



Boniface & Hamisi Project

Kenya, Africa

Progress Report on the Boniface and Hamisi Project September 16, 2000

Dear Friends of Boniface and Hamisi,

We're delighted to report that we have received another donation this week to the project fund, bringing it up to \$1070. Thank you all so much.

We had a very successful week, our last in Kilifi before leaving to sail up the coast. By the time of our departure, we had been able to bring four separate projects to completion.

1. The Cow Project

We were successful in buying a good cow for Hamisi, at an excellent price of only 12,000 shillings (\$240). The cow is 18 months old and will be ready to calf and produce milk very soon. The Plan program officer took Hamisi to see the cow last Monday and helped him purchase it, and Hamisi got up at 4:00 in the morning on Wednesday to start the three hour walk to where the cow was raised, walking it back with his brother in the afternoon. We saw him shortly after he arrived, and went the next morning to visit the new cow, which had no name and therefore we named "Magic".

Magic is a very pretty light brown cow with a very expressive face. To our delight, she is also very friendly, and wanted to follow us wherever we went. She's rather small and has an enlarged stomach that indicates worms, but we had bought a supply of cow medicines in Mombasa earlier in the week, and worm treatment is among them. Today Kalimbo from Plan is going to visit Hamisi and help teach him how to administer the worm medication. Otherwise, Magic seems to be healthy.

We have left Hamisi with a supply of a variety of cow medicines and treatment, as well as a knapsack sprayer for tick spray that he will be sharing with Boniface's family, who have been applying this insecticide to their own cow by dipping their hands in it. Plan has kindly offered to be available as a long term resource to Hamisi in helping him manage the cow, so we are very confident this will make a positive difference to his life.

We spent almost 8000 shillings (\$160) on the sprayer and other supplies, and also left Hamisi with 1500 shillings (\$30) in cash, with instructions that he use it to buy a bucket for the cow to drink from, and save the rest in case of needing to pay for veterinary care for the cow. Soon we hope he'll have doubled the investment with the birth of a calf, and then begin producing income from the sale of milk. With the price of the cow, the medicines and our cash contribution, we came very close to the 20,000 shilling (\$400) budget we had set for this project.

Hamisi has agreed that with the profits from the dairy business he is now establishing, he will ensure that all his future children proceed as far as the end of secondary school. He told us he plans to expand his business over time into a herd of 30 cows. He's a quiet young fellow, Hamisi is, but we think he's got quite a bit of depth and is pretty sharp and we are pretty sure he will do well. His entire family is very proud and excited as being the owners of such a valuable animal, and its prospects for earning them a sizeable income, as well as being the start of a high quality herd of milk cows, are good.

2. Boniface High School Project

As I wrote before, the Stuemmer family, from its own funds, paid for Boniface's \$400 per year school fees, and will continue doing so for the rest of Boniface's high school. We paid the fees directly to the school and have made arrangements to do a direct transfer to the school's bank account in future years. The school will be mailing his report cards to us directly.

However there were quite a few other expenses involved in equipping Boniface for high school that we weren't entirely

aware of at the outset. The list provided by the school included uniforms, books, and some other supplies such as shoes, pink sheets, and a grass-cutting tool that also had to be bought.

We went with Boniface to the book store, and he also asked us whether we could buy for him a series of study books that are meant to supplement the official text books and are used for self-study. In class, several boys share a single text book, and without these self-study books for homework, a child's chances of getting good grades are much reduced. Boniface also wanted to get some advance work done over the next months until the term starts, by studying these books at home. Having given Boniface many lectures about how hard he must study if he is to realize his dream of becoming an engineer, we could hardly balk at providing the books that will enable him to do that. The cost of the books, one for each subject, came up almost to \$100, which we paid for, along with shoes, sheets and uniforms, a total of about \$200. We are hoping that if additional money comes into the fund, the donors wouldn't mind if we use it to cover those expenses, which we paid from our own funds. In any event, we now have Boniface totally outfitted for school, and these expensive books are good for all four years of high school, so they should be a good investment. We were impressed Boniface was keen enough to request the books and are sure he will make good use of them.

3. The Hairdressing School Project

Having set up Hamisi and thus his family with the milk cow, Herbert and I felt strongly that the rest of the money should be used for education, as it is this that can permanently make a difference. This pretty much meant allocating the rest of the fund to Boniface's family, since they are more interested in education and more progressive than Hamisi's. Having ensured Boniface's high school education, we were also keen on sending someone for post-secondary education. The problem was, of course, the cost.

