

## Update

### Giving Young Kenyans a Brighter Future



Great Grandmother (left) the main carer for the new born orphan being held by his step grandmother

#### A quick trip to Kenya

What a fantastic trip we had to Kenya in January/February 2020. We made a "spur of the moment" decision to visit Kenya for almost 4 weeks following the sale of our Nimbin property. Yes, Rikki and I are currently homeless, living in our caravan at a friend's place while we search for a new home.

The main purpose of this trip was to research income producing ventures, from visiting a rabbit breeding facility, fish farming, bee keeping to cottage industries like making bone or bead jewelry.

We also heard there was some land available to lease where we could implement some of these ventures and establish a training centre. While there we met the newest sponsored students.

#### Special Needs update

When we are back in Kenya we always follow up on our special needs cases to make sure



A happy Pherdinand, no longer having seizures

they are out of the woods. We visited Pherdinand and his mother, Jesca. Those who have been following this story will remember Pherdinand is the 12 year old boy who had epilepsy since age of 4 (now 12) he was having seizures about 3 times a day. We organised the boy to be assessed and put on medication. It's been 4 months since we have seen him and were pleased to hear that he was still on medication, had no adverse side effects or any seizures.

Now the sad news - Jesca had a hoarse voice. When I asked her why, she told us she had been mourning. They wail when someone dies. Her teenage step daughter had recently died during childbirth. The baby boy survived and is now being cared for by his great grandmother. This girl was in Form 4, I guess that would make her about 17. Teenage pregnancy is not uncommon in this area. Often this is due to poverty, the young teenager may want some luxuries that we all take for granted like some nice soap or hair piece, while others are desperate for school fees. Men with some means prey on these girls and entice them to have sex with the promise of some money. In this case it cost a teenage girl her life.

#### Education and Training Centre

Last year we told Chief Elijah we wanted to rent some land next to Lake Victoria to establish an education and training centre for horticulture and animal husbandry. Elijah is appointed by the Kenyan government as Chief of the Agolomuok district and holds the position for life. He is well respected by the Agolomuok community and is also Patron of the Agolomuok Support Group.

We were excited when Elijah told us he had found a piece of land that would suit our





At a Govt. run rabbit breeding farm - Rikki deciding whether the rabbit is a pet or food. Mmmm



Checking out how the local animal market is run

needs. The land belongs to St Camillus Mission Hospital and is suitable for growing vegetables and fruit. With Elijah's assistance we have leased 1.25 acres of land fronting Lake Victoria for 5 years, with an option to renew for another 5 years.

We have prepared a plan and a budget for setting up the 'Agolomuok Education and Training Centre.' The project includes a classroom, greenhouse, water pump and storage tanks, gravity fed trickle irrigation system, enclosures for goats, chickens and rabbits, bee hives, a shipping container for storing tools and fodder and most importantly, a secure perimeter fence to deter thieves and stop the nearby hippopotamus from eating our vegetables.

**The cost of establishing an education and training centre is \$20,000 and we are seeking donations from interested supporters.**

The cost of establishing the education and training centre is \$20,000 and we are seeking donations from interested

supporters. If you would like to help and/or receive a copy of the proposal for the centre, please email me at [rob@kenyakidsinternational.org.au](mailto:rob@kenyakidsinternational.org.au) and I will be happy to respond. Whatever level of support you can give will be very much appreciated.

**Employment opportunities**

For quite some time we have been seeking ways to increase the income earning potential of Agolomuok families. Rikki has been hunting down local crafts and discovered Fred, a man who makes jewellery out of bone and Theresa, a woman who makes bead jewellery like the Maasai. On returning to Australia Rikki took some of Fred's bone jewellery to a Fair Trade store to see if they would be interested in selling the product. To Rikki's delight the owner of the store was very



Some of the 5000+ workshop participants

impressed and is in the process of placing an order.

Not only has Rikki found an outlet for selling Fred's work, she has arranged for Fred to teach his carving skills to other locals with a creative flair. The hope is that as these people acquire bone carving skills, they too will increase their income earning potential. Rikki is still exploring what can be done with the bead jewellery.



