



RUAHA CONSERVATION FUND



Makifu school Library

Our latest project is constructing a library for Makifu Primary school. Some time ago the school approached us with the possibility of helping them create a space for the children to study, and more importantly, a place where they could have a selection of books that the children could access. It is worth mentioning that none of the primary schools in our area have such a facility, though, some years ago we constructed a large library/environmental hall for the secondary school in Idodi.

At the same time, Jongomero Camp, who has been assisting this school in various ways also had, had the same request, so it seemed a good idea if we joined hands with Jongomero on this program. We have agreed that we, RCF, will construct the building, and Jongomero Camp will provide the books and the furniture. We are delighted that our side of the project has been made possible, (again), by the generous donations from the Geiselman family, from Houston, Texas.



MAKIFU SCHOOL



1. Tree nursery center and top right.

2. School yard, top and bottom left

3. Becky and Tony Geiselman on their last visit to Ruaha. Cullen Geiselman, Tony's daughter not in the photo, donated to this project as well.

various aspects of this school

Makifu school has always been our "role model" school. Since we began our work with the 6 village schools on the SE boundary of Ruaha National Park, some 15 years ago, Makifu has always been the school to excel itself. Every year it wins one of the environmental prizes for the best kept school yards and every year it has new initiatives. The photos above show their well maintained tree nursery. These trees serve a variety of needs, some are fruiting trees, some are good for coppicing for wood, others are great for shade, doubling up as good herbal medicine too. The head teacher told me that many of the homesteads in the area have bought seedlings from them and that the business continues to expand as more and more families look for ways to save and make money.

I was also impressed to see 3 new fish farm ponds. It all started by a leaking tap! The head teacher decided rather than get the tap fixed it would be better to utilize the seeping water to make a fish pond, the idea worked and now they have 3 ponds which they are harvesting fish from, which is a great addition of protein to the children's diets.

But the best thing is that over the years the hundreds of children who have attended this school have all been influenced by a very forward thinking and acting person. To my mind, action speaks far louder than any amount of words. So, I am sure that many families who attended this school over the past 15 years are reaping the benefits to this day.

The annual school trips to visit Ruaha National Park were their usual success!

This November we were very happy to welcome Harry and his two sons, Robert and Bram from Holland. Harry and Ans, have been supporting the annual school trips to Ruaha for the past 10 years! Without their support thousands of children would never have visited Ruaha. It was great for us to be able to show Harry first hand how much the children loved their day in Ruaha.

Harry came with other wonderful gifts too. He brought with him four complete sets of outfits for the primary school football teams. Plus 4 footballs !!

Football in Tanzania is almost a national pastime, all kids and grownups alike take this game very seriously indeed, so for the children of 4 schools to receive footballs and outfits for the game they love, was a real occasion to be happy!



Harry Enjoying Interacting With The Children And Giving The Football Outfits



THIS YEAR WE SENT JUST OVER 600 STUDENTS FOR AN OUTING TO THE PARK!

DR DULLE AND I STARTED THIS PROGRAM IN 1999. EACH YEAR, WE HAVE SENT ABOUT 600 CHILDREN, ON A DAY TRIP TO RUAHA NATIONAL PARK.

OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS THAT AMOUNTS TO OVER 8,500 CHILDREN!

HARRY AND ANS HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPORTING US FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS, THANKS TO THEIR GENEROSITY THEY HAVE SENT AT LEAST 6,000 OF THE 8,500 CHILDREN.

FANTASTIC SUPPORT !!!!!

THANK YOU

The children with the bag of football outfits.

Mr Mwangosi the Education Officer for the area, photo right.

Below, Sue and the head teacher admiring the outfits.



FOOTBALL SERIES TO SAVE ELEPHANTS



The winning team and Godwellias Meing'ataki , spearheading the SPANEST program and who instigated the games



The referee for the game and below, some of the the fans going home after the game.



SPANEST USING FOOTBALL AS A WAY TO ENCOURAGE ELEPHANT PROTECTION IN RUAHA

Although SPANEST is nothing to do with RCF, I wanted to highlight the fact that TANAPA together with UNDP are spearheading this successful program aimed at strengthening partnerships with National Parks, and protected areas, with the communities which surround them in southern Tanzania

Rob and I were delighted to attend the semi final match to a mini 'village cup' series held in August this year. This series, was the initiative of Godwellias Meing'ataki, who is the leader of the SPANEST program based in Iringa. The idea was to use football as a way to spread the word about the detrimental effect the massive poaching of elephants is having on Tanzania's economy, and more specifically, on their economy if they don't do something themselves to stop the trend.

At the beginning of each match, during half-time, and at the end, Godwell gave a talk to the crowds as to what effect the poaching was having on Tanzania as a whole, and how it would be helpful to all, if the villagers could act responsibly and call the Parks directly if they saw anything suspicious.

I had first hand comments from many of the villagers we know, who were really enthusiastic about the games, saying that week-end drinking had gone down substantially, as people wanted to attend the games rather than hang out in bars and more importantly how the message was getting through about reporting the poachers. Everyone felt part of the team! Wonderful!

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