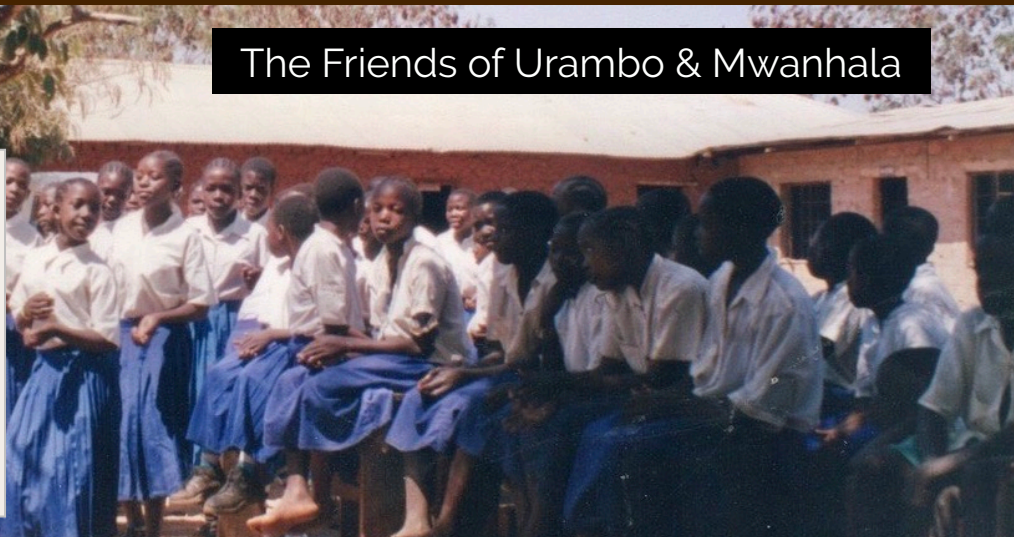


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The Friends of Urambo & Mwanhala



Friends of Urambo & Mwanhala

Linking the Tabora Region of Tanzania with the UK



A Message from the Honorary Secretary

Dear Supporter

This newsletter brings you a lot of good news about our recent and current projects which I hope interest you. Simon Headington, our project officer, visited the Tabora Region in August and visited many places where work is going on. His report can be read below, beginning on page 2.

As always we rely totally on your generosity to secure the funds we need. Not only do you give generously and regularly but many of you put in a special effort this year and joined one of our two sponsored walks, raising an astonishing sum which will go towards a new maternity unit in Usisya village in Urambo District. Particular mention should be made of Ralph Burgess who not only ran the Copenhagen marathon sponsored on our behalf but also generously asked that any

wedding presents in celebration of his wedding this summer be gifts to FUM. We wish him and his wife Hattie a long and happy marriage. His contribution provided a major part of the money used to build a special needs classroom in Iyombo village, Nzega District

(see page 6). His contribution joined that of Cranbrook School students who, yet again, gave us valuable support and that of the Friends of Nzega (FON) who gave their remaining funds to the Iyombo project.

It was with sadness that we learned that FON had decided that the time had come to wind up their organisation. We have worked closely with them for many years and salute the invaluable assistance they have given to the people of Nzega; I know from first hand just how effective their assistance has been. I hope that any of their supporters wanting to stay in touch with the people of Nzega will sign up to receive our newsletters.

As Simon will tell you, there has been great success at the village of Kiloleni where the new village water supply is



now working. Simon will give us the latest position. The next project in Urambo District is building a maternity ward at the clinic in the village of Usisya and right now the lyombo classroom in Nzega District is nearing completion. As well as these projects we continue with our aid to the fifteen clinics and three FDCs we support in the region. All of these commitments stretch our resources to the limit, so if anyone can think of any clever fundraising schemes do let us know.

