The Kasiisi Project

ANNUAL REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2008
INTRODUCTION

2008 has been an exciting year for The Kasiisi Project. Highlights included visits to the schools by 27 donors and educators from the USA and UK, an expansion in the building program and a boost to our conservation education program by a grant from The Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund. Kasiisi primary school ranked third of 156 schools in the district based on 2007 primary leaving exam results and was declared a “model school” for Kabarole district by the District Education Authority.

On the other hand 2008 has also been a difficult year financially. The dollars continuing plunge against the Ugandan Shilling and rising fuel and food costs put a severe strain on our budget. Staple foods maize and beans doubled in price between March and July and the cost of cement rose 30% during the same period.

2007 was also a year of renovation for some of our older buildings. After 11 years many of our first classrooms at Kasiisi and Kanyawara schools needed repair and up-grading. While not as glamorous as new libraries or nursery schools the work needed to be done and was expensive.
1. **CONSTRUCTION**

The project is now in full-scale production of sun dried eco-bricks which will be used for all future building projects. Made of dirt and cement these bricks using no clay as an ingredient or wood for firing protect wetlands and forests. Since they interlock they also cut costs by requiring less cement during building.

*Making interlocking soil stabilized blocks at Kasiisi Primary School, June 2008*

*Official opening of Kasiisi School staff housing February 2008*
2. SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2007 the project was supporting 68 children, most of whom would not have progressed beyond Grade 6 without Kasiisi Project scholarships, in secondary and tertiary education. Our first university candidate successfully completed year 1 of a BA in Business Administration at Kampala International University. We also had students enrolled in the following certificate and diploma courses: Medical Lab Technician, Electrical Engineering, Pre-school Teaching and Primary Teaching. We have four 2007 high school graduates beginning University in September 2008 pursuing degrees at Makerere University in Urban Planning and Environmental Management and at Kampala International University in Medicine and Business Computing.

3. TEACHER EXCHANGE

Following a very successful visit by 6 Ugandan educators to Weston in 2007 a return visit by 12 teachers and administrators from Weston (airfares donated by WEEFC), took place in June 2008 for 2 weeks. They taught classes in reading, social studies, comprehension, math and ESL in all five Kasiisi Project Schools. A collaborative program to plant trees in the US and in Uganda around a shared environmental education curriculum was initiated.
Moments from the Weston Exchange Visit

Children welcoming Weston Teachers Uganda, June 2008
Weston teachers planting Prunus Africana at Kasiisi Primary School, June 2008
Weston teachers in class at Kasiisi, Kanyawara, Kigarama and Rweteera Primary schools
4. STAFF SALARIES

In 2008 the Kasiisi Project provided funding to cover the salaries of 5 extra teachers, 2 at Kanyawara and 3 at Kasiisi primary schools, to help reduce class size.

Karungi Edith teaches a Primary 2 class of over 300 children. They are outside as they cannot fit into one classroom. Kasiisi School June 2008. The second P2 teacher is on maternity leave. There are no substitutes.

Staff and students enrollment at 5 Kasiisi Project Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>GOVERNMENT TEACHERS</th>
<th>KASIISI PROJECT TEACHERS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KASIISI</td>
<td>1240</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KANYAWARA</td>
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<td>KIGARAMA</td>
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<td>KIIKO</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWETEERA</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
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5. PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

Construction began on a new nursery school at Kasiisi and land was donated for a nursery school at Kanyawara. Financing of the building and donations of books, Lego etc were made by the parents and friends of the Weston Public Schools pre-school program. Links were cemented between Kasiisi and Kanyawara nursery schools and pre-schools in the USA.
6. SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAM

Construction began on the kitchen and dining room at Kasiisi. This building will serve both the school lunch program and the boarding house. The lunch program projected to begin in 2009 at Kasiisi and Kanyawara will test the use of a banana-based porridge as an affordable, sustainable food for school lunch programs in nation wide.

![Preliminary taste results of the banana based porridge at Kasiisi Primary School, February 2008](image)

Emma Osbaldeston of Cadwalader, Wickersham and Taff, London, sponsors of the Feeding Program, laying a brick on the new kitchen foundations at Kasiisi Primary School, June 2008
7. LATRINES

6 new latrines, 4 for girls with incinerators and showering facilities, and 2 for boys, have been completed to slab stage at Kasiisi and Kanyawara schools. Walls and roofs will be added in September 2008 using a grant from the UK charity The Kitchen Table Charities Trust using our steadily accumulating supply of eco-bricks.

![Image of latrine construction](image1)

Elizabeth Kasenene, Principal of Kasiisi Primary School, and a 5 cubicle latrine completed to slab stage, June 2008

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8. WATER

New, vandal proof water barrels providing a dependable source of clean drinking water have been built at Kasiisi and Kanyawara schools. This model will be adopted by other Kabarole District Schools.

![Image of water barrels](image2)

Kasiisi School management committee and the District Education Officer inspect new water barrels
9. A READING CULTURE

The Kasiisi project in response to a request by Ugandan teachers is collaborating with Weston Public schools to help develop a reading culture in Kasiisi Project schools. A fundraiser with children’s book publisher “Barefoot Books” resulted in donations of both culturally appropriate books for the children and money for school librarians.

