDC is sited only a short distance from the national grid power lines stretching through the country, but as yet has

“It was great to see the refurbished UWT building at Mwanhala”

not benefited from connection to the grid: it is hoped this might happen in the next twelve months. Currently it relies on a generator to provide electricity. It is also more than twenty kilometres from Nzega town on a very difficult road.

Each of the colleges is working to improve facilities and courses for their students. As for all governments, funding is a difficult balancing act and Principals have to work hard to manage their budgets. All attempt to undertake money-making projects to assist their incomes: desk building and production of school uniforms for local schools, provision of meals for local government offices, etc. Second-year college students assist in these enterprises. However, the support received from FUM and Cranbrook is very much appreciated. At each col-

lege the Cranbrook students worked hard on projects funded by the school assisting in the maintenance of the respective institutions. Alistair Hamilton, staff member at Cranbrook, who in 2009 undertook the major re-wiring of Sikonge FDC, this year achieved an amazing refurbishment of the electrics at Mwanhala.

At Sikonge FDC, FUM was able to provide funds to purchase spares for the two motor cycles owned by the college to enable them to become roadworthy again. They provide transport to visit students when they are undertaking placements and when recruitment for new students happens each year.

It was great to see the refurbished UWT building at Mwanhala. Mama Malyeli intends that this will now provide dormitory accommodation for people attending seminars/workshops, etc. There are internal finishing touches to be completed but the 'Mwanhala' Cranbrook students were the first visitors to enjoy the new facilities. Mama Malyeli tells us that she has been able to rent out the building to the workers surfacing the Nzega to Tabora road. Great news as this will bring considerable income to the FDC.

Both Mr Mguba at Sikonge and Mama Malyeli at Mwanhala hope to refurbish 'canteen' buildings at their colleges to provide facilities to their own students and staff, but also to people in nearby communities, and perhaps offer another opportunity to assist college budgets.

Urambo has recently been selected by the government as a centre for training in beekeeping. This will be an exciting development that will contribute skills but hopefully will also assist in supporting the sustainable

management of the forests in the district.

In the long term, the difficulties of satisfactory water supply at both Sikonge and Urambo is an important issue which will feature in FUM officers' discussions. The benefit of the deep borehole well at Mwanhala is making such a difference to the college and the nearby village.

I would like to thank Mama Malyeli, Mr Mguba and Mr Sabuni for their kind hospitality and for the time they gave to discuss college matters during

“Urambo has recently been selected by the government as a centre for training in beekeeping”

my stay at each institution. I enjoyed my visits very much and I hope I may have the opportunity to visit again some time in the future.

I was sorry not to have the opportunity to meet the two Principals, Ms Kanoni from Sikonge and Mrs Kizinga from Urambo, who had retired last year. I had enjoyed corresponding with them from the time I became FDC liaison officer four years ago. However, Rod Smith did meet Ms Kanoni in Tabora and had the opportunity to make a presentation to her to express FUM's thanks for her committed leadership at Sikonge (see photo, front page). We hope very much that Mrs Kizinga will receive her gift shortly.

MCH Clinics

Jo Taylor (FUM Medical Officer)

This year, during July and August, I went to the Tabora Region with the team from Cranbrook School, and whilst the students were busy refurbishing clinics and primary schools, I travelled the length and breadth of the Region with Frank Charles and Janet visiting FUM sponsored clinics.

The news is mixed. Two are still not open, others are functioning, some are extremely busy, and the standard and enthusiasm of the staff at each clinic is proving crucial. Overall though there is a lack of trained staff; it is always a problem to get trained staff to live and work in the isolated communities where we sponsor these primary care facilities. Those that already have rainwater harvesting have such an advantage that facilitating this in more clinics must be a priority for us to support.

In the Nzega District the most pleasing clinic I visited was at **Malilita**. When I last saw this clinic in 2006 it had yet to be opened and was infested with insects. Now it is being run by a husband and wife team who show a real passion for their

work. The clinic has rainwater harvesting, runs a good vaccination programme as well as testing and counselling for HIV positive mothers and babies. They had no functioning blood pressure monitor, but Cranbrook School bought one for them. However, they still need weighing scales. There is a problem with a leaking roof, but the DMO was aware of this so hopefully this will soon be fixed.