The cost of sending someone to college is about \$1000 to \$2000 a year, depending on the program. Programs usually run from two to three years. There are two other young men in Boniface's family who have succeeded in finishing high

school, thanks to Andrew, and they are Mark and an older brother, Ngumbao. Ngumbao is hoping to go to mass communications college, but our fund simply cannot afford such an expensive program at this time. We therefore set our sights on Mark.

That actually suited us just fine, because of all of Boniface's brothers, we ended up liking Mark the best. Despite his rather off-putting Rastafarian hairdo, he is a very nice young fellow, gregarious, easy to make friends with, hard working (judging by his performance painting the boat where he was the first to start and the last to finish, even after staying awake half the night in our cockpit guarding the boat) and all together nice to be around. Our kids absolutely adore him, as do we all.

Mark's dream, which we spent hours discussing, is to open his own beauty salon. It is actually a very realistic dream and, we think, takes advantage of Mark's best talents, which are his interpersonal skills. Earlier we had gone with him to investigate one hairdressing college, but were not impressed with the facility. Showing commendable persistence, however, he kept at us and last week brought us to another college in Mombasa, which a cousin of his is currently attending. We met with both the proprietress and his cousin and satisfied ourselves that attending this six-month course will equip Mark to find a job and ultimately to save enough money to open his own salon.

The cost of the course is 30,000 shillings, or \$600, a little less expensive than the other college we investigated. But we were very impressed with the business acumen of the proprietress and her efforts to help her graduates get set up in business. So after we all slept on it for a night, we gave Mark 5000 shillings plus the bus fare to Mombasa, and he went to register himself. He will start the program immediately. He will get very personalized attention because he and his cousin are in a class alone, as the only male students, because some of the Muslim girls in the other group of female students cannot attend school with a man!

We didn't have any extra money to give Mark anything for his living or transportation expenses, but he hopes to earn

some extra money selling shark tooth jewellery in Mombasa to help support himself during his training period. His girlfriend's brother is a draftsman in Mombasa, and has offered to let Mark stay with him, which will be a big help. And maize meal is not expensive. We think Mark will do very well, and we suspect that next time we come to visit, he will, indeed, have his own salon. We're going to get our hair cut for free next time we visit!

Apart from the 5100 shillings we gave Mark for the school fees (he brought back a receipt to show that he had, in fact, used the money for that - "What do you think, that I'd use the money for something else?" he asked us, "This is my life!") we deposited the rest of 25,000 shillings (\$500) directly into his older brother Andrew's bank account. It is difficult and expensive to establish a bank account in Kenya, and so we rejected the idea of establishing a special one in favour of using the one that already existed. We feel Andrew, in spending virtually all the income he earns to put his younger brothers through school, has already proven his trustability in being the guardian of these funds. We didn't want to pay the entire amount in advance to the school, before Mark was certain it was going to meet his needs. Andrew has agreed to dispense the school fees to Mark, one month at a time.

The fund was short of the total amount necessary for Mark's college fees, so we advanced it in the hopes that other generous people might be able to make it up later.

4. The Shark Tooth Jewellery Project

This project is mainly Hamisi's, but is also being shared by Boniface and, to a lesser extent, Mark. This project has probably been for us the most fun.

We have now invested around \$100 in jewellery making supplies and photocopied cards to attach to the fossilized shark tooth jewellery. Last week we purchased more earring supplies and beads in Mombasa, since the first set of earrings sold out so quickly. With these new supplies, the boys have been hard at work turning their collection of beautiful fossilized shark teeth into jewellery - necklaces and earrings. We've also translated into German the explanation

cards, so that they can have an easier time selling to German tourists. Unfortunately, we didn't get the Italian and French translations we had e-mailed people for, before leaving Kilifi. We also managed to dig up a letter of authentication from the British Museum of Natural History about these exact fossils, of which we have also made copies for the boys to show interested people.

Friends of ours on the American boat Lyric approached a nearby resort on behalf of the project, and discovered there was some interest in their newly established gift shop selling the jewellery. Lyric had bought a pair of earrings, showed it to the gift shop manager, and she was impressed and asked that the boys come to see her. She issued a gate pass so the boys could gain entry to the resort (without the gate pass, they would be turned away from the property.) Hamisi has been using every spare second to turn out a good selection of jewellery to show her, and they are planning to go today with a dozen chains and necklaces to display.

