



*Northern Magic Fund for  
International Development*

## **Kenya Update**

February 28, 2008

Dear Friends,

We have come to the end of the second and shortest month of the year. Globally, it has never been short of both juicy and intriguing news as Kenya, in its own right, claimed a slot as one of the nations of the world that made – yes you got it – big news! But that’s a story for some latter space.

### **Sponsorship program**

Many students have forwarded their applications to us and we are in the process of short -listing them in accordance with our selection criteria. For some reason, we did not receive as many applicants this year as we did last year. Yet, the number we have is still more than we are able to take.

One of the reasons why some students may not have come to apply is because last year, during the election campaign period, our politicians from both sides of the political divide promised them Free Secondary School education – a promise which has proved to be a tall order, indeed.

After reviewing Mtawali Saniti's a.k.a Vinani's progress in school, we decided to send him to another school where we think his performance may improve with closer supervision. He seems to like his new school. We are looking forward to better grades for him this term.

We also reviewed our capacity to send more students to college and - even though quite a good number of them qualified to join these institutions of higher learning – decided we did not have it. With your support, we hope that in future we will not disappoint our young avid learners. Noteworthy, the girl child in Kenya has been the more disadvantaged when it comes to getting opportunities in schools, colleges and employment. To date, we have not sent a single girl to an institution of higher learning and we are looking forward to seeing one or more girls in those institutions soon.

Unfortunately, due to the political situation that had been obtaining in the country, some students reported to school as late as last week.

## **Renovations**

We finished the renovation work on three blocks of 13 classrooms at Chumani Primary school late last month. This was made possible through the generous contributions of Calgary South Rotary Club and Wild Rose Foundation. It marked the First phase of their donation to the school. We are in the process of looking for more partners towards this cause.

Owing to the political situation that has been prevailing for the past two months, our partners decided that we wait until the situation calmed down before we embark on the next project when approved.

## **Politics**

Aah, ladies and gentlemen! Here in Kenya, we have been talking politics, playing politics, eating and sleeping politics. When we do not talk of our own politics, we talk about the American Illinois senator, Barrack Obama. It has helped a lot to drown our own sorrows.

But today ladies gentlemen, we could have as well shouted, 'Hurray... we have a pope!' after seeing the white smoke. Today, the two premier 'gentlemen' of Kenya's politics – Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga struck a deal! A sigh of relief that was. This was after a protracted mediation effort that had involved a lot of push and shove and where tempers flared and were lost at some point. The protagonists have finally agreed to amend the constitution and share power. This has been welcome news for the majority of Kenyans, especially those who lost their loved ones and had their property destroyed in the aftermath of the elections. They simply were not ready for another round of violence.

The content of the agreement has to be sent to parliament where it will be entrenched in the constitution and pave way for its implementation.

To be still discussed are issues believed to be the underlying factors that in reality caused the violence. These are matters to do with unequal land distribution, and unequal employment opportunities among others. Indeed, the gist of our problems emanated from our constitution which created an imperial presidency. We all hope that this will be the beginning of a cherished change.

## **A visitor in March**

One of our Board members will be traveling to Africa – Tanzania and Kenya – this March. Diane King's trip will not be so much of an official visit than a private one. She will be on vacation and will want to spend a few days to relax. She will, however, take a few days to visit some schools, students and some of our projects. I am sure she will have much to talk about when she gets back home.

Thank you - all of you - for your big hearts.

God bless you all,

Andrew Thuva.