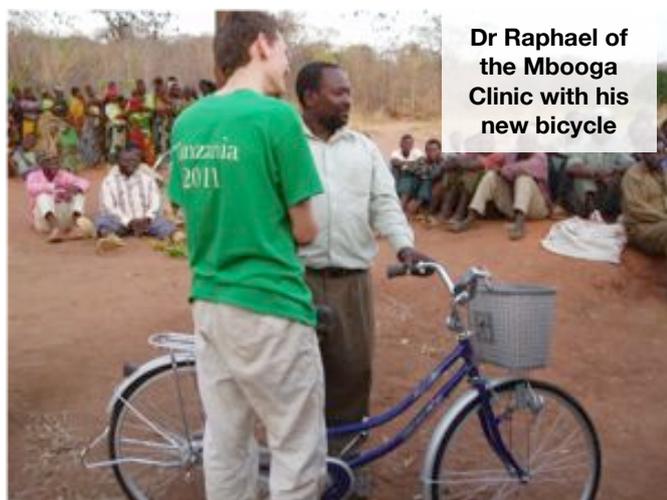
The **Mbooga** Clinic and Dispensary looked fantastic when the Cranbrook School team had repainted every room and the village fundi had pebble dashed the outside walls. There is only Dr Raphael there, the Clinical Officer, but he runs a good clinic with help from a village

worker. The staff house is almost complete, and the school left the necessary paint to finish off the job. The latrines are built and functioning, as is the store. There was no bicycle for Outreach work, but the school bought one for Dr Raphael, and he was delighted.

The clinic and dispensary at **Semembele** appeared run down, and this is mainly due to the problem in keeping staff in this remote village whose only access is through the forestry reserve along a terrible "road". In addition, the staff house is still an old-style building as the village still have to build the new one. There were locks missing on some doors, a leaking roof and no bicycle for Outreach work. Again the school purchased a bicycle for the Clinical Officer and the



With Clinical Officer Frank Charles and Janet outside the Malilita Clinic and Dispensary



Dr Raphael of the Mbooga Clinic with his new bicycle



A mother and her new born baby, just 1 hour old, at Isegehe Clinic

Nurse, who the villagers said were a good team.

The clinic and dispensary at **Isegehe** is strong, with two nurses/midwives but no Clinical Officer. They run a good CTC scheme here, to prevent transmission of HIV from mother to child, plus a good vaccination programme. The clinic is in need of some refurbishment, and the staff requested wiring from the solar panel on the dispensary to the clinic, so they can have lighting in the delivery room. The **Mwanhala** Clinic and Dispensary looks good, and is staffed by an excellent nurse and a Clinical Officer. They benefited recently from the visit by two trainee doctors and are



Uhindi Clinic in Urambo District

still delighted with the birthing set donated by Amy and Jennie. The **Mwasala** Clinic is good, though the nurse who has been there since 1996 retires soon. The clinic provides all the normal support for mothers and babies so let's hope that the good nurse is successfully replaced. The clinic at **Shigamba** is still not open, but the DMO told me he has applied for a licence so he can employ staff and open this facility.

In the Urambo District the clinic and dispensary at **Uhindi** was the most impressive. There is a Clinical Officer, a Medical Assistant and a Laboratory Technician! They serve 3 villages with a population of 18,000 and 4,300 under 5s. The staff are undergoing training to run their CTC scheme, but they are already testing mothers for HIV, and offering counselling and support where needed. Malaria is still the most common disease they deal with, but the supply of free, treated mosquito nets via the Bill Gates Foundation has seen the number of cases in children drop from 2,062 in

2009 to 635 in 2010. This clinic has no rainwater harvesting, which the FUM may consider funding in the future, and its other problem is the distance from Urambo for help with patients with complications.

The clinic at **Maboha** only has one Nursing Auxiliary but he runs a comprehensive service for the villagers, though his bicycle for Outreach work is getting old. The main problem seen here was the lack of piping from the gutter to the rainwater harvesting tank; villagers told me they have the piping and Frank Charles gave



The Ibambo building site

them one month to restore the piping, in time for the rains this year. The Clinical Officer at the clinic at **Usimbe** was on annual leave, but the villagers spoke highly of him, saying he "works all day every day". Sadly the clinic at **Nyasa** is still to be opened, but again I was told this should happen by October this year. And the Clinic /Health Centre at **Ibambo** is still being built, but is way behind schedule, mainly due to the lack of rains this year holding up the brick making and work generally. When built this will be an amazing health centre, with outpatients rooms, laboratory, vaccination rooms, delivery rooms and the like. Watch this space!

