

On April 5th 2005 AAF trustees Denis Cannon and Tony Perry accompanied by Rosie Crane and Kenneth Robertson students from Kings College, Cambridge visited the Mwingi District, Kenya on our latest mission to aid the Akamba people. Apart from monitoring the existing projects being carried out by our field agents, we wanted to gather information on the needs of the people of the area to plan for future projects and to check our long term aims. Overall our mission was a complete success, and we were able to formulate many plans for possible future aid, subject to available funding.



NEW TRANSPORT FOR GAI CLINIC During 2004, one of our trustees Dr. James Buckle, raised funds to provide reliable transport for Te Wai Yesu FCC (known as Gai Clinic). In a programme organised by AAF supporter Brian Herrick, an existing Toyota 4 x 4 vehicle was taken to Nairobi where engineers completely re-built it as an ambulance at a cost of £8,500, and it was with great pleasure that in April 2005, AAF finally handed the vehicle over to Samson and Lydia, the administrators at Gai. It is now in service to collect some patients or transfer them to the larger hospital at Mwingi, as well serving as a mobile clinic carrying out child immunisation in the outlying areas.

The *“Te Wai Yesu Family Care Centre”* is not government assisted but with the support of AAF over the last 5 years it now has a sound financial base enabling it to provide a good health service to many thousands of people over a very wide area. The AAF “Harambee” scheme for subsidised health care is also ensuring that poorer patients can afford the modest fees charged by the clinic. Whilst at Gai Clinic, AAF again donated a large consignment of medicines, for which the staff were very grateful. As usual to make the best use of our funds, we purchased these in Nairobi at very favourable prices.

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A similar donation was also made to another clinic at Katakani (10 miles from Gai). Again this is a self funded clinic which is supported by the Roman Catholic Church in Africa. They are at present constructing a large extension to accommodate more patient facilities, and a new laboratory. The staff at Katakani comprises Registered Nurses Martha and John, and Daniel the laboratory Technician, together with several community assistants. They were very keen to join our “Harambee” card scheme to give affordable healthcare to the poor, so the following day we issued new cards to the 20 poorest families we could find. This means that 150 cards are now in use giving access to affordable health treatment to nearly 1500 men, women, and children for the first time in their lives.

NEW CHURCH BUILDING

We are hoping to respond to a plea from the pastor of Kalambani AIC church for help in finishing a new building. Previously they had been worshipping in a traditional wicker construction which needed constant repair to keep it weatherproof. However recently the congregation have raised the funds and built a new permanent building, or at least the walls and roof. They now need cement to concrete the dirt floor, and to plaster the outside of the building to protect the bricks from the weather. Probably 200 bags of cement will be needed costing



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AAF FARM-AID In September 2003, we started our programme of loaning two bulls and a plough to assist poor families to cultivate their field. This has proved very successful and even the most needy families can now, subject to sufficient rainfall, grow some food. Some of our supporters like to donate specifically for this scheme and recently AAF has purchased more animals and ploughs, so that at present we have six bulls, three ploughs, two cows (one in calf), three donkeys, and two goats in our loan scheme.

EXAMINATION TIME This year 2005, many of our sponsored students are completing their four years secondary schooling and sitting final exams in October, and many are looking forward to getting good grades. The Kenya Government offers students a loan scheme for university education, but due to the scarcity of places, only those achieving A or A- grades will be considered for state universities. Some students with B grades will be hoping to find sponsors to help them in a Diploma College course, as without further education good employment is not possible. We hope to be able to help some of the dozens who will apply to AAF. As in previous years we have been inundated with requests for assistance with secondary education, many more than we have funds to help. The trustees now have the difficult task of sifting through the applications to find those most worthy of support.

BROWNIES HELP THEIR FRIENDS IN KENYA Over the past months, the Brownies of South Petherton have been raising money for the pupils of Kakoongo Primary School near Twimyuua. In common with many, this school has very few teaching aids and almost no sports equipment. On behalf of the brownies, we purchased in Nairobi, good quality footballs, volley balls, a volleyball net, and ball inflation pumps, which we then presented to the pupils. To say they were overjoyed was certainly an understatement. Previously their footballs were handmade from many plastic bags wrapped tightly and tied up with string.

While we were at the school we discussed with David the Headmaster many other problems they had. One we could solve straight away by buying 4 bags of cement to repair the leaking water tanks. Another problem was a little more difficult. All the classrooms were in a very bad condition with cracked walls and weak roof timbers, in fact one classroom was so bad it is unsafe to use. The building was erected many years ago, but the floor level was very low so that during the heavy rains, the water came not only through the roof but also flooded right through the dirt floor of the classroom. We felt the best solution was to demolish and re-build the whole block of three classrooms to a better standard and with a higher concrete floor level. Beyond the means of the community – they have taken many years to raise the money to build a nursery classroom, and the new block would cost 3 – 4 times the amount.

Quietly we took details, made drawings, and filed it in our “Possible future projects” folder.

WIFE AT 16, MOTHER AT 18, WIDOW AT 19! One young woman Kasembi Nzau who came to see us was married at 16 and had her first child at 18, she and her husband had no home and little money so he went to Nairobi to work in the construction industry to enable them to buy some land and build their own home. Tragically, early this year he was killed in a road accident in Nairobi leaving his widow and baby son homeless, living with her Father who is himself very poor, and sleeping in a granary. AAF persuaded the Father to give a little land to his daughter, (not usual in Kenyan culture!) and we would build her a traditional house, plough her land and give her seed to plant. We also loaned her a pair of goats for two years, the offspring of which (maybe four) would belong to her. Both Kasembi and her father were overjoyed. She and her son could now look forward to a future living in a home in Kamula which is legally hers. We also registered her with an Harambee card so that the worry of healthcare will be taken off her young shoulders.



Total cost to AAF £150 ~ value to Kasembi and her son, we can only imagine ~ priceless!

To our many supporters who have made all this possible, on behalf of all Akamba people,