

Abigail NEWS

autumn 2008



Great Excitement As Work Begins...

The Craft Centre and the Training Centre finally open for business

The ladies who have patiently been learning and improving their skill for many months now, some even for years, have finally got a place to work. We appointed a young man called Simon to manage the Craft Centre and Soap-Making Project at Daylove and the ladies are setting about their work with new vigour and excitement.

At New Hope some ladies are being given tailoring training, while others are very enthusiastically making cards. This is an entirely new project which is being tackled with great excitement as they have never seen such cards before! We had great difficulty restraining other members of staff and some of the teenage girls from joining in. We were all amazed, not least the ladies themselves, to discover how skilled they became in such a short time and as soon as we came home we had

to make up a large packet of materials to send to Kenya to keep them well supplied. It was thrilling to see the look of pride on their faces when they saw what they had created.

For the women at both Centres, these jobs are such a blessing because they now know they have regular employment in a clean environment, doing something they actually enjoy and under kind Management. Going to work will be a joy to them rather than a drudge. In the few days we spent with each of the Groups, all the women arrived well ahead of starting time with huge grins on their faces, itching to start work!!

'It was thrilling to see the look of pride on their faces when they saw what they had created.'

BRINGING HOPE AND COMFORT TO NEEDY FAMILIES IN KENYA



New Horizons - Seasons of Opportunities!

What a fantastic welcome we received from Daniel, Grace and friends of the Seed School and Reeds Project at Seiyoi! We are very excited about our future involvement with these projects as the work will be very different from that which we can do at Daylove and New Hope. Nevertheless, the needs are just as great and we look to the Lord to provide the huge resources we will require to help the needy people in this new area. We travelled hundreds of miles throughout the North Western Rift Valley. Being an agricultural area, the needs will vary with the seasons and we shall have to be alert to provide at the appropriate times!

Life in the remote regions of the Great Rift Valley

Imagine having 2 acres of ground but no money to hire a tractor to help with the ploughing. Every inch of the soil has to be broken up by hand and spade. A back-breaking job? YES! **But -**

Imagine, doing this on an empty stomach – perhaps you cannot even remember when you ate a decent meal. After all, last year's harvest was a failure. **Now -**

Imagine, you only have a few shillings to buy seeds – not enough to grow into crops to satisfy your family's hunger. **Now -**

Imagine, the cost of fertilizer is so huge there is no way you can afford to buy any to feed the crop and increase its yield. **Now -**

Imagine, you have a small well, but no pump. Every bucketful has to be painstakingly drawn by hand and every inch of your field has to be watered by the bucketful – in an area where rainfall is unpredictable!

Imagine the long months of waiting for the crops to ripen so that you can harvest some food. **Now -**

Imagine the despair as you see insects attack and gorge themselves on your seedlings and then gradually the sickly crops droop and fail and you know you face another harvest which will fail to produce enough food for your family.

All because you lack; Ploughing equipment, healthy and adequate seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, water pumps and irrigation facilities. **Just imagine!!**

Abigail Ministries wants to change all this. We began while we were there and since we have come back we have sent money to help many families with preparation for their next harvest, i.e. money to hire tractors to help with ploughing and bags of fertilizer. In a few months we will send money for seeds and sprays. Later, we will send money to help with the harvesting and grinding of the maize corn. We hope to be able to install pumps and irrigation systems at some stage as well.

You could help us do this by sponsoring a family through two years of harvest to enable them to become self-sufficient. *See our sponsorship leaflet for details.*



Still Traumatized

This was one of the worst hit areas during the violent clashes that took place following the elections earlier this year.

We met many people who had suffered greatly at the time. Nobody had come through unscathed. Some, however, bore deeper scars and deeper emotional pain than others. One day we unexpectedly came across a school bus in the middle of nowhere. It took us several minutes to realise it had come to meet us intentionally. Three men emerged from the bus – two Teachers and a Pastor. They told us they were from a High School situated near a Camp where many thousands of internally displaced people (IDP's) still reside, unable to return to their homes. Many because they have no homes to return to! Eventually they asked if we would talk to some boys they had brought with them.

Five teenage boys slowly stepped down from the bus and very hesitantly came towards us. One by one we were introduced to

them. It was very clear that they were all still deeply traumatised and in fairness to their pain we only asked each of them about two questions. It was obviously still too traumatic for them to speak about their experiences. We were finding it too hard to contain our tears as well. Not only had they lost their homes, but two of them at least had been 'dumped' at the camp by elderly grandmothers who used the situation to run off and abandon their grandsons because they had been drains on their already too meagre resources. The boys were devastated and broken-hearted.

These five boys represent many other abandoned and orphaned boys the school is trying to take care of. Without our help, the school cannot continue and the boys will have lost everything in this world.

Please sponsor one of these boys and give him a chance to finish his high school education. He has suffered enough. See our sponsorship leaflet for details.



Animals - A Source of Food, A Source of Income...

Cows

In the past AM has been fairly reluctant to get involved with providing animals as we have felt there was not enough room for or care given to them in the slum areas. There is, however, a different attitude to animals in the Seiyo area. Animals have room to graze and are well cared for. We have, therefore gifted cows to several families already and plan to gift many more as they are of great value in providing milk for nourishment for the families as well as offering a source of income through selling the milk.

