

# **Suitcases for Africa Annual Report 2019**

## **Educational Sponsorship Program 2019**

2019 was a very good year for our Educational Sponsorship Program. Thanks to the expert oversight of the program by our administrative team of Susan and Esther the students were able to concentrate on their studies. As always, the students received encouragement, obtained counseling when needed and knew that they had an advocate that they could turn to if needed. SFA started the original educational program with 63 sponsored children. With continued graduations over the last few years, there are now 50 students remaining. 45 students are enrolled in our regular day school program, 3 students are in boarding school due to past emergency interventions and 2 students are registered in postsecondary studies. One of these students is studying catering and the other is studying electrical technology.

Each year SFA pays for: the school fees; uniform costs; books and all material costs needed for learning. The young girls are given the necessary equipment for their sanitary needs so they do not need to miss a week of school each month. The students who do go on for further education get assistance from SFA's education fund and sometimes the continued support of their donors.

This is a project that we are especially proud of. In Kenya an education is something that is truly valued. To have 2 students go through our whole program and now be registered in postsecondary studies is beyond our initial expectations. Although it often takes longer than usual for some students to achieve their goals due to difficult challenges, we have provided an opportunity for them to take the time needed to succeed. Once students have completed their education they are eligible for apprenticeship programs and are more likely to find employment. It is thanks to our wonderful and dedicated sponsors that we have been able to support so many children over the years.

When our team was in Kenya in February 2019 they enjoyed two wonderful days visiting with most of the students. Letters from sponsors were handed out and the students took time to write back to them. This is always a highlight of the day with students. Wendy and Michele really enjoy the interaction with each student. Susan always

inspires the students to work hard and do their best. Supplies are handed out if necessary and snacks are provided and everyone enjoys the day. We are grateful to our educational support donors-without them we could not have achieved this level of success!

## **Funding of SFA Water Projects in 2019**

In 2019 the SFA executive and general members made the decision to focus our attention mainly on clean accessible water for as many as possible with the funds available this year. In January the first such project was completed and commissioned by the SFA team visiting in February.

### **Indulusia Primary School Well**

This was the third well that has been funded by Joshua and his friends. It caused much joy and excitement in the community. Most people in the area know the story of this young man who started his own mission at the age of five years old to raise funds to build wells and make clean water available to their communities with the help of SFA.

Now as a teenager, and in partnership with SFA fundraising, Joshua has achieved the goal of a third community now celebrating the gift of clean water! The well is an excellent one with lots of water. It was flowing plentifully even during the dry season. The well is built on the grounds of Indulusia Primary School. It serves the 498 school children and 18 staff as well as 200 local families for a total of 716 people. It came in at a cost of \$8,358.

### **Kicker Academy Water Project**

Towards the end of 2019 two more water projects were in the works. Kicker Academy is an Early Childhood School project which currently serves ninety children of nursery school and junior age. It was created to assist struggling families who are unable to educate their children. The school also admits orphans, who are often stigmatised, forgotten and live their lives in social isolation. The children are being taught ECD basic skills, numbers and language. The hope is to also develop a food program for mid-day nutrition. SFA began to assist this project in 2019 by installing a Water Collection system

at a cost of \$2,165.00. It involved installing an elevated water tower, a storage tank and a submerged pump. Water is now pumped up from a 20 meter deep borehole to the storage tank and is then delivered by pipes to a sink and taps installed by the latrines for hand washing. This improved sanitation will also lessen illness. The water will also be directed to an area for a future small kitchen. (SFA hopes to fund that kitchen in 2020.)

Local river water is contaminated by toxins and infested with Shigella entero bacteria, staphylococcus, salmonella and e coli to name a few. Clean water to drink and for handwashing at the latrine taps will go a long way towards ensuring better health for the children and staff. Every year millions of Kenyans die from preventable waterborne illnesses. The goal of protecting these children from diseases such as Hepatitis, Cholera and Dysentery has now become reachable. We thank our wonderful donors for funding completion of this much needed water project.

## **The Shamoni Community Well**

With the funding completed at a cost of \$8,353.00, this well was scheduled to break ground in November of 2019 after the end of the seasonal light rains. However the unusually heavy rains that arrived and persisted forced the date to be set back. Rains were so heavy that ground was washed away and even livestock and lives were lost in some cases. The well team is now poised to begin the well digging in early 2020. The funds for this well were raised throughout the January to June months of 2019 due to an exciting adventure taken on by long time SFA donors Gerald & Lenore. The couple took part in the Cairo to Capetown Bike Tour which took them and others in the tour from Egypt down the full length of the East African continent. Their adventure was shared on a very interesting and informative blog. On the Kenyan leg of the journey donations were requested for the funding of this well. Not only was the well generously funded, Gerald and Lenore also raised awareness of the great importance of water in basic daily life and the dire need experienced by those who live in this part of the world. Thanks to their initiative, water will soon be available to the Shamoni Community. It will serve one school, two churches and the local people for a total of 1,050 people. This will ease the burden of women and children walking long distances in search of water that is not even safe to consume. We are very grateful once again for these generous donors.

## **Mosquito Nets Project 2019**

SFA was disappointed to learn that the price of mosquito nets to be purchased for distribution by the team during their 2019 visit in February had gone up dramatically from previous years. The old price was \$1.99 (150Ksh) each, the new price was \$7.96 (600Ksh) each, an increase of over 300%. Prices continue to sky rocket for everything in Kenya. Though a search was made for a better price it was only possible to get the reduction down to 500Ksh. This allowed the team to distribute only 260 nets at a cost of \$1,895.50 during their visit. Those who received the life- saving nets were very appreciative.

### **Updates about additional on-going projects....**

#### **Chevosho Posho Mill 2019**

The mill is an on-going income generating community project. It continues to work well. The group is still united and sustaining the project. The mill had a mechanical problem in 2019 but the group was able to repair it and continue.

#### **Masha Mapya Cow Project**

This community income generating project continues with the original participants pushing forward. The only problem that arose in 2019 occurred when a swarm of bees attacked one of the cows. Unfortunately the cow died as a result but no human was affected because they locked themselves in the houses during the attack.

#### **Shitochi Goat Project**

There is nothing special to report with this project. It continues to function well.

#### **Khayega Women's Sewing Group**

This long running income generating group is now in its tenth year. The group has gained experience, new skills, patterns and their items have sold well. Each year the SFA visiting team has brought back items made by the group to sell at our small fairs and events. Among those items are jackets, skirts, table mats, hand bags and aprons.

## **Thank You for 14 years of Support**

As SFA completes its 14<sup>th</sup> year in operation, the last 10 of those years as a fully registered Canadian Charity, we are both happy and proud of all the work done by this small but enthusiastic organisation. We are very grateful for all our friends and supporters of all ages ranging from preschool to seniors in their 90's. Together we have contributed to the health, nutrition and education of thousands of individuals who live on the margins, often lacking the very simple basics of life. None of this would have been possible without all of you. Be assured that your partnership has made life better for those you have never met in this poor rural region in Kenya. We believe that the world is a better place for your commitment and involvement! See you next year!

Darlene Anderson, President

Wendy Buchanan, Treasurer