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“CHALK WOULD BE A MIRACLE”



Children at Aitong primary School enjoying clean water

Thank You

for your support and continued interest in the Maasai community at Mara Rianda.

A big thank you from the people of Mara Rianda and Aitong. It is with amazement and gratitude that I write to you. I am amazed at what you have enabled us to provide for these lovely people and so grateful for your interest, support and encouragement.



I was overwhelmed by the gratitude of the Aitong community when I visited in September. The headmaster, school governors, parents and pupils welcomed Pola, myself and our visitors like royalty. They proudly showed us the windmill we have had erected in Aitong village, pumping water from the spring nearly one kilometre to the school.



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Previously the children were drinking from a muddy pond. It was a delight to see them drinking clean water pouring from the taps in the very large sinks erected at Aitong School.

Mara Rianda Primary School is thriving. It is a joy to see the new classrooms fully utilised and the pupils able to study even when the sun goes down with the use of solar lighting. Hopefully we can install solar lighting throughout the school.

Most of the teachers' homes are very far from the school and they have had to leave their villages and families in order to come and teach at Mara Rianda. The living accommodation at the school is very basic. One of the teachers proudly showed us her room that now has solar electricity. Until recently, before this was installed, her room was lit by a kerosene lamp, which she had to pay for. The building of the new kitchen and dining room should soon be started. There is immense excitement about this project.

In February the preschool requested toys, dolls, cars etc. We were donated some beautiful dolls which were dressed in traditional Maasai clothes. The pupils and teachers just loved them. We were also donated cars and many other toys. We had rather a lot of excess luggage but it was worth it to see the delight on the faces of the children and teachers. Previously the school had no toys at all.



Also a big thank you from our 23 children at Sosio Secondary School. Eight pupils went on a school trip to Mombasa earlier this year. They had an overnight stop in Nairobi. As you know these children live in mud huts in the Mara and have never seen a big city with multi-storey buildings before. They visited some historical sites in Mombasa. One boy mentioned that he swam in the ocean and loved it but that the others were too frightened – they had never seen the sea before. It was wonderful to hear their stories and listen to them describe seeing fish for the first time. One boy graduates from Sosio this year and six next year – exciting times.



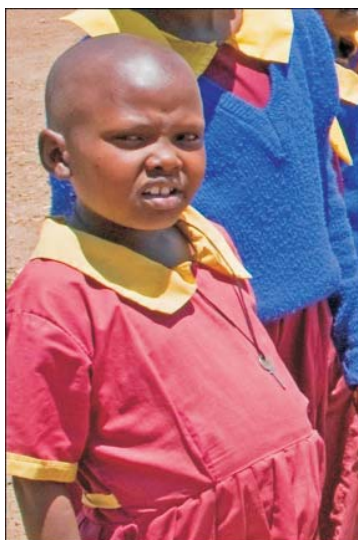
We are in the position to provide further bursaries for pupils to attend secondary school from January 2010. Last year we were able to provide 11 bursaries. If you are a UK tax payer a bursary can be funded by monthly standing order of £26 for three years. With Gift Aid your donations will effectively be the full amount required to fund one child for four years of education. If you are interested in assisting a child in this way please let me know and return the attached standing order and Gift Aid form.

In September we visited the three churches in the Mara. The women were dressed beautifully in their traditional Masai clothes with hundreds of children around. We are humbled by their amazing sincere faith; they have so little but are grateful for so much.



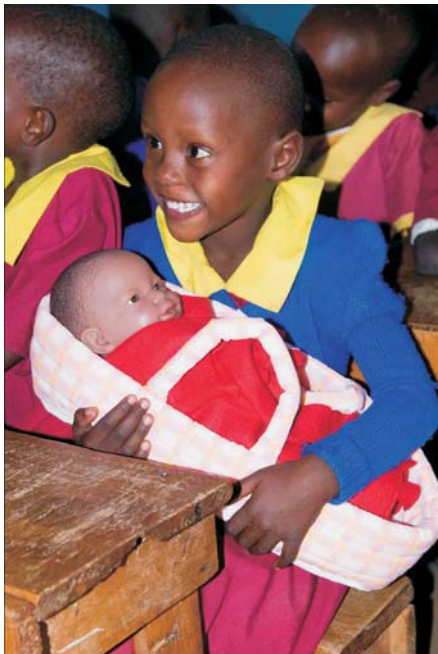
A doctor who joined us on our last trip spotted this girl with an extremely distended abdomen. It was initially thought by one of the teachers that this was caused by some form of malnutrition in early childhood. We asked that the girl's condition be investigated. She was taken to a clinic in one of the towns who referred her to a hospital in Nairobi. Her condition was much more serious than we initially realised. She has now been operated on and though, due to communication difficulties with the Mara, we do not fully understand the nature of the operation we are lead to believe that she is doing well.

We are grateful to supporters who give specifically for medical needs in enabling us to help this girl.



You may remember that funds were donated for a year's supply of medication for Tumpes, the young man suffering from epilepsy since childhood; we are pleased to say that he is responding to treatment. Governors Camp has assisted in Tumpes being assessed in Nairobi and Doctor Peter at the camp is advising the family on the need to take the medication as prescribed. We trust that ongoing funds will be provided.

Football is common language worldwide and no different in the Mara. How they manage to hear up to date news I just do not know. The boys love football. We were donated some Norwich City Football Club shirts and took these to Mara Rianda School. They will wear them when playing against other schools in the Mara. We were also given a variety of football strip shirts which we gave to pupils at Sosio.



Support is always welcome and greatly appreciated. There is always a need for new books, sports equipment and general school supplies. Should you be able to give any further support to the school please make cheques payable to The Mara Rianda Charitable Trust.

A family member of one of our pupils sent this note to our supporters *"I am so grateful on behalf of the entire community for what you are doing for us. May God bless you in all ways and may he expand your boundaries in all aspects of life. You are building up a better generation, a strong one that will stand and defend its people and advocate for positive change in the society."*

We are constantly grateful to Governors Camp for their never ending support and much valued advice.

As usual I do apologise if you feel this letter is an intrusion and should you not wish to receive any further letters then please do let me know.

May I conclude with my personal Christmas greetings and again thank you for your support and continued interest in the Maasai community at Mara Rianda.

Yours sincerely

Richard Long
TRUSTEE AND DIRECTOR
THE MARA RIANDA CHARITABLE TRUST
Charity Number 1102255
Company Number 05035681

"Test me in this", says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have enough room for it". Malachi 3:10 NIV