

In this newsletter

Honorary Secretary's message	1
Projects Report	3
Medical Matters	5
FDC Report	6
Sponsored Marathon for Iyombo	7
Appeal for Urambo Schoolgirls	8
Sponsored Walks 2023	9
FUM Officers and Last Word	10

The Friends of Urambo & Mwanhala

Friends of Urambo & Mwanhala

Linking the Tabora Region of Tanzania with the UK



A Message from the Honorary Secretary

Greetings to all our supporters wherever you are in the World. Thank you for your continued interest in FUM and your support for our projects. The news from the Tabora Region is good in that the rains, while not as plentiful as hoped, have been sufficient to grow enough food. Mr Joseph, the Sikonge FDC principal complains that although the rains were irregular earlier in the season, it seems never to stop raining now so their March and April has been rather like ours, although a lot warmer.

A piece of news which may seem minor but is, I feel, most important to FUM, is that The Regional Commissioner Batilda Buriani has agreed to be the FUM President. It has been a few years since we have managed to contact the RC who do not stay long in post and are fearfully busy. I am delighted that now the RC once again leads FUM which is, if nothing else, of great symbolic importance as it highlights the fact that all we do is in step with local government policy.

It is a shame that more members couldn't join our AGM. If you had done so you would have had a real treat

listening to The Hon Margaret Sitta, Mama Sitta, the wonderful Urambo MP - readers of our autumn newsletter will remember that it was she who officially

“ If you had joined our AGM you would have had a real treat listening to The Hon Margaret Sitta, the wonderful Urambo MP ”

opened the new maternity unit at Kiloleni. In her talk she explained just how important the new facility is for the local women, many of whom attended the opening and surely some of them have already benefitted from it. She

emphasised just how appreciative people were of our efforts. She praised too our aim to ensure that all our clinics have access to a safe, reliable water supply. Kiloleni now has one in the form of a deep borehole fitted with a hand pump. As this is sited about 2km from the clinic, the plan now is to pipe water to the clinic from a second borehole fitted with a solar pump. Simon Headington, our Project Officer, describes this scheme in his article. Mama Sitta explained just how important help from FUM is because the underlying granite makes it very difficult to sink wells deep enough to function throughout the dry

season. There is a government scheme to bring piped water from Lake Victoria, but it will be many years before villages such as Kiloleni can benefit.

Mama Sitta mentioned the difficulties faced by young girls from poor families wishing to attend school. A major problem is the lack of access to sanitary products to get them through their menstrual cycle and if their family circumstances mean they are unable to purchase sanitary products the girls must remain at home. She has started a scheme to provide sanitary towels to distribute to schools to give to the girls and wondered whether FUM could help. Kit Lawry, from the Kenilworth Uyogo Friendship Link told us that KUFL run such a scheme in the Uyogo village school and recommended that we should consider joining Mama Sitta's scheme. At the subsequent officers meeting we resolved to look into this and so, in this newsletter, you will find an appeal for funds specifically for this project. Just a few pounds from each of us and we can improve the lot of so many young girls.

At the AGM I was delighted that we were able to welcome two new officers into our ranks. Ellie Davidson is now the Assistant Newsletter Editor and with our Editor, Martin Kenway, is responsible for producing this newsletter. You will have read Ellie's story in the autumn issue. In this issue you can learn about Ralph Burgess who has offered his services to FUM as a fundraiser assisting Isabel

Heycock with fundraising. He is off to a flying start by running a marathon on behalf of FUM. Details of this are elsewhere in the newsletter for anyone wishing to sponsor him.