Chris Lowey and the Repair of the Village Maize Mills

A Tribute to a Friend and Faithful Servant of FUM
Martin Gilbert (Technical Training Officer)



Chris Lowey relaxing on the veranda

It was the sight of the Mwanhala maize mill engine in 1988, in pieces in a cardboard box, with many components broken or missing, repeated in many other villages throughout the region, that inspired me to set up FTR. In 1990 we employed a VSO Technician who had instructions to give the training of village mill mechanics priority, but by 1991 he had done nothing constructive at all. He had stripped down several engines and mixed their parts, he had pillaged the stock of spares and not ordered

replacements, his records were abysmal and the only engine which he rebuilt broke its crankshaft when on test. He then left without telling us. Mark Holdsworth and I went out in June 1991 to effect some emergency restoration, but it fell to Chris Lowey during his first session at Mwanhala FDC in early 1992 to set about restoring the situation. He had been recruited by VSO and had already spent time in East Africa, he spoke Swahili and he gave John Gillett and me strong indications that his

attitude and his diligence would be up to the task.

Chris was a man of complete integrity and his manner inspired admiration and imitation among his students; he set up training schemes at both Urambo and Mwanhala and spent six months at each to ensure proper standards of work by his trained village mechanics. He also rebuilt and set up trained support for six village mills by the end of his four years engagement. VSO renewed his con-

tract and by the end of the second four years he had the whole system set up and working with no outstanding repairs and new villages being brought into the scheme month by month. He also set up administrative teams at each FDC which included a storekeeper and a Land Rover driver/maintainer. In that eight years he had eradicated the terrible legacy of the previous volunteer and had made FTR a byword for progress and inspiration throughout the region among the District Officers as well as the villagers and the FDC staff.

The many criticisms of FTR were not due to any failures on his part but were due to prevailing conditions in rural Tanzania where, for instance, the money earned by a village mill could not be banked because there was no way of doing it. The money could not be put under a mattress somewhere because it would have been stolen or, if not stolen, the funds would have depreciated rapidly owing to inflation. He tried to mitigate the effect of these problems by buying parts

and putting them into stock for the mills, but had barely begun when his contract was not renewed.

The refusal by VSO had resulted from damaging reports by his Field Officer, a young woman who failed totally to understand what he was doing. When she toured Tabora Region with her boss, she did not take him to meet Chris or to inspect any of his work or to talk with the local officers. The VSO setup was geared to teaching English as a foreign language and Chris just did not fit. By chance, my daughter, Ruth, who lives in Marsden, Yorkshire, had a neighbour whose niece was this very Field Officer; she told Ruth of the terrible problems her niece had had with some oily chap who never attended training sessions in Dar Es Salaam and who ignored requests to visit the head office, and who was altogether a waste of space which she had eradicated with great satisfaction; may she be forgiven. VSO then replaced Chris with another volunteer who was ineffective and in the end, FUM had to close the FTR programme.

After Chris left VSO and our direct employ, he continued to live near Morogoro where he had a mill of his own and ran some other small businesses. We were able to pay him a retainer, in return for which he could keep us in the picture about local difficulties and on many occasions was instrumental in helping Elias Masatu to sort out administrative problems for us. He remained a good and faithful servant, as well as a personal friend to me and to many other FUM officers.

It was with great sorrow that Anita and I saw him in hospital in Newcastle a few years ago, where he looked very ill indeed. He had some trouble with a broken hip, and other problems, and throughout his later years he suffered repeated attacks of malaria, although his spirit never wavered. We were nevertheless devastated to hear that he had finally succumbed and been rushed to hospital in Dar where he died on 12th August.

We in FUM are forever in his debt.

Secondary School Sponsorship Project

Jenny Wills (Education Officer)

Would you like a Christmas Gift idea?

In the current economic climate many people consider charitable giving in lieu of giving Christmas cards to colleagues one sees every day or expensive gifts for adult family members.

