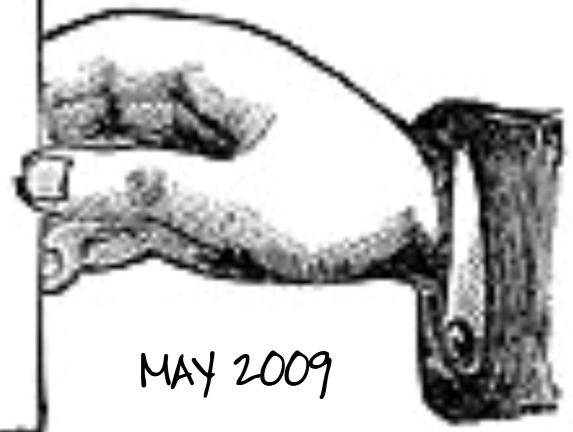


FISCH FOOD



MAY 2009

the Future for Iringa Street Children monthly news bulletin



Welcome to the second edition of FISCH Food. We've got so much information for you this month that we've had to expand to 4 pages, we hope this will enable you to really share in the experiences of the Tanzanian team. We hope you enjoyed reading our first edition and we would welcome any feedback you may have regarding the news bulletin so we can make improvements on a monthly basis.

{ James Robinson }



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Contact Us

If you have any questions or queries about anything you read in FISCH Food or you just want more information about FISCH then please contact;

Rich & Lissie Gercke - richandlissiegercke@yahoo.co.uk
James Robinson - noahsapprentice@yahoo.co.uk
Matt Vaughan - mattjvaughan@googlemail.com



Some sad News...

It is with regret that we must share the news of the death of Kevin who has been helping with the FISCH project as part of the Tanzania team. Please see page 3 for Mote's tribute.

Sponsorship Opportunities

There are now 6 children at the carpentry school and these children need support. It costs as little as £150 for the first year of their tuition and £100 for the second, over 2 years that's only £10.47 a month! If you are interested in making a difference to their lives here's a great opportunity. We are not at a stage where we can offer individual sponsorship programmes for specific children but if you would like to give a generic 'carpentry school fees' gift then please use the form on page 4. Don't forget to fill out the gift aid form if you are a UK tax payer as this increases your gift by 25%.

FISCH is a project of
The Grassroots Trust
(Registered Charity No. 1060034)
8 Meadow Way, Farnham,
Surrey, GU10 4DY



FISCH in 'the BIG Issue'

FISCH was featured in Issue 621 of the BIG Issue in 2008, it's exciting that the project is getting some much needed advertising...

"In and around the Southern Highland town of Iringa alone, with a population of 110,000, there are hundreds of homeless and vulnerably housed children – the estimated total standing at around 5,000. Future For Iringa Street Children, or FISCH, was set up last September by concerned local vicars and UK Christian volunteers who donated time and money towards a holistic programme of rehabilitation after witnessing the disturbing problem first hand."

News and Views

My wife and I recently made a trip to India and Pakistan. Frankly, it was a stupid time to go, with all-out warfare raging in the Swat Valley, the omnipresent threat of terrorism, and the more mundane dangers arising from road conditions (terrible) and local driving habits (worse). Nevertheless, it was a safe trip, and a real eye-opener.

One of the things that struck me the most was seeing, once again, the reality of poverty. Every time you stop at traffic lights in Delhi beggars will surround your car, asking for food or money. Children pluck at your sleeve everywhere you walk. One of the most shocking things was being told that children frequently have their limbs broken by their parents to make them more needy, and therefore more successful at bringing in donations. I still find it hard to comprehend the kind of mindset that could lead a parent to break their child's limbs in order to scratch out a few more rupees a day.

I quickly realised that lots of the things we saw – maybe most of them – were so far removed from our Western mindsets that they were completely foreign. I have lived a prosperous life, with a supportive family, a good education, and all of the benefits provided by the bounteous wealth of the West. How can I possibly hope to understand what it's like to face hunger on a daily basis? How can I try to empathise with a man whose legs and arms were so completely crippled by his parents that all he can do is crawl to pedestrians, begging for alms? The sheer scale of human need is so unbelievably overwhelming that, frankly, it's hard to see how anyone could ever hope even to scratch the surface.

I feel the same way when I read stories of the children being helped by FISCH. Children like Isaya, whose parents both died before he was twelve years old, who left school because he was unable to cope, and who ended up carrying luggage and working on a building site for a paltry living. Sleeping on the streets, he was occasionally arrested by the police and locked up for a few days each time. When a friend told him about FISCH he went along, initially attracted by the almost unbelievable promise of a free meal. Through FISCH he is now enrolled in a carpentry course. He dreams of running his own workshop and, one day, being reunited with his siblings and providing for them as well.

Or take Emmanuel, a boy who doesn't know how old he is. Although his parents are both alive he has lost contact with them and left home when life became too tough. He would wash second-hand shoes all day as a job, earning him slightly less than £1 for a day's work. He would also collect and dispose of rubbish in the streets, earning a few more shillings. He hoped every day that he would be able to find someone to support him. FISCH answered that hope. Emmanuel started attending Saturday activities and received counselling and health training. He also enrolled in the carpentry course and hopes one day to set up his own workshop to earn a living.

**STREET BOYS WHO HAVE JOINED THE CARPENTRY COURSE
AT AMANI CHRISTIAN TRAINING CENTRE**



Isaya, Emmanuel, Moody, Ally and Wito

I doubt that many of us reading this have first-hand experience of this kind of poverty. The experiences of many children in Iringa are so far removed from our comfortable Western lives that we may as well be on a different planet. It's understandable, then, that many Western Christians seem happy to ignore the suffering of people like Isaya and Emmanuel – after all, how can we ever hope to understand what they go through, or to make a difference in any significant way? And yet, as Christians, we are instructed to care for those less fortunate than ourselves: "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1: 27). It's a challenge, but if we paid more attention to this single, crucial verse of scripture, we would be able to read more stories of people like Isaya and Emmanuel whose lives have been transformed through the love and sacrifice of Christians.