Our commitment to the Folk Development Colleges in Mwanhala, Sikonge and Urambo continues as does our support of the 15 village clinics. Jo Taylor writes about those in her article. We also continue our support for young secondary school children in



The Kiloleni handpump in action

Nzega. Thanks to your generosity and the success of the sponsored walks we are, each year, able to undertake new projects. Last year the focus was mainly on the village of Kiloleni where we hope to complete work on the water supply during 2023; our attention will then switch to the village clinic in Usimba which is in urgent need of refurbishment. New floors and windows are essential as well as general redecoration to

bring the clinic back to a satisfactory standard. The final steps in the rainwater harvesting installations at Nyasa and Ibambo clinics should be completed during the year, something else to read about in Simon's article. A new project will start in Iyombo village near Nzega where we have been asked to fund a new classroom at the primary school, a classroom specifically for the use of children with special educational needs. Happily, the funding for this seems in place with the proceeds of Ralph's marathon and a generous donation from Cranbrook School pupils joined to help from The Friends of Nzega. Right now I am not sure about the timetable for this project but by the time of the autumn newsletter the building work should be well underway.

We are very pleased that The Friends of Nzega have made a contribution to the Iyombo classroom but it is with regret that we learned that the organisation has reached the end of its life and is folding up after so many years of wonderful assistance to the people of Nzega. When I first became involved with The Friends of Urambo and Mwanhala, the Kingsbridge Nzega Friendship Link as it was then was wonderfully guided by Mrs Eileen Noakes. Others took on her mantle and for many years were able to assist many projects in the District. Georgina Torabi has said that she will try to put together an account of their work. I do hope she succeeds and that we will be able to read this in the

autumn. All of FON deserve our congratulations for so many years of success and our thanks go to Richard Newman for agreeing that the residue of FON's funds should be used in lyombo.

Finally, I should mention Mary Kenway's nutritional flour project. She has raised funds for the purchase of protein enriched flour to be given during their first trimester to expectant mothers who have contracted HIV. This is so they are better able to stand the rigours of the treatment regime

necessary to prevent their children being born with the disease. Dr Mary in Nzega oversees this project and so by the autumn newsletter we hope we will have a report from her. Mary is keen to continue with her fundraising and has free fundraising packs available for anyone who would consider running a coffee morning or cake sale to support this scheme. Do contact her via Martin Kenway whose details are to be found on the back page.

My thanks to our FUM coordinators in Tabora Region, Gerald Nicholas and Charles Mswima, our Liaison officers and Venance Gomegwa and Lucky Mgeni our two volunteer assistants who do so much to ensure that our projects are successful. My thanks to all associated with FUM for your support. Do spread the word as wide as you can; sending this newsletter to friends and family suggesting perhaps that FUM is an organisation worthy of their support.

Rod Smith

Projects Report

Plans for 2023/24 by Simon Headington

After the successful completion of the new maternity building in Kiloleni, the first two phases of the water project in the same community and the installation of new elevated pipework to connect to a 100 cubic metre water tank in Ibambo we are now looking at the plans for the next 12 months.

Kiloleni Water Supply Project (Phase 3)

Last year we sank 2 successful boreholes with water at 30m and 85m depths. The second phase of this project was the installation of a hand-pump on one of these boreholes, at the start of the year, and this is working well.

Phase 3 of this project is for the second well to be fitted with a solar power pump that will lift the water from the ground and then push it the 2.5Km to the dispensary and maternity building. At the health buildings the pipe will feed into an elevated water



tank that will have a standpipe and connections to the plumbing in the new maternity building, which will be fed by gravity.

The pipe that runs from the wellhead to the village will be larger than is needed at this stage, so that when we get to Phase 4, we can easily provide 3 additional "spurs". The aim is that these will go to the primary school, the secondary school and the village centre.

We already have the funding identified for Phase 3 and will move onto Phase 4 as soon as we have raised enough additional money.



Installing the improved water pipes at Ibambo clinic

This is a very large project but with up to 20 cubic metres of clean drinkable water being provided to the centre of the village each day, this should make a big impact on health within the community.

