

## May Articles

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## Newsworthy

### Rising food prices impact Bududa

This is rainy season in Bududa, and planting has begun in earnest. Unfortunately it is also the time when the remaining stock of beans from the last harvest is ploughed back into the fields and maize flour to make "posho" from last harvest has run out. At this time, Bududans have to buy more of their food, so a 65% rise in maize flour prices since September couldn't have come at a worse time. As I look at our students and traverse the hillside, the hunger seems more evident than it did during harvest time. To make matters worse, Malaria outbreaks are more prevalent during rainy season. Most weeks find us taking a malaria-stricken student for treatment to the local hospital.

## Program Updates

*"Education is the most important tool we have to empower and change a community. Many of the issues that lead to extreme poverty in Bududa are worsened by poor education, especially among women. Bududa Vocational Institute is working hard to improve education in this region, and hopefully, with time, improve the quality of life."*

-Lisandro Torre  
Peace Corp Volunteer

As we run diploma programs at Bududa Vocational Institute, offer short courses in computers, enhance the education of the

orphans in the Children of Peace, and develop other educational programs for the community, it is good to keep Lisandro's comments in mind. While there is much we must do to ameliorate the hardships of extreme poverty, we hope to use our resources to improve the ability of the Bududan community to support themselves.

## Bududa Vocational Institute

We have enrolled our first fee paying "Introduction to Computers/ Learn to Type" student, Mubarac, son of Ahamed. He has paid the equivalent of \$30 for 50 hours on the computer, learning to type and how to use Microsoft Word. Our computers have a paced "learn to type" program on them that "teaches" our students as fast as they can learn. We hope to develop more short courses that can reach a larger group of students.

We now have 39 students in our diploma courses. The Nursery Teacher Training students in their second year have just returned from their teaching practicals, and we are so glad to have them back. The Brick Laying and Concrete Practice students have been practicing their craft making bricks, laying out designs and leveling walls. Our Tailoring students are also working with the machines most of the time. We have found a way to make this class begin to be self-sustaining as we hang the clothes they have made outside on our veranda. As the world passes by on market day, we sell some of our newly made items.

With a monthly payroll of less than \$1,000, we have nine



paid employees, 5 educators and 4 support staff. Our students pay the equivalent of about \$45 for each of three terms a year, including meals. In an economy with little cash income, it is a real struggle for them to pay this much. We try to create opportunities for the students to earn tuition money by selling the practice garments, providing maintenance on the school buildings, and working in the Saturday program. While the tuition amount is only a small percentage of the cost of running the school, we want students to be invested in their education. With our present enrollment, we are subsidizing these students a great extent. As our reputation is established, we are confident our enrollment will increase resulting in a decline in our per student subsidy. However given the economic deprivation in Bududa, student fees alone will never be self-sustaining. I have to say, I do spend waking hours worrying about sustainability, yet I carry on as I think it is a worthy endeavor, and the response from all of you has been so overwhelmingly positive that I carry on and look at the glass as if it is half full, and with a hope and a prayer and a lot of hard work, you will continue to support us in the future.

## Top ways you can help Barbara and the people of Bududa.

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1. If you are a **Children of Peace** sponsor, we would be most grateful if you could fill out your renewal forms and send your sponsorship money into AGLI. Thanks! If you would like to sponsor a child, or one of our vocational students, email Karen Vaccaro at [vackern@yahoo.com](mailto:vackern@yahoo.com) or Barbara.

2. Many of you have asked to send care packages. We will have visitors coming in the next month from the Philadelphia area, and if you wish to send items for the children, please contact [mia.samuel@att.net](mailto:mia.samuel@att.net) who may be able to fit items in their "extra" suitcase.

3. The cost of mailing a 5 pound package to Bududa is about \$50. For this amount of money we could buy a set of African themed reading books for the Children of Peace published here by Macmillan. We so appreciate all the packages that have been sent, but if you would prefer to make a donation go to [www.aglionline.org](http://www.aglionline.org) Please indicate Bududa Projects in the Designate line and email Barbara.

### Children of Peace

Two hundred orphans and needy children aged five to eighteen years from all over the Bududa district participate in a program supported by American and Canadian sponsors. The program was started in 2003. Now in 2008 it has come under new management and we are working as hard as we can to meet the needs of these very special children. First of all we meet every Saturday divide into eight classes. Class size in Bududa is often 150 students or more, so with

our Saturday staff of 8 teachers, we supplement the student's education, provide nourishing meals, and try in a meager sort of a way to see to their health care. Some of our students walk for over 2 hours each way to attend the program. For many, the Saturday meal alone is a significant motivator for the journey.

Most importantly we give these children a little adult attention when no one else in their lives can. This month, Ivan, a tiny, adorable, ten year old limped into school a few Saturday's ago, barefoot, and complained of jiggers in his feet. Jiggers are the eggs of the sand flea that are laid in humans and hatch into tiny worms. They present as itchy pimples usually on the feet. This week we had two Canadian nurses helping on Saturday from near Brampton, Ontario. They looked at Ivan's literally rotting feet and realized their inexperience with jiggers and sought help from the locals. They instructed us to wash his feet well and then soak them in salt and water so we did. Then we found an upper class student, Scovia, to help. We carried Ivan outside as we did not want his feet to get dirty again and Scovia got to work. It took more than hour with a needle and razor blade to dig out the egg sacks and then cleanse the sores. All the while Ivan was stoic. When Scovia finished we washed the wounds with hydrogen peroxide, and only then did Ivan cry. The nurse, Devon, bandaged his feet and we gave him special soap and cream. The next problem that presented itself was how to get Ivan home and keep his bandaged feet clean. I found a pair of my Teva sandals in the

cupboard at school, and one of our teachers took him to the trading center in the village and bought him shoes for two dollars. He was delighted, most likely this was his first pair of shoes.



The following week one of the teachers and I visited his home to see that they were keeping it clean. We met Mum who had been away for a few weeks as they are so poor, they have no land nearby to grow crops on. She was forced to go to relatives an hour away to dig and plant just before the rainy season begins. She took the youngest children and left Ivan and a few others with the Dad. We looked at the home and the mattress that four or more of the children would sleep on, and I wished I had money to buy a new mattress. I gave them a few items of clothing brought by visitors, a book, and a bit of money for food. Ivan came back the next Saturday, limping again and we resumed the same treatment. I guess we will keep doing this until we have cured Ivan and we will certainly keep visiting the home to see that they are managing as well as possible.

Thanks again to all of you for all your encouraging words and emails and offers of help and care packages. You have no idea what they mean to all of us. Love to all. Barbara