The Kasiisi Project

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Rweteera Kigarama Kiko Kasiisi Kyanyawara
Summary

2009 was an exciting year for the project. Despite gloomy financial prospects there was a flurry of new initiatives and our programs impacted 6000 children. From computer classes to soccer coaching and from a functioning school lunch program to a functioning school library the project grew in many different directions. Most exciting was the formation of new association that heralded better cooperation between organizations working for high quality conservation education in schools around Kibale National Park.

In addition to the programs described below the project continued to fund salaries for extra staff, remedial teaching, monthly exam fees and sanitary supplies for all menstruating girls.

Athletics

In July soccer camp came to Kasiisi. Organised and sponsored by Sue Oliver, trustee for The Kasiisi Porridge Project, UK, Seronjogi George, former player for the Uganda Cranes – the national soccer team - held 2 afternoon coaching sessions at Kasiisi Primary School.

Soccer drill

Bursaries

In 2009 6 Kasiisi Project teachers obtained staff bursaries, funded by The Newby Trust to enable them to attend continuing education college to upgrade their qualifications. Grants were awarded to teachers who had demonstrated their commitment to further education by already being enrolled in a course.

CBO - The Kibale Forest Schools and Student Support Project (KFSSSP)

In July 2009 the LC 5 for Kabarole District conferred official approval on the newly government registered Community Based Organisation (CBO) – The Kibale Forest Schools and Student Support Project (KFSSSP). KFSSSP replaces AFROKAPS as the functioning representative of the Kasiisi Project in Uganda.
Computers - One Laptop Per Child

On July 18th 2009 Kasiisi Primary School was the site of the inauguration of the Cambridge, Massachusetts based One Laptop Per Child program in Uganda.

Between June and August Grade 4 students at the school had their first experience with computers. Using XO computers developed by One Laptop per Child, (www.laptop.org) Kasiisi children learned their way around the keyboard, painted pictures, took videos and wrote illustrated biographies.

The computers were deployed in partnership with The Kasiisi Project by University Students from Colorado College, Makerere University and Kampala International University. The 3 students made up one of the 30 teams selected from over 200 applicants for 2009 OLPC Africacorps grants. These grants provided successful teams with 100 laptops each and the funds to deploy them.

Kasiisi Project volunteer Jeff Bittner helped direct the project and will be in charge of training of staff and pupils during 2009/2010.

Kabarole District LC 5 officially recognizes KFSSSP as a CBO by handing registration documents to the board.

Conservation Education

a) Staff Trips to National Parks
During January 2009, in a program funded by The Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund, 27 teachers from 9 area schools visited Kibale (forest) and Queen Elizabeth (savannah) National Parks, most of them for the first time. Primed by introductory seminars the teachers tracked chimpanzees in Kibale National Park and took an overnight trip to Queen Elizabeth.
b) Wildlife Camp and Drawing Competitions

Led by Wildlife Clubs of Uganda’s Nambogwe Helena and Kasiisi Primary School’s Wildlife Club Leader, Musinguzi Moses, 22 children from 9 Kibale area schools participated in a 3 day wildlife camp at Makerere University Biological Field Station, Kibale National Park. Drawing competitions with an environmental theme were held in all the schools with books as prizes.

Kasiisi Project students visit forest restoration project

KFCCE

In 2009 under the guidance of The Kasiisi Project and North Carolina Zoo, representatives of 18 stakeholder organisations involved in improving academic performance and school based conservation education in schools around Kibale National Park, agreed to create a formal association to encourage and facilitate effective collaboration.

d) Great Primate Handshake (GPH) (www.primatchandshake.org)

In 2009 The Kasiisi Project partnered with UK non-profit Great Primate Handshake to promote primate conservation software for the XO computers and to develop partnerships between schools in Wales, UK and Kasiisi Project schools. GPH provided The Kasiisi Project with logistical and technical help with the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) program and produced a fundraising movie for the computer program.

Great Primate Handshake staff work at with OLPC laptops at Kasiisi 7/09

e) Nature For Kids (www.natureforkids.nl)

The Kasiisi Project has joined North Carolina Zoo and Jane Goodall Institute (Uganda) to partner with Dutch conservation NGO Nature for Kids to produce conservation education videos for children in Rutooro. Accompanied by booklets and posters, also in Rutooro, Batooro children will be able, for the first time, to see and read about conservation issues in their native language.
f) Brevard Zoo
Brevard Zoo have donated suitcases of puppets and other environmental teaching aids, books and posters. Continuing collaboration, including soccer uniforms and knitting projects are planned for 2010.