Kindergarten teacher Beatrice Kabahuma teaches the alphabet using African Animals ABC by Philippa-Alys Brown. The wall map behind her was a gift by Weston Field School to assist in the teaching of social studies.

6th Grade pupils at Kasiisi Primary school use donated books in an English class.
10. DONOR VISITS

In 2008 The Kasiisi Project organized a first visit to the schools by major donors. In June 7 members of the London law firm Cadwalader, Wickersham and Taff, which supports our school lunch program, joined 6 trustees of our UK charity, The Kasiisi Porridge Project, on a trip that combined community service and wildlife tourism. The second of these trips to give committed donors a first hand experience of our programs will take place in February 2009.

![Painting P1 classrooms at Kasiisi Primary School, June 2008](image)

![Playing rugby football with the girls at Kasiisi Primary School, June 2008](image)

![Sundowners at Lake Mburo National Park, Uganda, June 2008](image)
11. **VOLUNTEERS**

In 2007 and 2008 the Kasiisi Project accepted young college age volunteers in the schools for the first time. In 2007 Ian Wrangham and Ben Ehrlich from the USA spent 7 weeks working at Kasiisi and Kanyawara schools and in Feb 2008 Raph Lehmann and Alex Benson from the UK spent a month at the schools. These young men, in addition to assisting in class, played lots of soccer. The children enjoyed their energy and the novelty of having native speakers to practice their English on. In June April 2008 US college graduate Ronan Donovan filmed the children at home and at school for 6 weeks to produce some short films for fundraising.
12. REMEDIAL TEACHING

In 2008 remedial teaching and extra tutoring was made available after school, at the weekend and during the holidays at Kasisi Primary School. Some of the classes were taught by scholarship students awaiting university placement, as part of a program, which encourages sponsored students to “give back” to the project. One of our partner NGO’s “Books Open the World” sponsored similar remedial programs at Kanyawara and Kigarama schools. The project will fund equivalent programs at Kiiko and Rweteera in 2009.

13. PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER NGOs

We continue to partner with all other organizations working in education and conservation around Kibale National Park. In particular we are involved in the following:

   a) The KP partnered with Books Open the World to provide textbooks in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Math and English to 5 area community libraries and funded the rent for extra rooms at the libraries to facilitate the use of these books.

   b) The KP collaborated with Jane Goodall Institute (Uganda) to improve conservation education in the schools by translating books on chimps into 2 local languages (Rutooro and Rukiga).

   c) The KP collaborated with Wildlife Clubs of Uganda, JGI and The Uganda Wildlife Authority to launch a program funded by the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund to improve conservation education in area primary schools by taking teachers into the National Parks to see their own wildlife first hand.

   d) The KP entered into a new partnership with UNITE from North Carolina Zoo to improve education in schools in the south of the park.

   d) In Feb 2009 the KP is hosting a two-day meeting of all stakeholders in conservation education around Kibale National Park to share experiences and to devise a collaborative framework that will improve both academic performance and environmental education in Kibale National Park schools.

   e) The KP partners with emPOWER to support orphans and other vulnerable children at Kanyawara primary school. A grant to the KP from the African Orphan Foundation will provide much needed scholarships for orphan girls from KP schools from Feb 2009.

   f) The KP hosted Patrick O’Sullivan of ‘Build African Schools’ during a fact finding trip to Uganda to discuss collaborative fundraising.
Pattrick O’Sullivan executive
director of “Build African
Schools” at Kasiisi Primary
School, June 2008

Handout of
uniforms and
scholastic
materials to
orphans by Kato
Innocent, Kasiisi
Projext
Administrator and
John Kasenene,
Director, The
Kasiisi Project,
Uganda, at
Kanyawara
Primary
School, Feb 2008

Wildlife Clubs of Uganda staff
play the “Chimp Game” from
the UNESCO/GRASP Great
Ape traveling exhibit at
Kigarama Primary School, June
2008
13. OTHER ONGOING PROGRAMS

a) School feeding program

b) Classroom construction – Rweteera and Kigarama schools are in particular need of new classrooms.

c) Adequate latrines at all 5 KP schools

d) Boarding facilities for Grades 5 and 6 at Kasiisi Primary School

e) Conservation education through field trips for teachers funded by the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund.

f) Sanitary supplies and health education for adolescent girls in all area schools

g) Staff bursaries

8. NEW INITIATIVES FOR 2008-2009

a) Nursery Schools at Kanyawara, Kiiko, Kigarama and Rweteera

b) Libraries and staff rooms for all 5 Kasiisi Project schools

c) Funding for a female community health worker at the new Kanyawara health clinic to teach health education in all project schools.
**SPONSORS**

The work of The Kasiisi Project could not continue without the generous support of the following donors:

The James and Gloria Stewart Foundation

The Seymour and Julia Gross Foundation

The Dobbyn Foundation, Belmont, MA

The Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund

The African Orphan Foundation

The Rotary Club, Waterford, MI

The de la Ferriere Center, Waterford, MI

WEEFC. Weston, MA

First Parish Church, Weston, MA

The Kasiisi Porridge Project, UK

The parents, staff and pupils of Weston Public Schools, MA

St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, Weston, MA

Trinitarian Church, Concord, MA

Friends of the Kibale Chimpanzee Project

Barefoot Books

Weston Girl Scouts, Weston, MA

*New health clinic at Kanyawara, July 2008*