

# The East African Fund Inc. (CFN 16123)

## Annual Report

1st October 2005 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006



### ***Letter from the Director Chairman – Gemma Sisia***

I guess most of you will have been following the progress of the school through the monthly newsletters so you will be aware of the great year we have had – so much so that I am running out of superlatives!

It has also been a year of extremes. We started in one of the worst droughts East Africa has experienced and ended the year in the longest and heaviest ‘short rains’ season on record ... and it hasn’t stopped yet. The good news is that the dams are full so we may be able to rely on regular electricity from the national supplier soon.

We filled all the available class spaces in Std 1 and 2 with an additional 160 sponsored pupils in January; eight new classrooms were in use; 21 new teachers were employed; five new school buses are on the road; the school website was updated; Cubit House with nine rooms for visiting Rotary teams and four apartments for long term volunteers was completed; land for the Usa River Primary and Secondary Boarding School was bought and a security wall started; a successful safari/school tour from Australia was arranged; hundreds of volunteers and visitors stayed for long and short periods; the 14-room extension was completed ready for use by the Std 5 & 6 students in 2007, and plans are underway for the development of the boarding facilities.

Two of the highlights of the year were the Standard Four National Exam results – St Jude’s ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the 204 schools in the district and five of our students were placed in the top 10 of their gender group. And the school inspectors granted us a ‘Grade 1 Certificate of Excellence in Performance’ – highest award for Tanzanian schools and only ever received by one other school in this district.

Our loyal sponsors and donors from around the world and Australian Rotary RAWCS teams continued generously to support the school in its effort to ‘Fight Poverty Through Education’ and through positive word of mouth the number of supporters continued to grow. As the sponsorship scheme was becoming so successful we had to modify the program as the increasing costs of the school’s infrastructure meant we had

children waiting for classrooms. So, at the end of 2005 we offered half sponsorship and full sponsorship options to current sponsors with the same benefits in both cases. This has enabled us to keep up with the soaring land prices, electricity bills, wages and general cost of living here in Arusha.

With so much support and continual offers of practical assistance coming from individuals and groups around the world, we had to modify the volunteer program to offer placements to people who were able to commit their services for at least one year. This was necessary to ensure the least amount of disruption to classes and the programs put in place. I realise this is disappointing to many people who are not in a position to spend a year of their life in Tanzania but this is just one of the many changes we are obliged to make to ensure the smooth running of a fast growing institution.

I had a great opportunity to speak at the National Association of Independent Schools conference in Boston as well as enjoy my annual trip to Australia for a whirlwind visit to many Rotary conferences. And many groups and individuals made it across to Arusha to visit us. We are always grateful to those who are in a position to be able to make the journey as we are not exactly on a well-trodden route! But those who are not able, we really appreciate your letters, emails and cards wishing us well.

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all our team – every one of you around the world who has helped to ensure the ongoing success of St Jude's – a very happy, healthy and successful 2007.

*Gemma Sisia*

## GENERAL ANNUAL REPORT 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2005 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2006

### **THE PUPILS**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005, there were 502 children enrolled at the school. On 10<sup>th</sup> January 2006 another 160 were on the enrollment list, so the school closed in December 2006 with 662 pupils.

Of the pupils enrolled, 93% are on a full sponsorship. Pupils come from villages up to 10 kilometres away and, as per the school's policy, all these children have passed an academic test, have been assessed as having aptitude and suitable attitude and come from very poor homes or disadvantaged backgrounds.

Children from three local orphanages are sponsored at the school – Huruma (7 children), St Joseph's (10 children) and Samaritan Village (3 children).

Very sadly, on the 8th of May one of our students, Maureen Abibu aged 8, died. Because of the recent rains the normally low river by her home had turned into a raging torrent and, losing her footing, she was swept away by the force. Her teachers and classmates attended her funeral.

## THE STAFF

<b>Fulltime Staff</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> September 2005</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> December 2006</b>
Academic Staff	25 Tanzanian + 3 foreign + 6 teaching assistants	37 Tanzanian + 12 foreign + 8 teaching assistants
Grounds Men	2	4
Cooking/Cleaning/Sewing Staff	12	19
Security Guards	4	9
Drivers	10	13
Administration Staff	7	15

Mr Nestory Msoffe, Academic Head, lead a hardworking and motivated teaching staff who achieved very pleasing results for the school's examinations as well as the Standard 4 National Examination held in December. This year 127 Std 4 pupils sat the exam and if the Mock Standard 4 National Examination held in September is anything to go by we will be looking at another reason to celebrate when the results come out early 2007.

In September the annual school inspection took place and after extremely careful scrutiny by three members of the Tanzanian Ministry of Education for two days, we were granted a 'Grade 1 Certificate of Excellence in Performance' – highest award for Tanzanian schools and only ever received by one other school in this district. This is due to the amazing teamwork by every member of the staff at the school in every area of the campus. Every aspect of the school is included in the inspection.