If this is something you like to do, please consider sponsoring a child through the FUM Secondary School Sponsorship Project.

A reminder of the cost:

£60 pa for 5 years pays for the school fees plus some left over for books and uniform.

**This can be paid in several ways:
a monthly standing order of £5
an annual standing order of £60
an annual cheque of £60
a lump sum of £300.**

If you are able to commit to any of the above,

a student will be allocated to you and I will provide a card for you to give the recipient(s) of your gift, naming the student who is being sponsored. Please contact me for further details: jennywills@sapo.pt

I still have 11 students needing sponsors so any donation will be warmly welcomed, since £660 must be raised to pay for these students. As you know, FUM is a small charity run by volunteers, so all donations to this project go directly to the students. For this project alone, which supports 100 students each year, £6000 must be collected from our sponsors.

**£60 a year
for 5 years pays for
the secondary school
fees for a child as well
as helping with the
cost of books and
uniform**

An Unforgettable Experience

Amy Baigent (Medical Student) reports on her medical elective

I am a final year medical student, but prior to 2005, I had believed that studying medicine would be an unrealistic career option for me, given my non-science A-Level choices. However, on the Cranbrook School trip to Tanzania in Summer 2005, I was able to experience medical care in the Maboha dispensary and mother and baby unit.

This experience convinced me to withdraw from the university English course I had enrolled upon and instead to study medicine at the University of Sheffield. Therefore, when we were given the opportunity to spend six weeks experiencing medicine in a different country, Tanzania seemed to be the obvious choice. I hoped to gain from the doctors' practice, especially in the field of obstetrics and gynaecology, in a world where equipment and drugs are limited and rationed.

On the 9th June 2011, two trains, two planes and a fifteen hour bus journey after leaving Sheffield, I arrived, with my travelling companion Jennie, at Mwanhala. We had chosen Nzega District Hospital as the location of our six week medical elective placement and, having experienced her hospitality in 2005 as part of the Cranbrook School trip, had returned to stay with Neema "Mama" Malyeli at Mwanhala FDC.

In true Mama Malyeli style, we were immediately made to feel



Amy Baigent (right) and Jennie Overend at Nzega Hospital

welcome into her home, with her protesting that six weeks was not a long enough period to truly get to know Mwanhala, and would we prefer to stay for six months? It was not long until news of our arrival spread and we were introduced to most of the village, many of whom I had remembered or recognised from my previous visit. We quickly made friends with two young teachers named Sarah and Zuhura, and a tailoring student named Teddy.

Our first weekend living in Mwanhala was fascinating, yet exhausting. We were keen to immerse ourselves in our new lives in both the college and village, and caused much amusement with our feeble attempts at pumping water from the well, carrying harvested maize crop on our heads and attempting to cycle across the sand track with the other balanced precariously on the back of Mama Malyeli's bike. We also went to church with Teddy, which was a great opportunity to introduce ourselves to people in the village. I'm not so sure the preacher appreciated our presence as much, as we somewhat took attention away from the service!

Our working week began and we found ourselves at Nzega Hospital; a small government-run hospital of 170 beds served by nine Doctors and Clinical Officers. The hospital has nine wards including male, female, paediatric, infectious diseases and maternity, alongside an outpatient department, dental unit and operating theatre. However, it has no oxygen

supply, no hot water and an operating theatre in a state of general disrepair. Working in cooperation with rural health clinics and dispensaries, the hospital serves a population of 417,097.

The routine I adopted throughout the placement was to firstly attend the morning Clinical Meeting where I was able to find out if any surgeries were anticipated or whether there were any cases of particular interest. These included trauma patients, patients with tropical diseases I had little experience of from training in England and obstetric complications. I regularly attended the antenatal clinic, delivered babies in the maternity unit and assisted in Caesarean sections. Through attending the outpatient department, I was also able to learn about the aetiology, presentation, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of patients with common tropical diseases, such as malaria, parasitic infestations, leprosy and schistosomiasis.

When organising my elective placement, I had expressed a special interest in travelling to Nzega District's satellite health clinics and remote mother and baby units, such as that at Mwanhala. Here, I was able to take part in education and vaccination campaigns for the prevention of diseases such as malaria and neonatal tetanus. Tanzania is currently undertaking a public health initiative to reduce mother to child transmission of HIV and it was of particular interest to attend antenatal clinics, where I was able to counsel and test for HIV and

help educate patients about the importance of safe sexual practices.

