

Richard Long & Co

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17 December 2007

“CHALK WOULD BE A MIRACLE”



Seasonal Greetings and a big Thank You

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

“PLEASE TELL EVERONE WE ARE SO GRATEFUL” These are the words of Francis Sareri who is one of the six former pupils of Mara Rianda Primary School now receiving sponsored secondary education. These boys come from poor families and if it were not for the generosity shown they would have gone back to their villages tending goats and cattle after leaving Mara Rianda Primary School. Secondary schooling is not compulsory in Kenya and is not provided by the government.

The boys are doing very well and are gaining in confidence. This was highlighted when I met them a few weeks ago in negotiating pocket money!!! I am pleased to inform you that Joseph is second in the class.

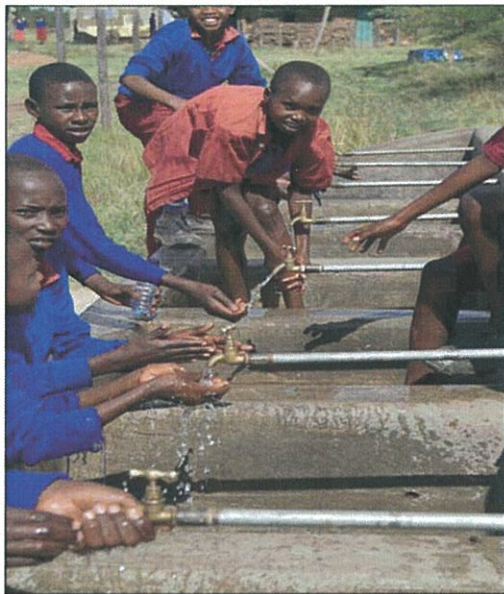
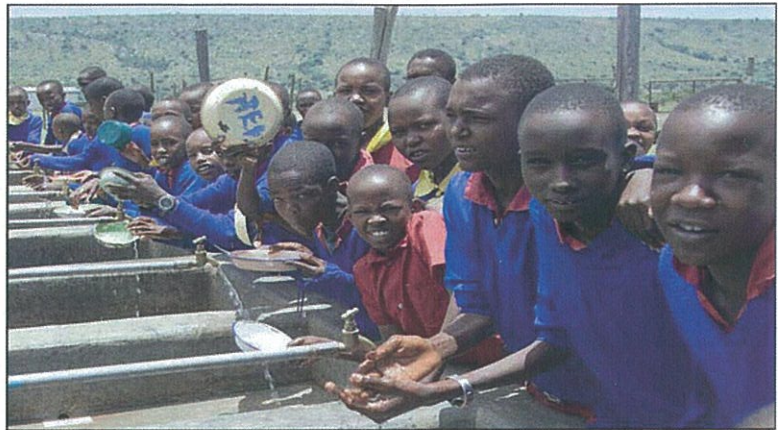
What else has happened at the school during the last twelve months?

The fresh water is in constant use by the school and the local parents.

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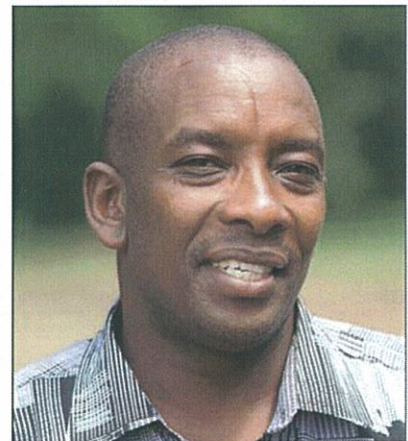


You will recall that it is a requirement of the World Health Organisation that where a Non-Government Organisation provides a bore hole the water must meet the WHO requirements. Through generous support sufficient funds have been raised to provide the appropriate filter.



A very large sink with ten taps has been installed so that the pupils can adequately obtain drinking water and keep their faces and hands clean. Some even stand in it to wash their feet! Taps have also been installed near the staff quarters and they too are enjoying the abundance of clean fresh water. The waste water is being drained to a particular area where the headmaster hopes to plant vegetables.

In January of this year a new head teacher Paul Kilayo arrived. Paul is an excellent head teacher and has improved the school immensely. He informed us that initially he did not want to be transferred to Mara Rianda as it is nearly 100 miles away from his home. The Kenyan Education Authority told him that the school needed a head teacher of his standard and having learnt of the circumstances of the school he agreed to the transfer.



One of his initial concerns was that the pupils were not performing at the required standard and he amended the time table to the following:-