I think there's every chance they will be successful in getting the resort to sell the jewellery which is, after all, a very special local souvenir that is available nowhere else. The jewellery business is a perfect complement to Hamisi's cow duties, and should help provide him with extra income to purchase the cow's daily water. We feel pretty satisfied that we have got Hamisi established on a good course that will eventually provide him with an excellent income.

Once he leaves in January to attend secondary school, Boniface will no longer be a part of this project, although he is helping out with it in the meantime. But Mark, who is a natural salesman with his big smile and friendly personality, is ideal to help with it, especially as he will now be living in Mombasa to go to hairdressing school. There he will search around for outlets to sell the jewellery, and this will also provide him with the extra money to help support himself during his time of training.

5. The Kitsao Family Scholarship Fund

Because there were many educational projects in Boniface's family, the Kitsao family, that we could not afford to finance - mostly children who needed to go to high school like

Boniface, but also older brothers who needed vocational training to lift them out of poverty, we have decided to establish a Kitsao Family Scholarship Fund.

We established the fund out of the 30,000 shillings (\$600) we advanced to Mark and Andrew for Mark's schooling. He accepted the money on the condition that it was a loan, and it would be repaid beginning as soon as he found employment, and he could continue to pay the fund back gradually, contributing at least 10 per cent of his income, until he had repaid 45,000 shillings in total. This was, in effect, what the oldest brother Andrew had done when he had won a scholarship for education, had found a job, and had reinvested the funds of his increased earning power in the further education of his brothers.

The fund would thus be self-perpetuating, and available to other children in the family for the purpose of education. Each person who accepted money from the fund would have to repay the fund plus 50% more. This way the younger children will also have added incentive to get good marks, because they will know they have a prospect of further education. Right now, there is basically no hope of any of them attending post-secondary education, so I can imagine they wonder, and rightfully so, why they should bother studying hard. Each person who has benefited from the fund becomes a source of funding to those who follow. This way also the lucky recipient, like Mark, does not get all the benefits while the rest are left out. The family is very keen on the idea, and while we have no guarantee it will work out in the end, we think nonetheless it is an important principle to establish. It will be up to them to make it work, or not.

We have Andrew's bank account number and can make international electronic bank transfers to it, should we be lucky enough to raise additional money for the fund. We have told the family that we will hold any additional funds raised until they have provided a suitable proposal and candidate for the fund, at which point we will transfer the money to Andrew for disbursement. While this does require the donors to the fund to have faith in us, it's probably more realistic than just sending money to Andrew without any particular project in mind. This way the entire family will be

encouraged to plan out their educational goals in detail.

Andrew, through his employment, has limited e-mail capability, and so will keep contact with us in that way. In addition, the very laudable Kenneth Muriithi, the local Plan International Manager, is keeping an eye on the two families, for us, as well as having made available the resources of his office to them. "After all," he told us, "your objectives and ours are exactly the same." If, in future, we get any communication from the families, we'll be sure to post it here.

So we're about to leave Kilifi for now, although I suspect our travels may well bring us back here some day. It's been an awesome experience for us, getting involved with the families here in a meaningful way, and we have you to thank for this opportunity. Those of you who have so generously contributed funds, God bless you. You have really made a difference.

Diane and Herbert Stuemmer S/V Northern Magic

Statement of Funds Received and Disbursed As of
September 16, 2000

Donor	Donation	Expense	Balance
Alice and Don Williams	\$50.00(U.S.)	-	\$70.00
Anonymous Citizen Reader	\$500.00	-	\$570.00
Mike and Esther Moghadam	\$200	-	\$770.00
Daniela Jansson	\$200.00	-	\$970.00
Diane King and Paul Couch	\$100.00	-	\$1070.00
"Magic" the cow	-	\$240.00	\$830.00
Veterinary Supplies	-	\$157.40	\$672.60
Emergency cash left to Hamisi	-	\$30.00	\$642.60
Boniface School fees (\$388.00) Paid by Stuemers	-	\$0.00	\$642.60
Boniface Schoolbooks	-	\$94.20	\$548.40
Boniface Uniform Pants (2)	-	\$23.40	\$525.00
2 pr. shoes, 2 pr. sheets, misc. other school supplies	-	\$28.60	\$496.40

Mark's school fees	-	\$600.00	(\$103.60)
Jewellery making supplies	-	\$85.00	(\$188.60)
Photocopied jewellery cards	-	\$15.50	(\$204.10)

Note: SURPLUS (SHORTFALL) (\$204.10) paid out by Stuemmer family