Completing rainwater harvesting projects in Nyasa and Ibambo

These are two similar projects that have been supported by FUM in previous years. The final part of these two rainwater harvesting projects is to install elevated water (Sim) tanks with solar powered pumps to lift the water from the large collections tanks that have already been installed. The water can then be fed by gravity into the dispensary buildings, which will make life a lot easier for the staff. The aim is to get Nyasa completed before moving onto Ibambo.

Usimba Dispensary Refurbishment

A number of villages need help with renovating existing buildings and the first on the priority list is Usimba in Kaliua District. It is expected that the project will include providing new floors and window frames, as well as general redecoration



Damaged flooring in Usimba Dispensary

to bring the clinic back to a satisfactory standard.

Iyombo Primary School (Nzega District)

FUM has received a request to help to build a new classroom (with associated store and office) specifically for the use of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) team at Iyombo Primary School in Nzega District.

The Special Needs Education unit at Iyombo was established in 2000 and currently has 16 students. This is one of 3 units across Nzega District, the others being at Mahene and Isimba primary schools. The children at Iyombo have a range of disabilities including cognitive, visual impairment, hearing impairment and physical disabilities. Currently the unit is only able to cater for children from Iyombo village but the improved facilities should result in greater capacity and improved outcomes for the children.

Medical Matters

Jo Taylor

The Clinics

All 15 clinics which we support were delighted to receive their increased donation last year; £250 per clinic instead of £200. Or roughly Tsh 750,000 rather than Tsh 600,000. Every clinic spent this money very sensibly. Purchases included gas cylinders to power the fridges used to store vaccines, an examination bed and mattresses, blood pressure machines, construction of a shaded area for use by the pregnant mothers waiting to go into the clinic and a smart notice board for outside the clinic to show the services offered there.

FUM receives good help and support from Lucky Ngeni and Charles Mswima relating to the clinics in the Urambo and Kaliua Districts, and from Nicholas Gerald relating to the clinics in the Nzega District. WhatsApp along with Google translate is also used to correspond directly with the Medical Officers at the clinics. From this we have discovered



The medical officer at Kiloleni clinic with the gas cylinders

some of the clinic staff have an impressive level of English, their third language, but others prefer to correspond in Swahili.

The staff and patients at the clinic at Ibambo in the Kaliua District are very grateful to FUM for arranging for Lucky to rectify the water problem there. The water pipes which were supposed to carry the rainwater from the gutters to the water tank were ineffective. Lucky and his team worked hard to

replace the water pipes and to secure them so they do now drain into the very large water tank. This has resulted in successful collection of rainwater during the recent rainy season.

The new maternity ward at the clinic in Kiloleni has been a great success. Mama Sitta officially opened the ward for FUM, but not until she had ensured the local government had supplied all the medical equipment and beds they had promised. Thank you, Mama Sitta! Now more clinics are asking that FUM provides financial help so they too can have a new and much needed maternity ward. These include the clinic at Usisya in the Kaliua District and the Mambali clinic in the Nzega District. The village of Usisya has already made the bricks needed for this project but of course the building project is very expensive but Lucky has made a powerful case for FUM to consider this project.

Nutritional Flour Project

This project, set up by Mary Kenway, provides an essential food supplement in the form of enriched nutritional flour to pregnant mothers who have been newly diagnosed HIV positive. The flour is given during the first trimester of their pregnancy to mothers who are malnourished, the purpose being to enable them

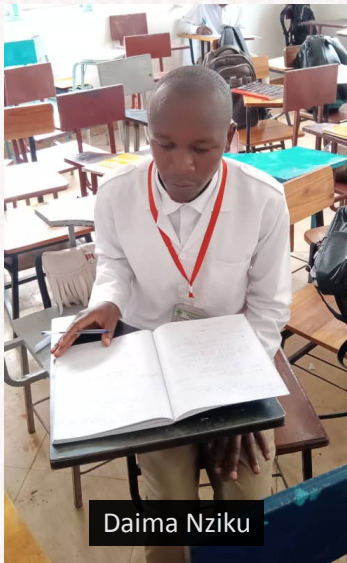
to tolerate the strain of the treatment necessary to prevent their children contracting the virus.



