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Quarterly Newsletter: July 2012

I have just returned from a very busy two weeks in Mwanza. I spent plenty of time with all the students and their teachers and received lots of smiles and gratitude for the BTP. The reports and feedback are very encouraging.

Latest News

The main focus is on the Form II and IV students who have national exams at the end of the year. Julius' and Sadicki's mock results are strong, both very close to the next grade up and finishing 25th and 27th respectively in a year group of 74. Ngussa's maths is undermining his other strong results, but with focused tuition he should be able to go up a grade in the exams. Ibrahim is aiming for a Division II in his Form IV exams (O-Levels), as are Mazera and Witness. Their most recent mock exams suggest that this is within their grasp. A Division II would be a significant achievement as most students achieve Division III and IV. However, schools will close for two weeks before the exams as the teachers will be administering the 2012 census. Elsewhere, Kulwa, Martine and Edward will sit an exam in October for places on a national vocational course (VETA). Gabriel, who I first met at a local orphanage, has gained his driving licence with BTP help and will apply for a VETA course. The BTP is also supporting Brian, from Gabriel's orphanage, as he works for his Form III exams and Paul has returned to study Form V. It was good to meet Azizi who we persuaded to attend primary school in 2007 with a uniform and materials. He is now in Standard V.

New kit and equipment

It is easy to overlook the resources that wealthy students have to help them achieve highly. Those without money in Tanzania have a massive disadvantage in their studies and the BTP has made a big effort to readjust this balance. Sponsored students were each presented with a new school bag packed with important resources. It is worth imagining what a teenager in a wealthy country might ask for and then compare it with these students' requests: pens, exercise books for revision



practice, soap, washing powder, toothpaste and a tooth brush, Vaseline (for moisturising skin), shoe polish and extra rations (rice, flour, cooking oil and salt). This was complemented by a donation of clothes (many thanks to Miss Odie) which saw them kitted out in smart,



designer clothes, as shown off by Yusufu – big smiles! With the exams in mind, the students were also bought collections of textbooks and revision guides which will prove extremely useful to further study beyond school. The past papers & answers books went down particularly well with the students.



Extra bits and pieces

It is easy to be ill in Mwanza. As a student, this means you miss school and underperform in your exams. A tear in a mosquito net could be dangerous. Lacking funds to buy charcoal and therefore not being able to boil water to make it potable will almost certainly make you ill. Steven needed a dentist (de-scaling and a filling), Jennifer needed glasses (to see the board!) and Shijay needed a doctor to make him better. None of this would have been possible without BTP funds. The allowance provided to the students for their meals, transport and other things is essential to their health and education.



Thank you

With lots to get done in Mwanza, I am grateful to Paschal for his time, ideas and Swahili. Enormous thanks go to Leah for meetings with so many teachers, Headmasters, students and market stall keepers. The sponsorship is only possible with the regular donations from so many donors around the world – thank you. The children believe they are incredibly lucky to get this help and are determined to seize their opportunity to repay their sponsors.

Ed Beavington