Outside of placement, in our home-life, we quickly got used to sharing a bed and living without electricity or running water. One thing we never did quite adjust to, however, was the huge quantities of food we were served. Our vague hopes of shedding a few holiday pounds whilst away quickly fell by the way-side, as evening after evening the dinners appeared, twice the size of that we'd eat in England. The food was delicious (particular favourites being plantain in tomato sauce, chicken stews, beans, pancakes for breakfast and lovely fresh mangoes), but however hard we tried, we could never quite eat enough to please Mama Malyeli and each left half a stone heavier than when we'd arrived!

Transport was something else we struggled to adapt to. Our half-hour journey into Nzega District Hospital was covered by whichever vehicle happened to be working at the time. When the college boys succeeded in push-starting it, the FDC vehicle would transport us. However, failing this, a taxi was called and in an effort to cut down transport prices, Mama struck a deal with the driver, whereby we agreed to pay half the fare and share the journey with anybody wanting to travel to Nzega.... So day one of our deal arrives and a Toyota Avensis with nine people crammed into it pulls up outside the FDC - eleven passengers on an unmade road for 30 minutes made an interesting

start to the day! Even the hospital ambulance was called on to fetch us to and from placement when needed.

We would have liked to make ourselves more useful around the house. However, Mama Malyeli protested strongly about this, only allowing us to lay the table or help wash the dishes when we insisted that we enjoyed it. Al-fresco cooking was something we were

able to get involved with to a limited degree, hampered more by our lack of skill than our lack of willingness! Ugali (a maize-flour porridge with the consistency of playdough) needs quite some effort to make and our weedy British biceps appeared not to be up to the challenge. However, we'd all gather around the cooking fire in the evenings, doused in insect repellent and chat about our days, have our hair braided

into all sorts of exotic styles and practise our Swahili vocabulary.

We had a brilliant time living with Mama Malyeli in Mwanhala and would like to say a particular thankyou to her and Teddy. Thank you also to Mr Smith for organising this trip, and FUM for funding our transport to and from Nzega hospital.

Sewing Machines at the FDCs

Alice Roucoux (Tools For Self Reliance Volunteer)

My mission was to repair, and explain the maintenance of, sewing machines in three different FDCs and Ibambo village.

Sikonge FDC

There were twenty one sewing machines at Sikonge, all Chinese Butterfly or Singer copies. All of the machines were broken.

Spare parts were unavailable, but by cannibalizing machines I was able to bring five treadle machines into good working order. I was able to run a two day course on regular maintenance of sewing machines with the FDC tutor (who really needs training) and nineteen students drawn from the FDC itself and from Sikonge town.

Urambo FDC

At Urambo, ten Chinese made Butterfly sewing machines were broken.

I was able to repair four machines only (three treadles and one handle) and I spent a lot of time training the FDC teacher,

explaining the big faults I came across during repairs and giving advice for better maintenance.

Ibambo village

At Ibambo I was with the Cranbrook students, who were working on the new MCH

clinic. Villagers were invited to consult me about their machines. I was able to repair three sewing machines: two Butterfly and one New Butterfly. My time was too short in Ibambo as a lot of people came seeking help. I think extended village visits should be a fea-



Alice Roucoux teaching in Sikonge FDC

ture of any future volunteer's programme.

Mwanhala FDC

There were seventeen broken machines here and I managed to repair eleven, again all Chinese made.

I also ran a two and a half day maintenance course for 20 students and the FDC sewing teacher.

Main difficulties

I had several difficulties. It was my first time in an African country. I was a little stressed to start with, but it became better with each day.

"I think extended village visits should be a feature of any future volunteer's programme"

We lost one sewing machine box with a lot of tools and materials in Das Es Salaam.

Most machines are Chinese made and of poor quality: the metal is quickly worn and dimension of the parts are never exactly the same.

I had too short a time in each location to repair and teach the students who do not speak English, and who are busy working at other tasks at the same time

There are many bad practices to change. These include the use of petrol for cleaning and lubrication, and the practice of touching the internal parts of their machines when their function is not understood. If intervention is needed, they

must look carefully before opening the machine.