Nutritional Flour at Mwanhala clinic

Dr Mary coordinates this project in Nzega. Already she has arranged three deliveries of flour to each clinic, which is enough for nine months of help. The clinics report back to us via Whatsapp and emphasise each time just how positively this help is being received.

Medical Trainees



Daima Nziku

Daima Nziku, the trainee nurse from Mwanhala clinic whose training has been sponsored by FUM took his exams on March 6th and we are delighted that he has achieved very impressive results in all parts of his final exams and will soon be returning to Mwaanhala clinic to resume his work there.

FUM has received more requests for nurse sponsorship but we do not have the funds to get involved in this for now. There is one nurse, Verediana Bosco Yohana whose family has fallen on hard times and cannot afford the fees for the last term of her course. Happily, we have found some generous donors who will ensure that Verediana is able to complete her qualification.



Verediana Bosco Yohana

FDC Report Di Cooper

Water Supply at Mwanhala

Following reports late last year from Mwadua at Mwanhala that the borehole was no longer giving water, Lucky Mgeni has made a number of visits to assess the situation. It was identified that the motor had again burnt out as a result of a faulty electricity supply after lightning strikes. Lucky ordered what was anticipated were the relevant replacement parts following consultation with Nick and Rod. However, when he returned to undertake the work it was found to be much more complicated than expected. Work has now been completed, and there is a supply of water at a lower capacity, but Lucky has recommended that electricity should be supplied by a solar panel system in future. This is being followed through by Simon Headington, Projects Officer.



Mwanhala FDC

Current FDC Student Numbers

At Mwanhala FDC there are 115 male students and 104 female, of whom 63 are on the Elimu Haina Mwisho scheme. Fifteen students are supported by FUM, 9 males and 6 females. Across all courses electric installation, motor vehicle maintenance, and sewing and cloth technology have the most students.

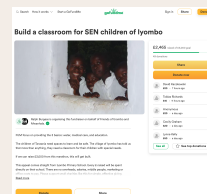
16 students at Sikonge FDC are receiving support from FUM.

20 students are being supported by FUM at Urambo FDC.

FUM sponsored Marathon Run undertaken by Ralph Burgess

Ralph Burgess, a newly elected FUM Officer, has signed up to run the Copenhagen marathon on 14th May, to raise money for FUM. He is aiming to raise £3000 for the construction of a classroom at Iyombo Primary School for children with special educational needs. Please consider sponsoring Ralph's valiant effort using the following Go Fund Me link:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/special-needs-children-in-iyombo>



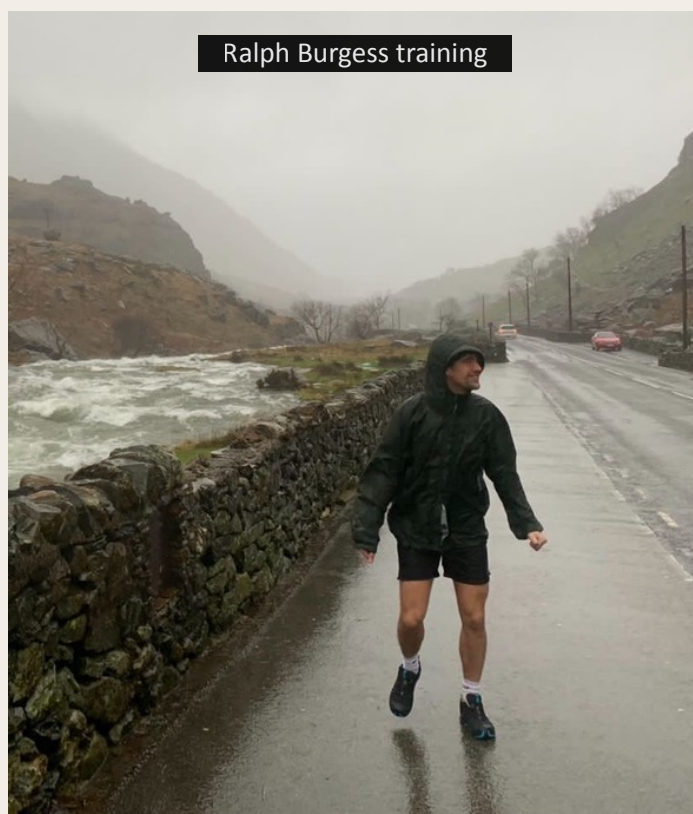
Here is Ralph's message to you.