The scheme to provide expectant mothers with protein enriched flour continues. There is an update on progress in the newsletter. Our fifteen supported village clinics each receive an annual grant of £250 to help with improvements to the clinics. Modern communications means that Jo Taylor is in contact with the

clinic staff and is able to discuss how the money is used. Support to our three Folk Development Colleges at Mwanhala, Sikonge and Urambo is being maintained with each of the principals receiving an annual grant of £2000 specifically to enable

“ I urge those of you who haven’t looked at our accounts to visit us on the Charity Commission website ”

youngsters unable to pay the course fees to attend courses at the colleges. We are able to help with college transport as well. Di Cooper liaises with Mr Mwadua, Mr Joseph and Mr Gulmay about these bursaries and is always pressing us to give more as she knows the money is well spent. If only we had the funds to help more.

So our giving falls into two categories, our regular bursaries and our projects. For the last few years we have been able to maintain this level of activity and some years have been able to do more. I urge those of you who haven’t looked at our accounts to visit us on the the Charity Commission website. You will be able to see the pattern of fundraising and giving for the last few years. This will convince you just how cost effective FUM is; we take the greatest care to ensure your generous donations are spent effectively. So as always my thanks go to my fellow officers and to our volunteer helpers in Tabora Region, Gomegwa, Lucky, Charles and Gerald, all of whom work with great energy to keep FUM the effective force it is.

Rod Smith

A Visit to Tanzania in August 2023

by Simon Headington

I was very fortunate to be able to take my three teenage sons on a 3-week trip to Tanzania during their summer holidays. Since 1990 I have visited Tanzania over two dozen times, but it had been over 10 years since my last trip. With my three sons aged 14, 15 and 16 they are of the age to manage a trip to Africa, so we arranged to combine a visit to projects, on behalf of FUM, with the more traditional tourist locations of Serengeti and Zanzibar.

We flew into Dar es Salaam and started to see signs of change straight away. Heading into the city centre we first passed the roadworks for the latest extension to the Rapid

Transit System, that uses guided bus ways to speed people through the traffic. Further on we crossed over the old track bed for the central railway line, that is still being

used for freight, and under an elevated section of the new “standard gauge” electrified line that is being built towards Mwanza and Kigoma, via Tabora. If all goes to plan it will



Muro and support team at the Urambo FDC Guest House

be possible, in a few years' time, to travel to Tabora on a 100mph double decker electric train.

With no reliable train service, yet, we flew to Tabora with Air Tanzania. After a quick breakfast in the former Railway Hotel, we headed south to Sikonge, to visit Principal Joseph at the FDC. It rapidly became clear that another big change has been the investment in the highway system.

Tabora now has good, sealed, roads heading north, south, east and west. This makes it easier, and cheaper, for people to travel as bus services improve, and reduces the cost of goods as transportation becomes easier.

We spent three nights in Devon House, the Urambo FDC guest house, being looked after by the wonderful Mura and her team of students. During our visit the college, along with the rest of Urambo Town, had no

running water and everyone had to relying on wells and boreholes, making life much harder for the staff and the students, many of whom are residential.

In addition to tours of all three FDCs and courtesy visits to lots of district officials, I was fortunate to be able to visit a number of villages. In Urambo and Kaliua districts I was taken by Lucky Enoch, the FUM co-ordinator, for the 2 districts, with the assistance of Charles Mswima (Urambo District FUM

Liaison Officer), to visit first of all Usimba, to see the new tiled floors and aluminium window frames in the dispensary building. In addition to making the buildings look a lot smarter they make it a lot easier to keep them clean for the staff and many users from the community. The next project in Usimba is to carry out similar work on the maternity building.

Next, we visited Usisya in Urambo Distict. FUM have agreed to help the community to build a maternity block, that will be used alongside the existing dispensary. The community have been making bricks, and money raised by this summer's FUM sponsored walks will go towards the cost. The rainy (and main growing) season is about to start, and it is hoped that work on this new building will commence in around April, as soon as the main rains have finished, and the harvests have been gathered in.

The big project in Urambo, over the past couple of years, has been in Kiloleni. A much-needed maternity building was



Kiloleni pump house

Joining football training



opened this time last year and on the day of our visit a local lady has just given birth to healthy twins. But our main reason for visiting on this occasion was to look at progress of the new water supply system.

Two excellent boreholes, funded by FUM, are located around 2.8km from the village centre (the closest that water could be found). One borehole has had a hand pump installed and the other is now connected to a brand-new water supply system. The 50-metre-deep borehole has a solar powered pump to lift the water and move it to a storage tank located next to the dispensary. It is hoped that in the future the system will be extended to the two village schools and a central point in the community.

