

Newsletter No. 6 December 2009

CLSA supports school building programme

In February the Trust's school building programme received an enormous boost from CLSA Asia-Pacific Markets, Asia's leading, independent brokerage and investment group. A U\$50,000 donation has helped seven schools build new classrooms this year:

- A Form V classroom at Bhunya High School.
- A block of classrooms at Ndunayithini High School.
- A library at Lamawandla High School.
- A classroom and science lab at Mnjoli High School.
- New classrooms at Faye's Academy.
- A school kitchen at Lwandle Primary School and
- A block of classrooms at Ekutsimleni Primary School.



Children at Faye's School at Mhlambanyatsi celebrate the completion of their new classrooms.



The SCT Manager, Sizwe, with Mr Simelane, the Head-teacher at Mnjoli High School.



Parents helping to build classrooms at Ndunayithini High School.

Bacon's College Return to Swaziland

In June, Bacon's College teachers, Alan and Wendy, took four students to visit the schools that they have supported in Swaziland. Lauren, Georgia, Daniel and Cevdet, all six formers, visited their twin school, St Francis in Mbabane, where they joined in lessons and boarded with their classmates. At Hhohho AME Primary School they saw the classrooms and kitchen that their appeal helped build and introduced a selection of toys and teaching aids. In a packed week, they also visited Maita Primary School, a very poor school in the south of the country and Ekutsimleni Primary and LaMawandla High Schools near Luve. To end their trip they had a well earned rest at Mbuluzi Game Reserve in the north east lowveld.



Children play indophu at Hhohho AME Primary School.

The response of the teachers and children was summed up by Mavis Tsabedze, the Head teacher from Hhohho AME Primary school

“We are happy and proud to have friends in England.”

She added: “The new teaching materials brought by visiting Bacon's College students have helped improve the lessons. There is less theory and more hands on activities that help maintain the children's interest. The activities give the children confidence and the teachers are very happy. The new toys will help develop the coordination of the smaller children. This fits in with the new National Curriculum.

“The popularity of the school has increased. With the new classroom, we now have two streams all the way to Grade 7 and the bottleneck has been removed. We are also very grateful for the kitchen because we are now cooking in a clean and healthy environment.”

Public transport in Swaziland

By Lauren Scoltock after her July visit to Swaziland

Public transport in Swaziland is very different to here in London. Instead of our traditional red double-decker bus, the preferred mode of transport of the Swazi people is the Kombi. A Kombi is very similar to a minibus in shape, although some differ in size, most being about the size of the Bacon's College minibus, but some being quite a bit smaller, depending on which company owns them. The destination of each Kombi is printed on its front, and Kombi's are available to take passengers to every corner of the country. In addition to the Kombi, there are also larger, more coach-like buses, which only stop at selected places, like the capital city, Mbabane.



Left: A Kombi leaving Hhohho AME Primary School.

Below: Bus tickets



Personally, I came into contact with a lot of public transport during my visit to Swaziland. Whilst staying with my St. Francis student host's family, I had to leave at 5.45am every morning, as unlike the other students, I was staying in a rural area on the outskirts of the city. Every morning, Fufu (my host), his younger brother and I would meet the ever punctual red Kombi that would take us on the 10km journey to Manzini city. The red Kombi was run by the local community, and had about 10 seats for the public. The inside was plastered with AIDS awareness stickers.

Once in Manzini, it was a short walk to the main bus depot, where we got on one of the coaches that would take us to Mbabane. This coach held the closest likeness to London transport, but rather than the usual four seats per row, there were five on these coaches. Fares are not collected at the start of the journey; instead a man collects them halfway through the journey and writes out a small square ticket for you.

My Life

By Bongiwe Mahlalela, sponsored student



I am a girl of sixteen years old. I am the last born in a family of three. I was born in Dvokolwako where my parental home is situated. I used to live with my parents and my brother and sister. We were a happy family some years ago.

When I was doing Grade Four in 2003 my mother passed away. My mother was a housewife and she used to sell firewood to pay for my school fees. I felt so much pain when she died because I loved her so much. My father was selling vegetables to get money. A year after my mother passed away, my father fell sick and he later died in 2004 when I was doing Grade Five. We thought it was finished with us, but God had a plan for us.