FUM focus on providing the 3 basics: water, medical care, and education.

The children of Tanzania need spaces to learn and be safe. The village of Iyombo has told us that more than anything, they need a classroom for their children with special needs.

If we can raise £3,000 from this marathon, this will get built.

This appeal comes straight from Iyombo Primary School. Every £ raised will be spent directly on their school. There are no overheads, salaries, middle people, marketing or office costs to pay. Please support small charities like this for simple, effective giving.



I'm running a marathon on 14th May, which is the best thing I could think of to raise funds. Hattie and I have also asked for support instead of wedding gifts.

I'm gonna give the marathon my all in the name of this cause. Your support is my motivation! Any amount you can donate would be life-changing to the wonderful children of Iyombo.

Thank you.

Assistance to Urambo Schoolgirls Appeal

by Nikki Hirst

Those of you who attended the AGM will have been delighted that we were able to welcome Mama Sitta, the MP for Urambo, to speak at our meeting. She spoke at length about how our efforts in Urambo District are valued and appreciated by the villagers, the women especially. She then raised a problem with us in the hope that we may be able to help. It is to do with the difficulties of attending secondary school faced by young girls.

Many young girls, particularly those in rural areas, come from families which are extremely poor, to the extent that they are unable to assist their daughters with the costs involved in attending school. The purchase of uniforms is very difficult, but a more urgent problem is the provision of sanitary products to see them through their menstrual periods. Mama Sitta has started a project of using local seamstresses to make sanitary pads to a recognised design which she then distributes to schools, requiring the school staff to identify the pupils in need of assistance. Of course, her resources are

limited and so she asked us if we could help; this is something the officers are keen to do. We note that our friends in the Kenilworth Uyogo Friendship Link are supporting a similar initiative in their village.

At this stage we are not sure just how many girls need assistance, but it is likely to be several hundred. A group of officers are looking into this and in the next few weeks will discuss ways and means with Mama Sitta. Each girl we help will need only a few pounds but overall the sum may become considerable, so to

meet this challenge we would like to set up a fund to assist these girls and surely, many of us can spare £5 or £10 to help. Should you decide you would like to help please donate via the website identifying your donation as being for Urambo secondary schoolgirls. Nikki Hirst, who administers the bursary help to school pupils in Nzega District, will control this Urambo fund, helping Mama Sitta as and when needed. I am sure that we can make a very large difference to the lives of many girls with only a modest input from each of us. **Please help.**

Girls at one of the Urambo Primary Schools



FUM 15-mile Sponsored Walks 2023

by Isabel Heycock

This year, once again, there will be two sponsored walks. We would be delighted if you could join us for either of these occasions. If you cannot manage 15 miles, then we can provide shorter versions of the route.

The South Devon walk will be on either Saturday 8th or Sunday 9th July.

Contact Julie Overnell,
jjeo@hotmail.co.uk for further details.

The South Downs walk will be on Saturday 9th September.

Contact Isabel Heycock,
iheycock@hotmail.co.uk for further details.



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

Please make a note in your diaries
and join us on the day. All members
will be very welcome.



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

My thanks to all associated with FUM for your support. Do spread the word as wide as you can; sending this newsletter to friends and family suggesting perhaps that FUM is an organisation worthy of their support.

Rod Smith