Even with the one access point the system is already making a big difference to the dispensary staff, the patients and the villagers who live close by.

The transfer from Urambo to Nzega, along good quality tarmac roads, was simple and it was lovely to be welcomed by FUM Nzega co-ordinator Venance Gomegwa and Gerald Nicholas, FUM's liaison officer with Nzega Rural District Council. Over the next couple of days, we visited the FDC and dispensary at Mwanhala and Isegenhe and Lyombo villages. All of these communities are old friends of FUM, and I was shown lots of projects that have been supported over the years. For the coming year, the big project will be in lyombo where work had already started on the foundations and footings of

the new classroom, specifically for children with learning disabilities.

On our final evening in Nzega we were very lucky to be able to spend some time with Dr George and Dr Mary. I only wish that I'd had longer to talk with them about the many changes and challenges that face the health services in Tanzania.

After leaving Nzega we drove, via Singida, to Arusha and a short break before a brilliant safari in Serengeti and Ngorongoro.

Tanzania has changed massively since I first visited in 1990. Whilst the population has grown from 25 million to around 60 million the people are as welcoming as ever.

Massive investment is helping the nation to move towards its goal of being a middle-income country, but there is still much to do and the support of FUM is both needed and appreciated, in the FDCs and villages of Tabora Region.

On safari



FUM Finances

by Nick Vinall

2023 has been our busiest year to date, so a brief summary might be of interest to members.

Our accounts for the previous year are published for the AGM around March time. After they have been audited the Trustees' Report and Accounts are published on the Charity Commission website. Click [here](#) to access these for 2022 and earlier.

Since 2020 the required format for the published accounts is now not very user-friendly so for committee meetings I still provide them in the old format which makes our situation clearer, especially for our Special Projects.

Each year Special Projects are mostly financed from our Fundraising Walks the previous summer. For example the sponsorship from this year's walks has mostly now arrived but the rainy season will soon start in Tanzania so major work at Usisya cannot begin until the rains end next April.

For clarity I keep regular FUM income and expenditure separate from those for Special Projects.

The broad situation so far this year is as follows.

A. Regular FUM account

- | | |
|---|---------|
| a. income from Standing Orders, one-off donations, Gift Aid etc | £15,400 |
| b. support for poor students in FDCs and schools, plus our 15 village clinics | £11,000 |
| c. improvement of Usimba labour ward and other smaller projects | £ 5,000 |

B. FUM Special Project 2023, Kiloleni water project (see previous Newsletter)

- | | |
|---|---------|
| a. Income and Gift Aid from 2022 Walks plus a special donation | £19,000 |
| b. Expenditure so far to supply the clinic and new maternity unit | £18,000 |
- It would cost £5,000 to extend the water supply to the village and two schools in 2024. We hope that this will be possible.

C. FUM Special Project 2023, Iyombo Primary School Special Needs classroom

- | | |
|--|---------|
| a. See the separate article in this Newsletter | £12,000 |
|--|---------|

D. FUM Special project 2024, new Maternity Unit at Usisya village clinic

- | |
|---|
| a. The 2023 Walks have raised over £9,000 towards the expected cost of £10,000. |
|---|
- The clinic already has a good supply of water from an international Water Aid project.

We are very grateful to our members and supporters for their continued support to help FUM improve the lives of rural villagers in Tanzania's Tabora Region.

Iyombo SEND classroom, for children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities

by Nick Vinall

Iyombo is a village between Mwanhala and Nzega. The Primary School there provides specialist classes for SEND children from the village as well as from the surrounding area. But its SEND facilities are poor so it was suggested that FUM might be able to build a classroom with facilities dedicated to the needs of these children.

At the time we did not have the £12,000 needed for the project but fate intervened. A FUM committee member Ralph Burgess, who some years ago had taught in Mwanhala, decided to run a fund-raising marathon in Copenhagen for Iyombo.

Secondly we had had a long association with another charity 'The Friends of Nzega' (FON) with whom we had shared several projects in the past, for example the training of Nzega nurses and the building of a nurses' house for Mwanhala clinic. Sadly FON had to cease operations earlier this year but they generously donated their remaining funds to FUM to go towards a suitable project. Iyombo was in the FON patch

so they readily agreed.