Classes 7 and 8

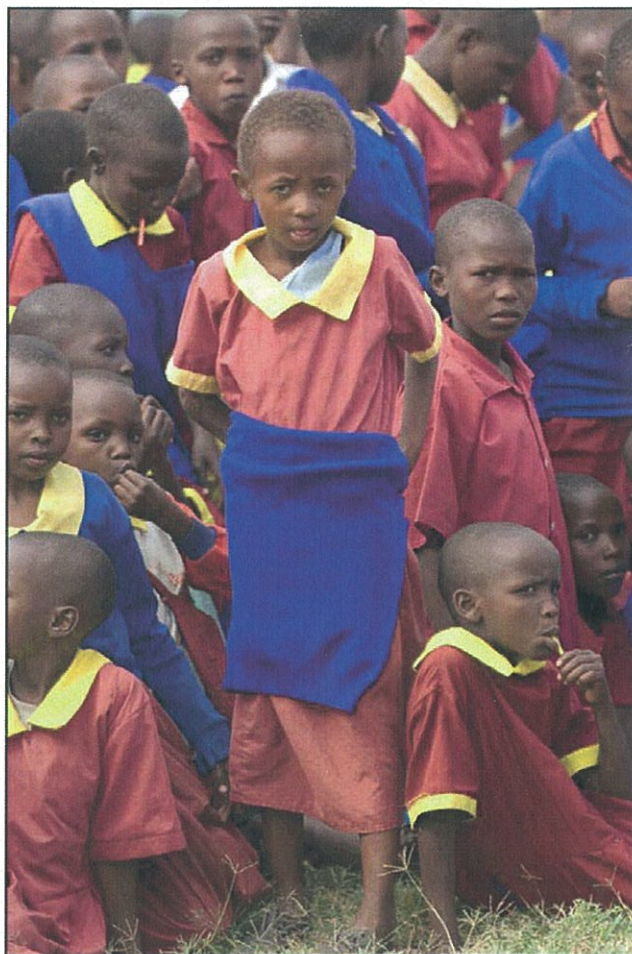
4.30 am	Wake up – bath
5.15 am	Lesson
5.45 am	Prayer meeting
6.00 am	Breakfast – cup of tea
6.15 am	Lessons

Normal school day starts for all classes

8.00 am	Assembly
8.20 am	Lessons x 2
9.30 am	Break
9.50 am	Lessons x 2
11.00 am	Break
11.30 am	Lessons x 2
12.40 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	Lessons x 2
3.10 pm	Games
4.30 pm	School ends

Classes 5, 6, 7 and 8

4.30 pm	Lessons
5.00 pm	Classes 5 and 6 finish school
6.00 pm	Dinner
7.00 pm	Lessons for classes 7 and 8
9.30/10.00pm	School day ends



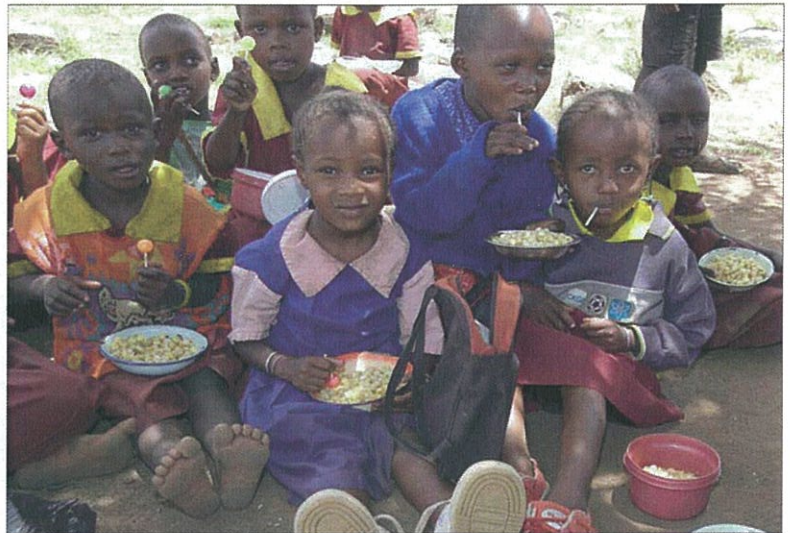
This is an amazingly long school day which the pupils love as they are being pushed and they are learning. Understandably the teachers were not too impressed by the new school day but they appreciate that the academic levels needed to be improved. Paul leads from the front and is at the school from 4.30 am in the morning until the school day ends. He lives in a small house in the school grounds.

Most of the pupils in Years 7 & 8 are boarding. The classrooms are emptied of desks at the end of each day and foam mattresses are put on the floor.

The new head teacher's view was that pupils and staff should be proud of the school and one of his first requests was whether we could provide funding for it to be painted and also for glass to be put in the broken windows. Fortunately through the generous support we have received there were available funds to do this.

There are now over 600 pupils at the school with 105 in the first class. The school desperately needs a new classroom block and this is something that we hope we will be able to provide. I am currently awaiting a detailed quotation. We are also hoping to improve the kitchen facilities which are used on those occasions when food is available.

It is wonderful to see how the school has gone from strength to strength; none of this could have been achieved without the amazing support that has been received. We are in the position to provide further bursaries for pupils to attend secondary school from January 2008. Whilst there are currently only three girls in Year 8 it is wonderful to see that there will be many more next year. More and more girls are now staying at school. 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.



Your support is always welcome and greatly appreciated. The parents cannot express their thanks enough. They are very grateful that people who do not know them are prepared to help their children.

There is always a need for new books, sports equipment and general school supplies. Should you wish to give any further support to the school would you please make any cheque payable to The Mara Rianda Charitable Trust.

As I advised last year I have deliberately refrained from bombarding you with appeals and updates about the school. However I continue to be encouraged by so many people frequently asking me for updates. 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.

Finally may I conclude with my personal seasonal greetings and 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