Construction

In 2009 construction project included both new buildings and repairs. The kitchen as Kasiisi school reached the point that it could be used for preparing lunch (see below) and construction began on the dormitory complex. 5 blocks of 5 cubicle latrines at Kasiisi and Kyanyawara schools were completed and classrooms at Kyanyawara were repaired.

![Kitchen Kasiisi PS 7/09](image)

Cultural and Curricular Exchange

2009 was the fourth year of exchanges between Kasiisi Project Schools and Weston Public Schools, Massachusetts. A first for this year was the inclusion of 4 High School students in the group of 15 representatives of the Weston School District that visited Ugandan in July. The group included the chair of the Weston School Committee, the finance director and Superintendent of Weston Public Schools, the as well as pre-school, primary and secondary level teachers. Members of the Weston team taught in class, gave ESL workshops to teachers and shared activities with Ugandan students, The Kasiisi School Wildlife Club participated in a GPS treasure hunt which is also part of the Weston curriculum for 5th Grade.
In February 2009 a second group of Kasiisi Project Supporters combined community service in the schools with wildlife tourism.

Health Education

In 2009 The Kasiisi Project partnered with The Kibale Health and Conservation Project to fund the salary of a female community health worker who will provide regular, age appropriate health, hygiene and first aid education in Kasiisi Project schools. She will also be responsible for mentoring and training female peer educators who will provide information and assistance to their classmates on menstrual and reproductive issues.

a) General Health and Hygiene Education

Boston College nursing student, Katya Wheelwright and Nurse Lucy tested health education classes at Kasiisi in July. First-aid supplies collected by Katya in the USA were donated to the school principals.
b) Girl’s reproductive health

i) MakaPads

In 2009 Vanderbilt University students Alice Bator and Sarah Quirk, directors of The Kasiisi Project Vanderbilt, interned for month on the MakaPad project in Kampala. MakPads are locally produced sanitary pads made from papyrus paper. The aim of The Kasiisi Project is to start production of this sustainable, affordable source of sanitary pads in Kabarole. Trials of the new pads are underway in Kasiisi Project schools.

ii) Peer Education

The Jane Goodall Institute (Uganda) runs programs that train girls to be a reproductive health resource for their friends. Children mostly learn about sex from their friends. The peer counseling program takes advantage of this avenue of information and helps ensure that the facts passed on are correct. Kasiisi Primary School has girls who have taken this training. Alice and Sarah carried out interviews to determine the level of knowledge of reproductive health issues, ease of access to accurate information and support, girl friendly latrines and washing facilities and adequate supplies of sanitary pads and underwear. Their data will be used to improve and extend both the sanitary pad and peer education initiative.

Literacy

a) Kasiisi Library

Under the direction of Barbara Stevens, the Kasiisi library, built in 2004 but until now mostly used as a repository of text books, general store room and staff room, blossomed into a real lending library, the first of its kind in a Kabarole district government primary school.

The library is a collaborative effort among partners and friends on both sides of the Atlantic. The congregation of Trinitarian Congregational Church, Concord, MA. provided initial funding for the project. The parents, students, and teachers of Field School, Weston, provided library shelving and hundreds of new books. Major benefactors, Allen and Dana Butler and Fred and Jacqueline Masotti, covered shipping costs and the salaries of the new library reading teacher and his assistant. The Weston, MA Public Library
donated four sets of reference books and Greg Mortenson donated 250 copies of *Three Cups of Tea*. Kathleen Dwyer and Courtney Masotti worked onsite for two weeks in Uganda. Kasiisi Headmistress Lydiah Kasenene organized her school community for success. She met with parents to describe their role in developing a reading culture. She supported her staff as they invested over a dozen after-school and weekend hours in professional development. She spoke to her students about the importance of reading. Kasiisi parents painted the interior of the library. Children moved books and furniture, painted tables, cleaned, and sacrificed football in favor of Treasure Island at 10:30 break time. For 5 weeks in July and August, 09, while the library was "coming together," three former Kasiisi students, now at university, volunteered at the library, because "they love their school."