Advantages of being with the group from Cranbrook School

Previous TFSR volunteers working on sewing machines for FUM have visited the country on their own. I feel that there were clear benefits from accompanying the Cranbrook group.

If I needed advice, I could always find a representative of FUM.

If I needed help to work quickly, it was more effective to ask one of the Cranbrook teachers or the students, as they had better organised working habits, were better able to follow instruction and were not afraid to ask me for help and guidance.

Because the Cranbrook students were busy working in the FDC, I was able to work on my own without FDC principals around, as they were fully occupied with the Cranbrook students; this was of real benefit when talking with the sewing tutors. Also, I was able to work more quickly alone.

I gained a better understanding of FUM and their goals.

I think the trip was more user friendly; I am French and I was with English and Tanzanian people.

Some suggestions

I think FUM should extend its help into refurbishing village sewing machines where the need is great.

More time is needed to teach the FDC tutors and to repair broken college machines.

It is essential to carry a greater stock of spares and tools so that kits can be left behind at each location.

Future volunteers need to know that the vast majority of machines are Chinese made so that they can train on these and adapt the materials.

Thanks

I thank the Friends of Urambo and Mwanhala and Cranbrook School who enabled me to

"I also ran a two and a half day maintenance course for 20 students and the FDC sewing teacher"

make this trip. I learned a lot about Tanzania and about myself.

Special thanks go to Mr. Rod Smith, who trusted in me and helped me in the moments when I doubted my ability to manage. Also, thank you to Ms. Di Cooper for her kindness and her help in engaging the FDC Principals so that I could work faster. Thank you to Jo, Alistair, Ryan, Alana, Karen, Milly, and the students of Cranbrook, for having facilitated my integration into the group. Lastly, my thanks go to Mr. Frank Charles and Ms. Jeannette for sorting out the problems on the Tanzanian side.

Cranbrook School Visit the Tabora Region in July 2011

Aislinn McDonagh (Student)

When we all left for Tanzania in July, we weren't sure what to expect. Though we had been forewarned, experiences like the day long coach journey, the dirt roads and the toilets still hit us.



However, equally so did the beauty of the savannah, the exhilaration of riding on the roof of a truck (illegally!), and the friendliness of the people we met out there.

Tired and stiff, we landed in Dar Es Salaam on the 12th of July, and after changing our money into what seemed like ludicrously large sums, travelled to the Salvation Army Hostel where we would be staying. There, we met at first a small group of children, which eventually grew into a crowd, all playing with our cameras and talking with us. Considering it was our first time trying to communicate over a language barrier, we all

adapted well, and soon decided on the games that worked best; the hokey cokey is always a delight, and for the month I couldn't get the tune of "heads, shoulder knees and toes" out of my head!

The coach the next day was bumpy, dusty and long, and though we cheered ourselves along singing and chatting, we were glad to reach Tabora at midnight!

In Tabora we were welcomed by the Regional Commissioner and Regional Administrative Secretary. Then we had an after-

noon school visit and supper at the homes of FUM friends there; we were never short of food! Less than two days after arriving however, we had our last showers for three weeks in the wonderful Tabora Hotel, and split off into our separate groups: Urambo group with Mr MacDonald; Mwanhala group with Mr Hamilton and Mrs Taylor, both on trucks; and Sikonge group, my group, with Mr Smith, squeezed into two jeeps with seventeen mattresses on top!

In Sikonge we were warmly greeted by Mr Mguba, our host at the FDC, and soon began to work on refurbishing the offices and classrooms in need, as well as some ladies' toilets and showers. This work took us just under a week, during which time we were visited by



'Even repainting the marker stones on each side of the paths'



after supper, chatting and learning "Tanzania Tanzania", or go and have astronomy lessons with Mr Smith on the football pitch. The Urambo group went to Ibambo where the clinic was unfortunately not ready for them to paint, mainly due to the lack of rains this year, so they undertook a similar project at the local primary school, specialising in scientific diagrams on the walls and lovely landscape murals. The Mwanhala group travelled to Mbooga where they completely refurbished the Clinic and Dispensary; this was the same clinic that a group in 1999, led by Mrs Taylor, had helped to build.

