



The Ronnie Fund

Supporting One Man's Dream for Quality Village Life in Kenya

The Ronnie Fund

Volume 4

Spring 2009

Irrigation Pumps & Brick Maker— A Great Success!

Things are really starting to happen in Wongonyi village, lives are being changed. A couple of our great successes are the gifts of irrigation pumps and a brick maker. Last summer when we visited Kenya we purchased two irrigation pumps and the brick maker from Kickstart organization in Nairobi through the generous donations of the Churches of St. Stephen in Muskoka and private donors. The irrigation pumps and the brick maker were a great success. The pumps were so well received that we sent funds over for the purchase of two more and Ronnie's fundraising allowed the purchase for a further two pumps.

Ronnie sent us the following report on this success, *"The water pumps have worked their magic. The water pumps have made a good impact over the dry season. Those who live near the water sources have made some good progress. Harvests have multi-*

plied and that has translated to more income. There is need for more especially beginning of August since there are no rains, so I have four requests from other serious groups. I believe it will make them have more impact again—that was a great investment!

The block press is now generating some income. The guys have formed a group and I left them with a few tenders lined up, though right now they are making bricks for the volunteer house which we have already measured up and Zach (a volunteer) is preparing the plan. We made a total of 600 bricks and we need like 3,000 bricks for their guest house. The machine has been hired quite a number of times and the group has made some money out of it. They plan to make enough money for another machine by the



Mwandami and another youth use the brick maker to produce high quality bricks for building.

end of the year."

Wow, we had no idea these two tools could have such impact in changing people's lives and providing much needed income.

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Special points of interest:

- Thanks for helping Ronnie fulfil his dream of providing quality village life in Kenya
- See the difference donors are making in changing the lives of others

Ronnie Interviewed on PWANI FM

On a recent visit to the village, Ronnie was called by PWANI FM for an interview. Ronnie says, *"I was very lucky to have an interview with PWANI Fm or maybe I deserved it. The interview was on why some organizations like The Ronnie Fund have more impact than the multi-million dollar organization. I was given transport to Voi and booked on a place to stay overnight since it was a*

late interview. I answered many questions and people were really happy about it. It was a rare moment when you get all those rare compliments and I highly appreciated it. Yes, it did have an impact because the following day I had all these organizations calling me and some wanted me to work with them and other want volunteers, so I will take my time to evaluate the

credible ones and see where we can synergize with them. I believe in productive partnerships so anything that will make positive change I am for it." This certainly is a testament to the great work Ronnie is doing not only in Wongonyi but all over Kenya through his work with World Corps Kenya.

Congratulations Ronnie on a job well done—keep up the good work!





Safe Water for All



Zach, a volunteer, Mwandami and Ronnie's family stand beside an impressive line of completed Biosand home water filters.

Last year we started a Biosand Water Filter Project. Through grants and donations we were able to purchase a mold to produce these home water filters. When we visited the village last August, the mold had just arrived and we purchased some supplies to start making the concrete filters. On Ronnie's recent visit he had this to report, "The biosand project gave me a huge surprise. I guess Mwandami and the

crew wanted to give me a pleasant surprise. I found they had already made 16 filters and we made six more. There are 22 filters in good shape. Mwandami used the money they got from the brick making to fix the lever and some of my friends had given an extra four bags of cement. The biggest thing now is to sensitize the community more and more because I found that most people still

don't understand the concept of safe water, they just know it's clean."

The youth will continue making filters for about 50 are needed so each family in the village has one and Ronnie is ensuring that training sessions will be carried out on the use and maintenance of the filters along with awareness on the importance of safe water and the benefits to health and improved quality of life.

"Giving is the secret of a happy life ... not necessarily money but whatever a man has of sympathy and encouragement and understanding."

John D. Rockefeller Jr.

Progress Continues—More Projects On the Go!

Happiness is hearing that good things are happening, even when you can't be there to see them or lend a hand. The Ronnie Fund supports projects that are sustainable so it was good news to hear about happenings in the village. Despite the fact that there are still ongoing issues with lack of employment for all youth in the village, some groups are mobilizing and creating jobs for themselves. One group is busy

building a butterfly house and making bricks for a guest house to accommodate visiting volunteers.

Demonstration gardens have been established to show new varieties of vegetables to be grown reducing the reliance on just maize and beans. Ronnie has been busy setting up a banana plantation. This variety of banana takes 6 months to begin producing and can be

harvested every four months. With a market already located, the profits from the sale of bananas will allow for the future purchase of a vehicle which will allow many farmers to get crops to markets in nearby Voi.

As well, several of the youth have been sent on training programs in woodworking, banana farming and other agricultural training.

Muskoka Pathfinders twin with Girls in Wongonyi Village

Last fall I made a presentation to the Muskoka Pathfinders on our trip to Wongonyi. The girls were very interested and asked how they might help. Ronnie's girlfriend Sera wanted to start a mentoring program with some of the village girls, so I thought a twinning project with Muskoka Pathfinders might be of great value. I suggested a project that another group working in Kenya had initiated 'Mama Pads'. Women and girls in Kenya have

difficulty accessing sanitary napkins. There are expensive to ship up to the village, girls are shy to ask to have them brought in and so they use rags. I supplied the pattern and the girls and their leaders Kim and Prithi got to work making pads for the five girls they would be twinned with. The Muskoka Pathfinders have finished the project and the pads are ready to be shipped off. The girls in Wongonyi have already

sent letters to their new friends in Muskoka and letters are ready to be sent back. Sera, Kim, Prithi and I are hoping that this will be the start of a great friendship for all the girls involved. The gift of the Mama Pads may seem so simple to our Muskoka girls but this means a world of difference to the girls in Wongonyi. Thanks so much to Muskoka Pathfinders—you rock! Lady Baden-Powell would be so pleased!