A baseline of literacy scores has been taken and plans are under way to measure improvement in reading scores. Plans to expand the program to the other schools are underway.

b) Books in Rutooro

i) Translations

The Kasiisi Project continues to translate books from English into Rutooro.

Owen and Mzee by Hatkoff, Kahumbu and Greste
ii) Bi-lingual Books produced by Weston Girl Scouts for their Silver Awards.

Weston Girl Scouts wrote books for young children both in English and Rutooro.

iii) Purchase of school books in Rutooro and Rutooro:English dictionaries

The 2009 church school collection at First Parish Church in Weston partially funded Rutooro language books for Kasiisi Project schools.

c) Barefoot Books

The Kasiisi Project benefited in again in 2009 from a continuing partnership with children’s book publisher Barefoot Books who have donated culturally appropriate books to Kasiisi Project schools and Kibale area community libraries.

Scholarship Program.

In 2009 The Kasiisi Project scholarship program supported 88 students, 5 at University, 9 in vocational training, 2 at primary school and the remaining 72 at secondary school.

School Lunch Program

In May 2009 a program to feed lunch to children at Kasiisi and Kyanyawara schools finally began. Every school day 800 Grade 2- Grade 6 children line up for a cup of maize porridge. Funded mainly by The Kasiisi Porridge Project (UK) the program will run for 3 years during which purchase of land will make program self sustaining At the same time Makerere PhD student Miriam Kanyago began her thesis research on childhood nutrition and school feeding programs. This study is partially funded by The Kasiisi Project.

Volunteers

a) Full Time

In 2009 US citizen Jeff Bittner joined The Kasiisi Project in Uganda as our first full time expatriate volunteer and has proved invaluable. His achievements include re-vamping the accounting system, getting internet connections up and running and generally acting as a helping hand wherever needed. He also organised, supervised and evaluated the conservation education trips for Kasiisi Project staff funded by The Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund. From June to August he was a key figure in the OLPC program and continues as its central motivating force.
b) Undergraduate Volunteers

In the 2009 long vacation students from Vanderbilt University, Boston College, Colorado College, Makerere University and Kampala International University joined staff at Kasiisi Project schools to help with health education, the library, the Girl’s initiatives and the One Laptop per Child programs.

### Incomings

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**TOTAL**                   | **$133,866** | **$124,731** | **$157,143** |

### Outgoings

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**TOTAL**                   | **$85,307** | **$130,754** | **$179,800** |

Admin Exp as % income      | 5%         | 5%         | 3%         |
Travel Expenses as %income | 1%         | 2%         | 1%         |
Collaborating Organisations

The success of the Kasiisi Project is in no small part due to the help and support that we receive from other organizations working with us in Uganda. In particular we thank the following for their willingness to share their expertise and resources.

The Uganda Wildlife Authority
Wildlife Clubs of Uganda
Makerere University
The Presidential Initiative on Banana Industrial Development
Tooro Botanical Gardens
KAFRED
UNITE
The North Carolina Zoo
The Kibale Community Fuelwood Project
The Kibale Health and Conservation Project
Books Open the World
The Jane Goodall Institute (Uganda)
The Kibale Forest Coalition for Conservation Education
Educate Foundation
The Kyoima School Project
FACE
The Kibale Chimpanzee Project
Great Primate Handshake

Sponsors

The work of The Kasiisi Project could not continue without the generous support of the many people who give so generously to our programs. We cannot list them all but they know who they are and how grateful we are to them. We acknowledge the organizations below in particular for their donations.

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 Coldbrook Fund
The Rotary Club, Waterford, Michigan
First Parish Church, Weston, MA
The Kasiisi Porridge Project, (UK)
The Kasiisi Project (Vanderbilt)
The administration, staff, parents and pupils of Weston Public Schools, MA
St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, Weston, MA
Trinitarian Church, Concord, MA
First Parish Church, Wayland, MA
Friends of the Kibale Chimpanzee Project
Barefoot Books
Weston Girl Scouts, Weston, MA
The Newby Trust (UK)
The Kitchen Table Charity Trust (UK)
Nature for Kids (NL)
UNICEF
One Laptop Per Child
Barefoot Books
Bookaid International
UNESCO

In addition we would like to especially acknowledge

Kent Davenport for preparing our tax returns, Wayne Lobb for the hours he spends maintaining our website and editing videos, Jeff Bittner for the huge amount of work he does in Uganda and Ronan Donavan who produced such wonderful movie footage.