These projects completed, we (the Sikonge Group) returned to our FDC for our grand farewell. It was a really emotional evening actually, as we all gave gifts to the people who had looked after us, like Mama Kuliama, received kangas and shirts from our hosts, and said goodbye to the friends we had made. The Sikonge and Urambo groups then travelled

the District Commissioner, learnt the risks of paint fume inhalation and made some fast friends with the students. The Urambo group worked on dormitories and the girls' latrines at the FDC, and in Mwanhala the groups undertook the task of rewiring some of the dormitories and main block, as well as repainting. After finishing our painting in FDCs, we gathered our things and moved on to our village projects; Sikonge's project was in Utimule, on the edge of Forest Reserve. The Sikonge group travelled on a truck with all of our luggage and mattresses, feeling more experienced and confident, and with excitement and much paint already in our hair. Utimule was a quiet village, pleasantly surprised I think at our work and appearance, and we quickly realised that life in the villages was very different from in the town – not least because it was so cold in the mornings! We also had more to do, as some of the students from the FDC had come with us and we planned to re-floor several classrooms in the Pri-

mary School with concrete, repaint most and redecorate the outside of the buildings. This was a big task, but the whole group really worked hard to complete it, and although we spent considerable time cleaning before painting, we managed to paint a room a day, with walls, blackboards and windows fixed, later adding murals in each room, planting shade trees and even repainting the marker stones each side of the paths. After work ended each day, we would sit around a camp fire



'Lovely landscape murals'



'We were able to see the beautiful landscape and wildlife of Tanzania'

to the Mwanhala FDC (the Urambo group had had a similar ceremony of their own, in which the girls received some lovely homemade dresses and the boys received Tanzanian shirts), for the last big celebration of our visit, and possibly Mr Smith's last ever visit to Tanzania with Cranbrook School. This party was long, vibrant and involved quite a lot of singing and dancing, and was, we all hoped, an excellent last hurrah for Mr Smith.

The last week of the trip we



'An excellent last hurrah for Mr Smith'

spent meandering back to Dar, reunited and once more on our beloved coach; first stop, Mikumi. The game park was brilliant in several ways – firstly, the luxuries of running water, electricity and fans were back, and I don't think I had ever missed them more, but

more importantly in that we were able to see (and take countless photographs of) the beautiful landscape and wildlife of Tanzania. I myself took over 200 photos that day, of the incredible elephants, hippopotami, zebras, giraffes and infinite gazelles among many others. Moving on, we went up into the Morogoro Mountains, where we were greeted by a gorgeous stream, our first rain since arrival and, in my case, sleeping next to an eight foot drop as we laid out our mattresses on the veranda. Morogoro was refreshing and rejuvenating – with no schedule or wakeup call we were free to sit and read, enjoy the lush foliage or, with the company of the teachers, go on one of two trips down to the market, although I think that more food was bought than anything else, as we stumbled upon Ribena, Nutella and Pringles! The best part of the mountains was undoubtedly the river, which was freezing, but so much fun, and incredibly refreshing, especially if you braved the waterfall. In Morogoro we also celebrated two birthdays, and spent evenings around an enormous campfire, before packing our bags once

again and travelling to the beach resort at Bagomoyo.

Bagomoyo was blissful, with sun, sea and Indian Ocean sunrises which were to die for. We spent our days there at the local markets, on the beach or at the pool, and other

than a few technical hitches (my shower gave me a mild electric shock) our time was fairly idyllic, and though it was highly enjoyable, many of us were ready now to return home to bore our families with our tales.

We spent nearly five weeks in Tanzania where we learned such a lot – about the country, the people and ourselves. Some say it has been a life changing experience, but all say they had a brilliant time and are truly glad they went.



'Indian Ocean sunrises which were to die for'

FUM Officers



Don't forget to check out the FUM website at <http://fumuk.org.uk> or just scan this QR code with your smartphone.



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STOP PRESS
Friends may have heard that Mr Masatu unfortunately fell very ill in September and had to be hospitalised in Dar es Salaam. He is recovering slowly and we are pleased to hear that he is now at home in Tabora and planning to visit his office for two hours a day while he regains his strength. I am sure you all join me in wishing him a full recovery.

The Final Word



"Don't forget to come to our 48th AGM in Exeter, where you can meet our guests from Tabora and listen to their first hand reports."

Best wishes
Rod Smith