Fred holding up a piece of bone jewellery

**Small Business Training**

Last year we reviewed the success of the First Fruits trial program held earlier in the year. A total of 7 families were

chosen for the trial; 4 families received interest-free loans to purchase products to sell and 3 families received a female goat to breed from. The trial was judged successful by those involved and a new program will begin when we next visit Kenya in the latter half of 2020 (Coronavirus permitting).

However, when we met the trial participants it became evident that both their knowledge of goat

care and the skills needed in business, were each sadly lacking. As a result, Rikki purposed to find a way to address each of these issues and discovered the "5000+ Program". This is a small business training program tailored for the poor. It is run by Kenyan volunteers.

Rikki arranged for the 5000+ Program to be held at the St Camillus Hospital conference room. The program consists of 5 seminars held one day a week for 5 weeks. We attended the first seminar before leaving Kenya. A total of 27 participants started the course including 8 people who had been chosen to benefit from the next First Fruits program. We are confident the 5000+ Program will give people who set up small businesses invaluable knowledge and skills to aid their success.

However, for the people receiving a goat, there are no suitable programs teaching goat care. As a result, Rikki decided to run a basic goat care program herself with input from the local vet. Having previously kept sheep on our Nimbin property, Rikki has both knowledge and skills applicable to goat care. Rikki conducted much research and liaised with goat breeders





Students at the Agolomuok Primary School being measured up for new school uniforms

in Mozambique and America in order to design a Goat Care Workshop. This program will be delivered when we next visit Kenya.



### Agolomuok Primary School Students receive School Uniforms

In Kenya if your child doesn't wear a school uniform they are sent home. We work in an area that is extremely poor, where buying a school uniform is not always possible. When funds are available KKI organizes children from the poorest families to be given school uniforms. In this remote area you don't just walk into a shop and buy a uniform off the shelf, instead you go to a tailor to get it made. That goes for just about everything you want to buy such as furniture (no Ikea here) gates etc. On our last visit we organized 2 seamstresses to come to the school to measure up a selection of the poorest students to receive a school uniform. These children only have a uniform because of our donors' generous gifts. Thank you!

### Feeding Program started at Obondi Primary School

KKI has begun to support a second Primary School's feeding program at Obondi. A total of 380 students receive breakfast because of our donors' generosity. We are currently looking for



10 newly sponsored students going onto high school in 2020

more supporters to increase the program to include lunch.

Since then all schools throughout Kenya have been shutdown due to Covid-19, it is not known when they will return. Students have been given some homework to do at home. As they do not have computers what they can do remotely will be limited.



### 10 New Sponsored Students

Each year since 2017 sponsors have taken up the challenge to support bright needy students to attend secondary school.

At the beginning of 2020 we had 5 new sponsors and 10 students. To our delight, by the end of January we had 9. Then John, whose sponsorship concluded last year, put his hand up to begin a new sponsorship, the tenth student was now covered. Thank you, John and all our new and existing sponsors. This is an all time record.

Currently we have 25 bright needy students at secondary school and our 2

young women at University. What a fantastic result! A huge Thank You to all our faithful sponsors.

### ASSG AGM

In Kenya we attended the Annual General Meeting of the Agolomuok Support Group and saw Patroba Odiwa elected as the new Chairman. Patroba is a retired man whom we believe will provide good leadership for the Support Group. KKI works closely with the Agolomuok Support Group to manage our Kenyan projects.

### How one can help

For one supporter it meant she looked around her house, gathered up years of wool remnants and decided to knit baby clothes. We took them with us and distributed them at the maternity ward where we stay in a unit on the grounds of St Camillus Mission Hospital. Thanks Ruth.