For nearly 40 years Cranbrook School has had a Tanzania Project and part of their students' annual Lenten Appeal fundraising has been donated to FUM every year. The educational link made the Iyombo project a natural beneficiary for the school's donation this year.

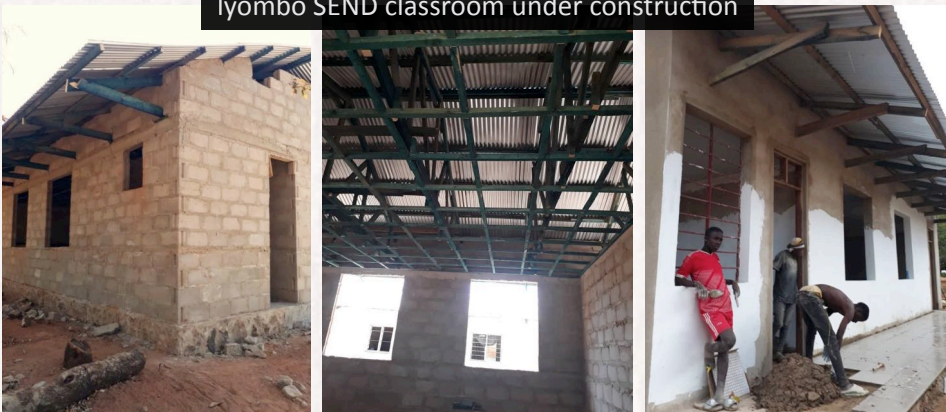
Thus the money for the building was raised. Ralph then generously donated the funds from his recent wedding and these will be used for specialist equipment in the classroom.



Ralph teaching in Mwanhala 2006

The photos show the building work at the time of writing. The project is being supervised by our good and trusted friend Venance Gomegwa who lives in Nzega and has for 30 years helped FUM with many such projects. The walls and roof have been completed in good time before the arrival of the rainy season in late November. Still to come are the ceilings, windows, doors, plastering and painting inside and outside. Finally the floors will be laid and the ground outside tidied up. We expect it to be completed by Christmas this year in time for the new school year in January and provide a long lasting benefit for local children.

Iyombo SEND classroom under construction



Medical Matters

by Jo Taylor

It was wonderful that Simon Headington was able to visit some of the clinics we support when he was in the Tabora Region in August. Visits like this really do reinforce the link with FUM and encourage the staff to keep in touch with us. Simon saw the new maternity wing in Kiloleni, the new floor tiles and aluminium windows in Usimba and the much appreciated staff house in Mwanhala.

Simon brought back news that the government plans to build more dispensaries in the isolated villages and larger health centres in the Wards. He saw the newly built District Hospital in Kaliua and was told of plans to build a new District Hospital in the Nzega District and of new additions to the buildings at the Urambo District Hospital. All of this is very good news but it does raise the issue of staffing. The dispensaries we support should have between 13 and 15 staff members but often there are only 3 paid staff members. The hospitals are similarly understaffed but hopefully the government will encourage more staff training to start to rectify this situation.

Lucky Mgeni continues to be the most valuable support for FUM in the Urambo and Kaliua Districts. FUM has its own bank account in Urambo and when we have sent money for the 3 clinics we support in the Urambo District and the 5 in the Kaliua District, Lucky communicates with the Medical Officers at each of the clinics to ensure their plans for purchases with their Tsh750,000/- are sensible. He then transfers their money to them for us. This saves FUM a considerable sum of money as



Maternity ward at Kiloleni clinic

every transfer from the UK to Tanzania involves substantial bank charges. Purchases this year have included IV drip stands, patient screens and delivery kits. The most exciting news is from the clinic in Maboha who used their money to finance the connection of the clinic to the mains electricity. This will be a huge advantage for all at that clinic.

Lucky gave us more good news from Nyasa where, at last, the solar pump has been installed so water from the very large underground water tank can now be pumped into the raised plastic water tank next to the clinic, meaning it will be a lot easier to access water there. This means plans can now be made to install a similar solar pump at the clinic in Ibambo.