We started the 2006 school year on the 10<sup>th</sup> January with 21 new local and overseas teachers. Each year the calibre of teaching staff is higher as we are able to afford well qualified and experienced local teachers. Those who do not come up to our more exacting standards are replaced. Wages were raised in line with the rising costs of living and also when greater responsibilities were given to staff members. Bonuses were paid to staff who showed initiative and exceptionally high standards of work and presented to them once a month at the Friday assembly.

Highly experienced teachers came from Australia to run the Art and Music Department and teach English and computers and also two came from New Zealand, one from England and several came from the United States.

The Administration staff increased by seven when we employed two young men in the IT department, two young women to run the visitor and volunteer program, one extra for the sponsorship program and two extra staff for general administration.

In December 2006 the Smith Family Foundation from the United States granted the school a great gift – the expertise of two education experts who spent three weeks in December with the teaching staff working on leadership skills and innovative teaching techniques. All deemed this program so successful that follow up seminars are being planned for subsequent years. Our standard of teaching will be brought in line with that of the western world.

## THE BUILDINGS and LAND

On the 15<sup>th</sup> July we signed the contract for the perfect site for the second campus. Thirty acres of flat, land with good soil, paved road access and water was found at **Usa River**, just a 20-minute drive from the current campus. Payment of this land was accomplished by 'selling' small parcels of land to the school's extensive team of loyal, generous and hard-working supporters.

The **8-room classroom block** complete with pupil and teacher desks and chairs and blackboards was ready for the start of the school year in January 2006.

**Cubit House** with nine rooms for visiting Rotary teams and four self-contained apartments for long term volunteers was completed and in constant use by the teams who came over to assist in building works.

Another **accommodation block** for overseas staff and visitors was completed offering 11 bedrooms and a large common room with cooking facilities.

The **Assembly/Dining Hall kitchen and the four-level water/storeroom tower** were completed. The kitchen staff uses the ground floor of the tower for cooking all the hot food and beverages in four large wood-burning caldrons.

Seven acres of land about 15 minutes walk from the school were purchased for the **boarding school** and negotiations are underway with the sisters of The Oblates of the Assumption to run the boarding facilities. Plans are currently been drawn up by several local architects for us to consider.

## **THE FACILITIES**

**The Library:** Paul Weinland from New Jersey, USA, sends regular supplies of excellent reading and reference books to the school library. Ruth Knoll also from the USA, brings a great selection of books when she comes to visit. The library team is working hard to ensure the library does not lose books by enforcing regulations and doing regular stock takes.

**Playground:** The area is not big enough but next year we hope to have an extra play area beyond the extension to the campus.

## **THE BUSES**

The year started with 13 buses. Thanks to matching grants from Rotary, four more buses were purchased during the year and another bus was bought with a generous donation from Peter and Catherine Campbell.

A tractor was also purchased thanks to Richard Hardham and family and Adrienne Baser and family.

## **PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION**

**The Website:** Richard Pagliaro, one of the school's sponsors from Adelaide, South Australia, and Roumen Staykov (web developer), along with Bob Treitman here at the school worked to update the website to a more user-friendly site for easy payments of sponsorship donations – [www.schoolofstjude.co.tz](http://www.schoolofstjude.co.tz) .

**National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) in Boston, Ma:** The President of the Association, Mr Patrick Bassett, invited the Director to share her experience of building a school in the developing world and explain what life is like for school children without the advantages we take for granted in the west. The Smith Foundation of America made it possible for the Director to attend the conference.

**Promotional visit to Australia:** In March, Ailsa Hay from Toowoomba Rotary Club organised and coordinated over 40 speaking engagements in three weeks around Australia for the Director. These included, Toowoomba, Broken Hill, Orange, Albury, Balwyn, Camberwell, Canterbury, North Balwyn, Geraldton Rotary Clubs, St Jude's Medical Company, Tangara Girls School, Methodist Ladies College, Melbourne, Reservoir parish and primary school, St Vincent's College and Channel 7's Sunrise Program.

## **THE VOLUNTEERS**

Qualified teachers from Australia, New Zealand, England and the United States made valuable contributions to the school. The administration had people from Australia, France, Germany, America, Ireland and Scotland.

## **THE VISITORS**

**Rotary RAWCS teams:** In August, Brian Patterson led a team of 17 Australians who spent their time building, painting, erecting a shed, roofing the garage and working in the library and administration. In September, another 17 Rotarians arrived to churn out the components of 200 desks and chairs for next year's new pupils. In November, the 11 member Rotary team from Chinchilla worked from dawn to dusk to assemble the 200 desks and chairs prepared by the previous team.

Too numerous to document separately were the huge numbers of individuals and families who visited the school and assisted in any and every way they could during their short or long stay at the school.

Also, two successful tour groups were arranged for sponsors and donors from Australia.