{ Matt Vaughan }

'News and Views' is based on the minutes taken at the regular staff meetings held by the Iringa team

Profile of the month

Rev Mote P Magomba of Iringa, Tanzania

Favourites: Colour - Brown, Film - The Passion of Christ, Music - Mozart, Author - Gerald West, Food - Chicken

Involvement with FISCH: In January 2005, I moved from St. Philip's Theological College, where I was a lecturer, to Iringa to serve as a Chaplain to the then Archbishop Donald Mtemela in the Anglican Diocese of Ruaha. After finishing my work in the Diocesan office, one late evening, as I was returning home I found 11 children literally sleeping on the ground near the town post office. I enquired as to why they were on the street, one said, 'mum and dad died of AIDS'; another one said, 'my parents separated'; still another one replied, 'my parents cannot afford school uniforms'; and still others said, 'there is no food at home'. I was overwhelmed by the stories and the sheer vulnerability of the boys I met. The next day, I visited the boys again; this time with my wife, Atu. We started giving the street boys some money and other times some food whenever we met them. As we continued to spend time with the street boys, we felt compelled by the love of Christ to do something sustainable for the street boys. When we had a conversation with our friend Richard Gercke, we found that we had a common vision. Then Richard and I would meet every Wednesday and Saturday at the Central Lodge Garden to pray for God's guidance and discernment; then, we would go into the streets, meet the children, and offer some help, be it financial, food, or counseling. Since then, Atu and I have vividly seen God at work as children's lives being transformed!



Current Involvement: I lead the Tanzania FISCH team, together with Atu, to fulfill the vision and carry out the mission of FISCH ministry, which is 'to witness the love of Jesus to the street Children of Iringa, by striving to meet their needs, that they may experience life in all its goodness'. Our FISCH ground activities are holistic; they target the physical, social and spiritual needs, which include food, shelter, health care, accommodation, education, moral awareness and above all the children having the opportunity to hear about God's love. We always aim to have direct impact to the needs of the street children. Would you like to directly touch the lives of these needy children, in abject poverty? You are welcome to join hands with us!

My Reminiscence of Kevin Luka

Kevin Luka was a young Maasai with a passion for Children. As a Maasai, coming from a rural village of Izazi, on the Great Ruaha Basin, about 90km away from Iringa Town, arrived in the town in search of a better life. He had previously been educated to a secondary school level – GCSE. However, He could not find a suitable job in the town, he then joined Capricon College to get a Certificate in Tourism and Tour Guide; unfortunately, he could not afford the fees and then dropped out to start selling wood carvings at the Town Garden Square.

In the early days of FISCH project, I saw Kevin hanging around with Street Children and saw the passion that he had for the homeless children. Richard and Kay Mayne offered to pay for his College fees so that he could complete his training in Tourism and Tour Guide; he fortunately made it.

On 1st April 2008, he was officially invited to FISCH project to serve as Saturday Programme coordinator, the work he loved most and did it with all his heart. Kevin is gone to be with Christ, but is still very well spoken of by Street kids, and remembered by all of us. May his soul rest in peace!

{ Mote Magomba }

Prayer Points

- ☞ The continued education of the 6 students at the carpentry school
- ☞ The ongoing work of the feeding project on Saturday mornings
- ☞ For the family of Kevin
- ☞ For Mote and the Tanzanian Team
- ☞ For continued growth in the financial giving to FISCH
- ☞ For the various fundraising events that are happening in the next couple of months
- ☞ That through word of mouth, the internet or via reading FISCH Food - the vision of FISCH would spread to a wider audience
- ☞ For James and Kate Robinson as they visit FISCH and other projects in Tanzania over the May half term holiday.

Fundraising idea of the month



This month...

Pampered Chef Party

as demonstrated by



Carolyn Gercke pictured in the kitchen following a 'Pampered Chef' fundraising event where £200 was raised for FISCH! That's more than enough to fund a child through carpentry training for a whole year!

If you've had a fundraising event for FISCH then we really want to hear from you! Please send a short description of who you are, what you did, how much it raised and a photo if you have one to noahsapprentice@yahoo.co.uk

THE GRASSROOTS TRUST
(Charity No: 1060034)
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Or: Standing Order Authority

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Last name:

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To: *(Name of your Bank)*

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Please deduct: *(numbers)* £

(Words) £

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and thereafter each Month/Quarter/Year (delete as appropriate)

Payee:

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HSBC, 140 High Street, Barnet, Herts, EN5 5XW

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I/We wish to financially support the work of THE GRASSROOTS TRUST and would like this donation to be given to **FISCH**.

Either: I/We enclose a one off cheque for;
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I want The GRASSROOTS Trust (Charity No: 1060034) to treat all donations I make on or after 6th April 2006 as Gift Aid donations until I notify you otherwise.

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Date: _____

Notes:

1. As your donation covers donations that you will make in the future, please notify us if you change your name and address while the declaration is still in force.
2. You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying us. It will then not apply to donations you make on or after the date of cancellation or such later date as you specify.
3. You must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that we reclaim on your donations in the tax year. This is currently 28p for each pound that you give.
4. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income or capital gains tax equal to the tax that we reclaim, you can cancel your declaration as described in note 2
5. If you pay tax at a higher rate, you can reclaim tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, please contact us. You can also get the leaflet IR113 Gift Aid from your local tax office.