My older sister changed and became mother to me and my brother. We lived a miserable life with no one to look after us. One day, the sister of my father came and told us that we were going to live with her in her home near Luve. My Aunt used to live with twenty six children in her home. We came and lived with the others. My Aunt is not employed. She teaches us to sell fruits during the holidays in order to get money.

When I am going to school, I have to walk for a distance of about 2km to the station. From there I board a bus to school which is about 15km away. In the morning, I wake up at half past four and wash the dishes. I prepare breakfast if it is my turn. I make sure that I am not late for school. I sometimes go to school without anything to eat but I don't mind because I know what I want to achieve one day.

When I grow up, I want to become a nurse. I want to help people who are sick to become well again and don't leave orphans behind like me because it is painful to live without parents.

Now I don't feel like an orphan because I get help from my sponsor. One day I wish to see my sponsor and visit his country. I pray that God will bless him and his country.

In the field

By Rob Mackenzie, UK Secretary



I returned to Swaziland, my home for 21 years, last August to see friends and family after a four year absence. I took the opportunity to visit several of the projects and see first hand how the Trust's work is progressing. During four days, I travelled the length and breadth of the country with the Manager, Sizwe, seeing 14 projects and meeting a selection of sponsored children.

Supporting rural businesses: Breeding indigenous chickens at Mhlosheni in Shishelweni District.

Swaziland Charitable Trust

Reg. Charity No. 257666 England



Left: Chairman, Rowan Howe and Sizwe visit Sidvokodvo High school. They have requested help roofing their admin block and building a computer lab.



Visiting some of the schools currently being helped to build classrooms I was impressed by the dedication of staff and parents. Head teachers are given great responsibilities and only limited support. Some flounder, but the best mobilise the support of parents and local communities and together they work wonders. It is these schools that we support.

I also joined Sizwe at St Benedict's Primary School in the south of Swaziland when he went to hand out new uniforms to sponsored children. Since I left



Swaziland in 2005 the orphan support scheme has grown enormously. Sizwe now has the mammoth task of looking after 250 children at 16 primary and 18 secondary schools. The number of schools increases each year as children move home and others move to secondary schools but Sizwe copes admirably.

Bhunya Secondary School is delighted with its new science lab. "It's perfect" says Mr Nxumalo, the Deputy-head.



Delivering uniforms to St Benedict's Primary School. Left: Sizwe leaving the SCT's Manzini office with a consignment of shoes. Right: handing out new uniforms.

Meet Senelisiwe



Senelisiwe is six years old. She is in her first year at eKutsimleni Primary School, near Luve in central Swaziland. She lives with her mother and five step brothers and sisters. They walk over 3km to school each day. Her father died recently leaving her mother widowed for the second time. Other than bursaries for school fees, there is no financial support from the Swaziland Government for people without income. Support from family, friends and neighbours will help the family survive, but without our sponsors, who top up school fees and pay for compulsory school uniforms, children like Senelisiwe would not be able to stay in school.

2010 Centenary Celebrations



Next year will be the 100th anniversary of the start of an African adventure which lead to the founding of the Swaziland Charitable Trust. With an initial capital of £30,000, the Mushroom Settlement was started in 1910 with the aim of settling British ex servicemen in the Orange Free State in South Africa.

Under the influence of one Alistair Miller, the focus was soon turned to Swaziland.

The name changed to Swaziland Settlement and the company bought large tracts of land and developed farms for veterans to settle. The company was a potent force in colonial times and many of the supported families still feature prominently in Swaziland today.

As independence drew near, Swaziland Settlement started helping ethnic Swazis to purchase farms and this continued until the national bank was formed in the 1970's to take over this work. The remaining money was invested and the profits have been used to support development and charitable work ever since. Recognising its new status, Swaziland Charitable Trust, a UK registered charity, was formed in 1968.

Swaziland Celebrations

In August 2010, schools, groups, communities and individuals that have worked with the Trust will join together in a festival of song and dance.

UK Celebrations

In December 2010, we hope that St Francis High School choir will be the focus of celebrations in Britain. The choir will meet their friends at Bacon's College, get a taste of English life and sing at several venues. Ticket sales for concerts at Hatfield, the Tower of London, and Bryanston School in Dorset will be used to help cover the cost of bringing the choir over.

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