In the Nzega District, our District appointed Liaison officer is less efficient than Lucky but recently Dr Mary,



Tiled floor at Usimba clinic

who oversees the Nutritional Flour project for us, has stepped up and encouraged the 7 clinics we support to communicate better with us. The plan is to send the money to the Urambo bank account and Lucky will then transfer it for us to the 7 clinics. But this has only been possible due to Dr Mary's firm and persistent support encouraging the clinic officers to reply to FUM WhatsApp messages. The purchases planned by these 7 clinics include gas cylinders for their fridges, solar batteries and a lot of printing of cards for



patient records. The clinic in Malilita plans to finance the electrical wiring of their staff house.

When Simon was in Mwanhala he discovered the clinic there is

now connected to the mains water supply which runs from Lake Victoria. They are able to pay for this due to all patients, apart from those with exemptions, now having to pay Tsh7,000/- per visit. All the clinics now make these charges and it explains why Simon saw good stores of medicines in the dispensaries.

Dr Mary is arranging for the latest delivery of Nutritional Flour for the 7 dispensaries we support in the Nzega District. You can read more about this in Mary Kenway's report below.

Nutritional Flour Project Update

by Mary Kenway

The nutritional flour project operates in 7 rural villages in the Nzega District and is now into its second successful year.

It is overseen by Dr Mary Mkamwa, who organises the purchase and delivery of fortified flour to FUM clinics, where it is given free of charge to young women with HIV, usually in their first trimester of pregnancy. Research has shown that providing poor and undernourished women with additional nutrients (proteins and vitamins) in these early stages of pregnancy can help them withstand their antiretroviral therapy, thereby reducing the transmission of HIV to their unborn babies. Helping these women to



remain strong during this difficult treatment improves their own survival rates too and impacts on the whole family, as mums-to-be in the programme are much more likely to be able to continue working and supporting themselves and their families if they are feeling well and strong.

We are incredibly grateful to Dr Mary, who undertakes this whole enterprise on a voluntary basis. Not only does she buy the flour for us in Nzega, but she also assesses the need in every clinic and adapts her deliveries accordingly.

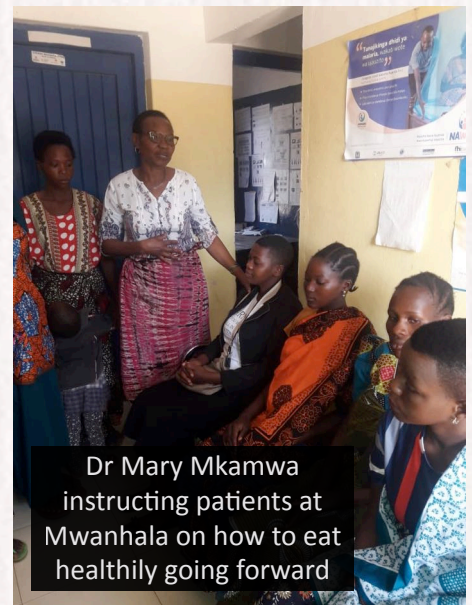
Whilst some deliveries are made unaccompanied, more often than not she will go with the driver so that she can speak directly to patients and advise them on how to manage their HIV and maintain healthy lifestyles and relationships. For example, since the last delivery coincided with a good harvest,



Nurse in charge at Semembele Clinic giving nutritional flour to a patient

a heartfelt thank-you to you, Dr Mary!

The project could not of course operate without the FUM officers, who keep a kind but observant eye on us all! Jo Taylor is in constant contact with Dr Mary and the 'in charges' at the 7 clinics and feeds back to us regularly on what is needed and where. Dr Nick Vinall also oversees all the project's finances and helps it to run as smoothly as possible. Thank you, both!



