

# Mafanikio Newsletter

Mafanikio Community Based Organization would like to thank all the volunteers who had traveled to Kenya to participate in our voluntary work since the inception of the International Work camp programme. The volunteers lived and worked with the communities and shared their culture from 3 – 4 weeks dedicatedly in work ranging from construction, treating patients to teaching and campaigning against HIV/AIDS in the communities. Many special thanks to Caragh Munn who has always believed and had faith in me. She stood by me through the conception of this programme. She encouraged me and made workcamps real. Our special thanks go to those volunteers who have sponsored kids to high school and community projects. We would like to thank you for your continued support and endless efforts. We also extend our special gratitude to those who have been on the forefront marketing our programmes back home. Finally, we extend many thanks to Maria Butler of Growth Reaching Africa, who has worked tirelessly to support our community projects and lastly but not least to the Volunteer Support Group which is headed by Niamh Comiskey and Julie Clarke. We thank you all for your endless efforts. Thank you again.



Diana Chipo MCBO Co-ordinator

## INTERNATIONAL WORK CAMPS

Mafanikio organizes work camps that bring together local and international volunteers who work together with the communities on various developmental projects. They help foster cross cultural understanding and international brotherhood. The camps last for three weeks during which volunteers live and work together with the local community towards a common goal. During this time volunteers get an opportunity to experience first hand third world development challenges, conflict resolution, interaction with a different culture among other things.



Volunteers at one of the work camps

### International Volunteer Placement Experience by Annette Elizabeth of Ireland

I spent a month in summer 2007 working with Mafanikio CBO in Kirasha Village in Kenya. Kirasha is located high in the Rift Valley area and so it was very cold and wet – not what I expected of African weather! I stayed with a local family where I was well looked after. My work involved HIV/AIDS education campaign in primary schools in the area. This is very important, though the HIV problem in Kenya is improving – in the 1990s 13% of the population were living with HIV, this is now down to under 6% - there are still 230 deaths every day. I worked with young members of the local youth club.

We visited many primary schools in the area where we showed information videos on HIV/AIDS, gave talks and held question and answer sessions. We also discussed the problem of stigmatization of people who are HIV+. We spoke about other issues affecting youth, for example pregnancy and abortion, and drug and alcohol abuse. I am glad to have worked with them.

[annette.e.egan@nuim.ie](mailto:annette.e.egan@nuim.ie)



Annette and the kids at Kirasha Centre

### Maria Butler GRA Founder and Community Projects

My name is Maria and I was a volunteer in rural Kenya, like many of you in 2006. The experiences I had were marvellous. Although on my return home I realised that I did not want to just be a visitor in Kenya. I, like most volunteers was touched by communities and I knew how lucky I was. It was this that encouraged me to stay involved with small yet direct projects with Mafanikio over the last year I have set up an Irish



Maria Butler (in blue)

registered charity, GRA (Growth Reaching Africa) and meaning 'love' in native Irish language. We held our first Gala Ball on October 12th in Dublin, Ireland. It was a tremendous success with 350 guests.

## SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME

Mafanikio has been involved in school feeding programme since the year 2004 in Kirasha Rehabilitation Centre. It later expanded this programme to cater for two more schools with a population of over 200 pupils each in the semi arid areas in Eastern Province of Kenya.

### Kiukuni Primary School

The school has a population of close to 200 pupils in Eastern Province as well. It is badly hit by drought and poor infrastructure. It is approximately 30 km from the main road. These kids are faced with many challenges among them lack of clean drinking water and enough teaching materials.



Kiukuni kids having a meal

### Mitingani Primary School

This school has a population close to 300 hundred pupils and is on the semi arid area in Eastern Province of Kenya.



Mitingani kids having a meal

It was a real 'Party with a Purpose'! Most of you Mafanikio supporters, know Diana Chipo and I must say that I am honoured to partner with Diana on projects such as such as; feeding projects, schools sponsor, Borehole construction, among others. I would encourage you all to continue your good work in whatever way you can. Feel free to get in touch if you have any ideas or advice.

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### Work camp Experience by Victoria Morgan

Working with Mafanikio was an extremely worthwhile experience. Our work camp was in Mikindani Primary school. For three weeks we helped in many ways in the community. We helped reconstruct bathrooms, taught classes and encouraged the community to go and get HIV/AIDS tested.



Victoria Morgan (in pink)

Mafanikio is a wonderful organization because it works hands on with the community. Mafanikio encouraged us to live and learn amongst the locals. The people of Kenya are the most positive, grateful, heart warming people I have ever met. I will ever forget my time in Mikindani and I definitely hope to return.

Victoria Morgan, August Work Camp 2007.

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### Work camp Experience by Julie Clarke

Participating in a Mafanikio workcamp is a memorable and rewarding experience. While working in Mikindani primary school I met some incredible kids whose families were more than welcoming to us. I made some great friends and was lucky to have the chance to really experience the Kenyan way of life. I worked with a group of thirteen people. Chipo (an incredible woman) advised us and looked after us for the duration of the workcamp. Our project was to relay the floor of the toilets in the school. I really enjoyed the experience of working together in a team and I feel I have gained a valuable skill for life. I also taught some classes to the wonderful children.

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## Acknowledgements

MCBO would like to acknowledge all of you for your endless and continued support and since we cannot mention everyone but just a few;

- ✿ Helen Dunne and her family for sponsoring students long before the conception of Mafanikio.
- ✿ Marjorie Pereira for helping in setting up of the organization and supporting the Women Group.
- ✿ Caragh Munn and her family for publishing brochures and contracting barrowvale technology for website hosting and designs.
- ✿ Oliver Dempsey and Eimear Flynn of barrowvale technologies for renewing our hosting fee and for hosting us.
- ✿ Niamh Comiskey and Julie Clarke for forming Volunteer Support Group.
- ✿ Maria Butler and her family for sponsoring students, advertising work camps in colleges and doing orientation to incoming volunteers.
- ✿ All volunteers who have participated in our programmes all round.
- ✿ Alexandra College for organizing an art exhibition for Sulmac pupils.
- ✿ Mick Power of Kildare Volunteer Centre, Pit Lucking Arizona State University and IAVE for advertising us their institutions.

We thank you all very much and we hope to continue working in good relations. We welcome your comments on our newsletter.

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