Asante-Sana! - Thanks to our Sponsors and Donors

There are simply not enough words to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the companies, organizations and especially individual donors who have joined us in our journey to help Ronnie make his dream come true of providing quality village life in Kenya. For us it is simply seeing the smile of someone's face when a new tool is presented that will make villagers daily tasks easier, new seeds to provide food for their family, a new sewing machine or some funds to help create or improve a micro business, or school supplies and books to aid teachers in providing quality education to all.

Our family feels very blessed by all we have, we are just an ordinary family, but we still have much that we can share to make someone's else's life better. Ronnie and villagers are appreciative for the help we are giving them. Ronnie says, **"Mum, thanks so much for the seeds and also to all the companies donating the seeds, the seeds can easily provide for extra highly needed food security. The biggest challenge though was that the seeds have instruction on the package and most people did not understand the instructions, so we made 3 demonstration plots and we taught a few youths**

on how to go about it, I must acknowledge for the first time people were telling me they can see and feel some progress. Thanks so much for everything. I really appreciate you and all the wonderful things you're doing. I told you things are turning for the better and I am very right, blessings and favor are chasing us. God bless you all."

Asante-sana to each and every one of you (you are too numerous to list) but know that our personal thanks and appreciation are sent to you on behalf of Ronnie and

Wongonyi village.



Students at Allan Mjomba Secondary School show off their new laminated periodic table sent by Becton Dickinson.

Micro-finance Underway with Success

Last year we had a donor who directed funds towards micro-finance initiatives. Ronnie

selected six participants to receive the initial loans. After Ronnie's recent trip to the village he has this to report. **"The micro-finance is doing well, six people benefited. Kirigha has started his poultry project, Mbala started her butterfly farm and bought a sewing machine, Malombo has expanded his shop in Voi, Mkamburi has also since**

bought her sewing machine, Tole has started his kiosk in Ron'ge and Ruth is doing his second hand clothes business. The biggest fear is that people are afraid to spend money that they will have to reimburse. A Peace Corps volunteer, John Juliano wants to start business classes in the village at the primary school and asked for my support on some things. I think that some of the World Corps Volunteers will assist him on this. I told

him about the project at the library (solar lighting initiative) and he is very excited and interested in helping to teach computer to the community once everything is set up and if we have Internet access, he is willing to train the librarian on researching for information that will help the villagers."

When these loans are repaid we look forward to helping other villagers improve their businesses.

"We are not cisterns made for hoarding; we are channels made for giving."

Billy Graham

World Corps Kenya Wins National Energy Award

This spring our Kenyan partner World Corps Kenya learned they had won the National Energy Globe Award for Kenya. They had submitted a project which was selected from 798 projects in 111 countries as the national winner for Kenya.

This prestigious award was

presented in Prague in the Czech Republic in April at the International Energy Awards prior to the meeting of EU Environment Ministers Conference.

This winning project was World Corps Magadi III project, a sustainable solar lighting initiative for a community information centre

providing access to computers and new information technology for villagers. This is very similar to the project we hope to initiate in Wongonyi Village. Teachers, farmers and village leaders are very keen to have access to computer technology for teaching, training and finding new markets for produce.



Sera Mucha, Grants Officer for World Corps Kenya accepts the National Energy Globe Award for the Magadi III project, National Winner for Kenya in Prague



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*“Supporting One Man's Dream for Quality
Village Life in Kenya”*

**Donations can be made by cheque to
Church of the Redeemer/The Ronnie
Fund**

Tax receipts issued at year end.

**We're on the Web
at
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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We are a humanitarian organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of Kenyan people. Our mission is to assist our Kenyan friend Ronnie Mdawida achieve his dream of empowering the people of his village of Wongonyi and Kenya to a better quality of life than the disadvantaged life they are now a part of.

OUR MANDATE

Our mandate is to alleviate poverty, improve the standard of living and strengthen the social fabric by empowering Kenyans through:

- Cultivating compassion and intelligence
- Encouraging confidence and skilful means
- Helping women and people decrease hunger and eliminate global poverty
- Empowering citizens through education, economic opportunity
- Combating the spread of HIV/Aids and other preventable diseases like TB, malaria

Continuing the Good Works

We are in contact with Ronnie almost on a daily basis and he keeps us informed about the challenges and successes in the village along with current needs and issues. At Easter, he sent us the following note, ***“Dear Papa and Mama, Happy Easter and many greetings from the Wongonyi people. They all love you and asked me to tell you you're most welcome in the village again. It was very interesting I met four nationalities who all had different missions in the village and each of them told me they have heard about***

the Wood's. It was awesome to know that even though people don't show it, they really do appreciate all you're doing. So top it up, I am very proud of you, all you have continued to demonstrate, your extraordinary commitment towards the good cause in the village. I salute you for that. . . . I had a chance to meet with the Ushirika Women's Group, they sent their love and they would love to hear from you.”

There are still many challenges in the village that the

villagers have asked help with—more resources for the teachers at Wongonyi Primary School, equipment for Mwambira District Hospital, personal items for the orphans and sports equipment for the youth along with more irrigation pumps. We are in constant contact with Ronnie as he informs us of the requests from people in the village. If you would like to assist us in helping Ronnie achieve his dream, donations are always welcome.



The ladies of Ushirika Women's Group affectionately known as the "Poultry Ladies"