Dr Mary Mkwana instructing patients at Mwanhala on how to eat healthily going forward

she took advantage of the trip to teach the women how to make their own flour for the future. In the spring she wrote to us to say, "The purpose is to deliver the flour and to train them on using local or available products to make their own nutritious food. This time when I will be supplying, I will also see how they manage to mix the available products like beans, maize, groundnuts and pumpkin seeds to make nutritious foods at their local areas. The months April and May are harvesting seasons, therefore the food is available to them." Dr Mary accounts for every purchase and ensures that we have photographic evidence of every delivery. So

Members may remember that a very generous donation from The Archer Trust was received in 2022. This will enable us to continue the project for a lot longer than we ever imagined. Of course, it is our hope that numbers of newly diagnosed women will continue to reduce, but whilst there remains a steady flow of women to the clinics who need our help, we are so pleased that we have the funds, as well as the incredible FUM infrastructure in place to give timely, targeted and cost effective support.

tickets, man the doors, or just eat lots of cake! Local shops are also now familiar with the project and give generously towards our raffle prizes without questioning. Thanks a million to Cornerstone in Callington, as well as Liskeard Co- Op, Aldi and Malcolm Barnecutt Bakery, who all gave so generously again this year!

Our first coffee morning happened shortly after Covid lockdown restrictions had been lifted, so everyone was



Homemade cakes, scones and cookies

I am also grateful to and proud of our local community in Liskeard who rally every year to raise further funds for the Nutritional Flour Project. There is always much enthusiasm and excitement when the Fairtrade cake and coffee sale is approaching. We are inundated with offers from friends, family and neighbours to bake, donate raffle prizes, sell raffle



Saying it with flours! "Asante Sana"



I am grateful to and proud of our local community in Liskeard who rally every year to raise further funds for the Nutritional Flour Project

particularly happy to be able to be together again. Indeed many of the older residents are already looking forward to next year's! In fact, if any of you would like to have your own coffee morning in your local area, then we have a free pack of fundraising materials that we will post or email. It includes posters, information sheets, money boxes and more. Just email mkenway@icloud.com if you would like to join in. Finally, my thanks again to

members and officers who have made their own generous donations. Without you this project would never have got off the ground.

Donations can still be made, and will be very welcome, by following this link <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/22108>

Report on FDCs by Di Cooper

To have Simon Headington visit Tabora Region was a great benefit to FUM. It meant that, at last, someone from the committee would have the opportunity to meet the Principals of Urambo and Sikonge, Mr Gulmay and Mr Joseph, for the first time, and could view the extensive rehabilitation and new buildings created on all three campuses in recent years.

Simon visited Sikonge FDC first. He was impressed by the new and refurbished buildings and the general lay-out of the campus where many trees have been planted, which, in a few

years, will provide good shade as well as creating an attractive and more eco-efficient environment. Cashew nut trees are amongst species planted which, as they mature, will

provide extra income too.

Joseph said there are 200 residential students on a variety of courses at Levels 1 and 2. In correspondence a

few months ago, he had informed us that the college had secured funding from the Office of the Prime Minister for a six-month project to train a further 125 students. Simon clarified that they are non-residential, local students who attend courses in the afternoon, after other students have finished, so use the same facilities.

Joseph has been asked to set up a new VETA centre. VETA courses are at the next training level, and students need to have completed Form 4 at secondary school to be eligible. Simon confirmed this site is 25 km from Sikonge in Ipole District. As it will run the higher-level courses, 4 to 6, it will complement, rather than compete with the FDC. Joseph and his Head of Curriculum will oversee both centres. Currently Joseph is overseeing construction.

However, the effects of climate change continue to affect the availability of water to the college community. It is connected to the town water



Sikonge campus showing tree planting

supply, for which, of course, it pays, but the poor rains mean that there are very real shortages on a daily basis; the dams from which the water is supplied cannot maintain needs.

Water supply is of utmost concern on all three campuses. The important increase in student numbers is great but, in turn, they all need to be able to access basic facilities. Hours of tuition are lost because time has to be given to collection of water from whatever facility may be available in each locality.

Each college operates on a very limited budget receiving only £50 (Tshs.150,000) for each 'long course' student. Both Sikonge and Urambo run 'short' versions of their 'long' two-year courses, as well as driving and computer courses. These, with different projects, offer essential income-generating activities to supplement 'long course' fee income.