### Plan to Visit Projects in Kenya

In 2021 we plan to visit Kenya for 3 months (after Covid-19 is over). If you'd like to join us to visit the projects and maybe go on safari in the nearby Maasai Mara National Reserve, give Rob a call on 0409 413 248. For more information check out our KKI website [www.kenyakidsinternational.org.au](http://www.kenyakidsinternational.org.au) and see how you can help in **Giving young Kenyans a brighter future.** Rob & Rikki Fisher



Note: KKI have new email addresses please update your records  
[rob@kenyakidsinternational.org.au](mailto:rob@kenyakidsinternational.org.au)  
[rikki@kenyakidsinternational.org.au](mailto:rikki@kenyakidsinternational.org.au)



# Even the simplest of things take time

By Rob Fisher



I was suffering with sunburn to my face and head. Since we were living inside the hospital compound, I decided to buy some burns cream from the hospital pharmacy. There were no other customers at the pharmacy and the only worker was dusting the furniture. After a while he stopped dusting and asked what I wanted, to which he replied "No we don't have

anything for sunburn" and went on with his dusting. I then asked "Do you have any cream for burns?" He replied "Yes but you need a prescription from the doctor".

I walked down the hall to the Doctor's office... again no customers in sight. I told the doctor my problem and she said she would check with the pharmacy and left. After some time, she returned to tell me they didn't have any sunburn cream. I politely agreed with her and said "But they do have cream for burns, so perhaps I could use that?" She wasn't sure but said I could try and wrote me a prescription.



In the last 5 years visiting Kenya this was the first evidence I have seen of cigarette smoking.



Challenges of getting around

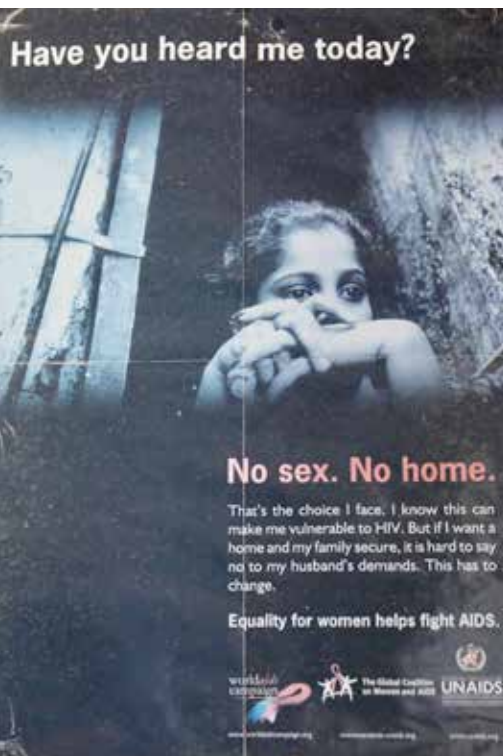


One of the benefits of living by lake Victoria - fresh fish is always available

Off I went to the Cashier's office to pay for the burns cream. After intently studying her price list the Cashier informed me, she needed to check the price with the pharmacy and off she went. A considerable time elapsed so I walked into the corridor to see where she was. The Cashier was in deep conversation with someone, but clearly not the pharmacist.

I walked back into the Cashier's office and to my amazement the woman behind the desk asked for 250 Shillings (\$3.70) for my medicine. How did she know what I wanted? They must use mental telepathy here. I offered her a 500 Shilling note to be told she didn't have any change. She promptly left with my money looking for change. After another long wait she returned with my 500 Shilling note intact, before rifling through her handbag to find 250 Shillings change for me.

Armed with my receipt and my prescription, I hopefully returned to the pharmacy and before too long I happily exchanged my receipt for a small tube of burns cream. The whole exercise had taken more than an hour and yes, ordinary burns cream does work for sunburn.



Attitudes we face in Kenya. A poster on the wall of St Camillus hospital.

## You can make a difference by donating to KKI Projects and giving young Kenyans a brighter future

### 1. Please join me up as a member of KKI so I can help the poor

Joining fee:  \$5 (a once only fee) Annual Membership fee:  \$25  Total \$30

### 2. I believe in the power of education to change lives

Here is my gift for the Education & Training Program  \$60  \$25  \$100  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. I want to donate to Obondi Feeding Program

\$60  \$25  \$100  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. I want to sponsor a student and lift them out of poverty

Monthly gift  \$40 or Annual gift  \$480 (sponsorship commitment for 4 years)

Please scan and email this coupon to [rob@kenyakidsinternational.org.au](mailto:rob@kenyakidsinternational.org.au)  
Remit your gift electronically to:  
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