

WMI TUTORING PROGRAM

www.wmionline.org

In May/June 2009, two WMI interns from McGill University, Danny Straith and Tobin Jones, traveled to Buyobo to launch a tutoring program for the children in the village. The program was structured to supplement the children's education while they were on vacation from their regular school. Tutoring is a way WMI can show its interest in the community and the interns can interact with the children. The program has developed an educational assessment and primary education intervention plan.



Dani and Tobin assembled the first group of students. Like all WMI programs, tutoring was structured to be offered on a sustainable basis. Parents paid 50 cents a week to have their children attend the sessions.



The education system in Buyobo is very challenging. Grades 1 – 7 share this crumbling building, plus 2 small sheds. There are 60 - 80 students in each grade and one teacher per grade.



When school is in session, the children sit on benches. They usually take turns doing their work on the wall blackboard. During vacations, the benches are removed and used for other purposes.



The children lack basic school supplies. There are no books, paper or pencils. Teaching is by rote because there are no supplies to teach by any other method.



The WMI interns brought notebooks, pencils, and simple workbooks for the children to use during tutoring sessions. The first sessions were held in the schoolhouse, because no other building in the village could accommodate the children.



In June 2009, WMI constructed this building in Buyobo. It contains an office for WMI, one for another NGO, and a community meeting hall that is now used for the tutoring program.



Bethesda, MD students collected over 1,000 books which were shipped to Buyobo to establish a children's lending library, housed in the WMI building. They are now also used in the tutoring program.



Over 70 of the books were atlases collected at Pyle Middle School. Teachers can use them in the classroom to teach reading, math and geography. For the first time, every child in the class can be looking at the same book, at the same time.



The children of Buyobo are attentive and eager to learn.



Tutoring isn't limited to in-class teaching. The Buyobo children love to play games and they stick close to interns throughout their stay.



WMI interns Margot Vandervosssen and Brian Miller started tutoring during the November/December 2009 school break. They brought pencils and notebooks for the students. They are using the WMI meeting room for the sessions.



Margot and Brian have integrated many of the donated books into their tutoring lessons. Children are taught in Ligisu through 3rd grade, so the younger children are receiving their first instruction in English.



Margot and Brian prepared a tutoring action plan and also outlined proposals to improve primary education in the village. They enlisted parent volunteers to assist with the program and helped organize a PTA.



The tutoring program is not quantitative - it's not about specific subject matter progress. It's about the essence and experience of having the opportunity to learn. It's about someone caring enough to take an interest; the children really appreciate the attention they receive in the program.