There is also quite a big opportunity for making yoghurt. At present, it is made by hand and fermented in calabashes - a dried gourd which grows abundantly locally. It is flavoured with dried twigs of wattle trees which also grow abundantly locally. The yoghurt tastes wonderful but because of the small quantities of milk available and no suitable cartons or refrigeration available the production is very limited. This is another Project AM would like to develop.

Goats

Goat's milk is very nutritious and will sell for a great deal more money per litre than cow's milk. There is a particular breed of goat which is highly productive but the animals themselves are very expensive compared to other goats. AM, however, would like to provide some families with goats to help them generate an income from their milk and perhaps progress to goat's milk products in the future.

Chickens

Elizabeth has been brewing liquor for many years. This is one of the few 'trades' in the area which brings in a regular wage. Many of the women, however, are not happy with their trade but without an alternative, they cannot change their lifestyle. Elizabeth desperately wants another means of income so that her 3 children are not brought up in this environment. Breeding chickens and selling eggs is a healthy alternative - healthier nutritionally and socially for her children. We have provided funds for her to buy 24 chickens and build a hen house. Not only will her hens have a new house, we have provided funds for Elizabeth's mud house to be rebuilt as it was falling down. Apart from the liquor brewing equipment her house was totally devoid of furniture so we have bought her a bed and bedding as well.

Elizabeth is not the only person for whom we bought chickens but there are still many more families who would like us to provide funds for them to buy chickens and so provide a healthier means of making money.

Bees

Honey is nutritious and a healthy source of energy. With the abundance of flora in the area, bee keeping is a relatively cheap business to set up. AM bought some bee hives for a group of women to manage together and it is yet another possibility for many more groups of people in this part of Kenya.

Why not give a family a living gift to help them this Christmas.
See our Christmas Wish List for details.

It's Nuts!!

The remote Keiyo Valley is beautiful. The earth is so fertile, no artificial fertilizer is needed. But the people are starving! They live on peanuts - literally and figuratively. They have land, some of them own several acres granted to their families following Independence but they were not given any money to cultivate it and so for the past 40 years they have lived in abject poverty. Neither have they received

education, and so they are primitive people surviving on the only crop they know how to grow - PEANUTS! It will not take much to help them. All we need to provide is seeds and a few animals and their lives will be transformed.

Please sponsor a bag of vegetable seeds or an animal for a family in this remote and beautiful valley. See our Christmas Wish List for details.



Many, many thanks to all our sponsors and regular donors.

We are, as always, indebted to you all because without you we cannot plan the work we will be able to do and deliver the promises made to the many beneficiaries we support because of your generosity. Several of you donate anonymously and we cannot thank you personally, but we are very grateful for your kindness, faithfulness and encouragement.

To all of you who have fund-raised, either by your own personal efforts or by organising other events, a huge 'thank you' also. We know it cost you time and energy however you did it, and we are most grateful. Your efforts were not in vain! Many people have benefited because of your hard work.

Prayer Points

- ✦ Thanks for a safe trip for Roger, Shena, Lindsay and Beccy
- ✦ Thanks for the new friends and contacts they made
- ✦ Seek God's guidance for the involvement of AM with the Reeds Project at Seiyo
- ✦ Thanks for the opening of the Craft Centre and Training Centre
- ✦ For continued enthusiasm and commitment from the ladies working at the 2 centres
- ✦ For Simon, the new manager of the Craft Centre with all his responsibilities
- ✦ For help and guidance as we plan the next Group Trip in April 2009.

Ways you can become a fellow-worker with Abigail Ministries:

- Commit to praying for a mum and her family
- Sponsor a child/young person
- Become a regular donor
- Donate a food parcel (£10)
- Provide money for a micro-business (£75)
- Sponsor a new roof (£100)
- Give a one-off donation
- Organise a fund-raising event
- Sponsor a charity run

If you would like to get more involved with the work of Abigail Ministries, just tick the boxes you want, fill in your details and return the slip to the address on the right of the page.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Telephone Number: _____
Email Address: _____
Thank You!



BLESSING OR CURSE?!?!

We have spoken many times about the small river that runs through the Market place and villages of Dagoretti! It has been the dread of visiting our families in their homes as we had to pass through the terrible smell that filled the air caused by the Slaughterhouses depositing their waste products in this tiny stream. On the surface it seemed a blessing when the Government took action and, for health reasons, closed them down until they found an alternative way of disposing of this waste. That particular smell has gone!!

Unfortunately, there is a down side to it. Several of our mums depended on getting casual day jobs at the Slaughterhouse and when they closed they lost this opportunity. Many of them have suffered. Some are unable to find alternative casual jobs because even more people are vying for the few jobs that are available, such as washing clothes. Others are having to travel long distances to get work, resulting in them leaving their children unattended for several days at a time.

We are hoping to help these ladies set up micro-businesses such as selling vegetables or other products in a Market stall so that they can earn a regular income without having to leave their children.

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