We have reported before on the programme which Urambo is running to supply secondary schools in Urambo District with desks and chairs, following major funding for the creation of new metalwork facilities. The college has also been successful in an application to the Tanzania Forest Fund to run a beekeeping project in the extensive forest reserve around the campus. The first instalment of funds has been provided which will enable TFF to train FDC staff. The overall aim is to improve the livelihoods of people in the surrounding communities through providing short courses in beekeeping.



Some of the FUM-sponsored students at Urambo

Mr Mwadua introducing Mwanhala Textile and Tailoring students to visitors



Simon stayed at Urambo FDC so had the opportunity to enjoy the campus in a more informal way. In a conversation with one of the students, she described a typical day:

- 05:30 - Woken up. Ablutions and chores
- 08:00 - 10:00 Lessons
- 10:00 - Breakfast
- 11:00 - 14:00 Lessons
- 15:00 - Lunch
- Then free time/chores/sports etc
- 19:00 - Dinner
- 20:00 to 22:00 Lessons
- 23:00 lights out

The last college he visited was Mwanhala where he met Mr Mwadua who has been at the

college for a number of years and had met other FUM committee members previously.

To assist their budget Mwanhala has introduced a market garden enterprise but, sadly, the effect of poor rains has limited the success of this venture up to now.

The borehole difficulties at the college have not been successfully resolved so the Committee will discuss with Mwadua how their water supply may be satisfied, as they too have seen student numbers rise considerably in recent years.

I would like to thank each of the Principals for the hospitality shown to Simon and his sons and for explaining the various activities taking place in the day-to-day running of the colleges. They are working under challenging circumstances and we thank them for all they achieve with their students.

In turn, each of the Principals asked Simon to convey their thanks for the continuing support which FUM supporters offer to the colleges, it is very much appreciated.

The Friends of Urambo and Mwanhala
60th Annual General Meeting
 See details on the back page



South Downs Sponsored Walk

On Saturday 9th September, 12 of us met at the Seven Sisters Country Park for our 15 mile walk. We set off promptly, before 9 o'clock, in the hope of getting a few miles under our belts before the heat of the day. The forecast was for a hot day and later it was reckoned to have been the hottest day of the year!

We set off up the hill and enjoyed the view down across Cuckmere Haven where the first team photo was taken. Our first stop was at The Gun Room in Alfriston where coffee, cold drinks and yummy cakes were enjoyed. Then it was up again, almost to Firle Beacon. Here 6 of the team backtracked to Alfriston as they had previously requested to walk 10 miles instead of 15, but the rest of us carried on in the blazing sun, with no shade, and absolutely no breeze. The views were wonderful though. We had our picnic lunches in the first shady spot we found and refreshed and rehydrated we carried on with our longer route back to Alfriston.



Group photo looking back over Cuckmere Haven

Under the shade of some lovely trees the 12 of us met up again and after a second visit to the Gun Room for most of us, for ice cold drinks and to top up our water bottles, we walked to the next planned stop in Litlington. More cold, cold drinks were consumed in the lovely shady garden there before a group finished the planned route and others took the road route back to the cars to collect a couple of the team who had simply had enough of the heat.



Usisia clinic

All thanks to Isabel for planning and coordinating this walk. We did all enjoy it, despite the heat, and knowing we had raised over £7,000 between us certainly made it all worthwhile. The funds raised will go to the village of Usisia to help them complete the maternity ward/room they desperately need at their clinic. When the villagers approached FUM to ask for help with this project they had already made the concrete blocks needed for the build but they could not afford to move things forward. We hope the funds we raised, plus the proceeds from Julie's walk in Devon earlier in the year will enable the project to be completed.

FUM Officers

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The Friends of Urambo and Mwanhala
60th Annual General Meeting
This is to be held on the morning of
16th March 2024 as a Zoom meeting.

The link will be circulated to members well in advance of the meeting.



The FUM Website

Our website is crammed with news, photographs and information about every area of our work. Just go to www.fum.org.uk on your PC or tablet, or point your mobile device at the QR code to take you straight there.



The Final Word

I urge those of you who haven't looked at our accounts to go the Charity Commission website and look us up. You will be able to see the pattern of fundraising and giving for the last few years. This will convince you just how cost effective FUM is; we take the greatest care to ensure your generous donations are spent effectively.

Rod Smith