



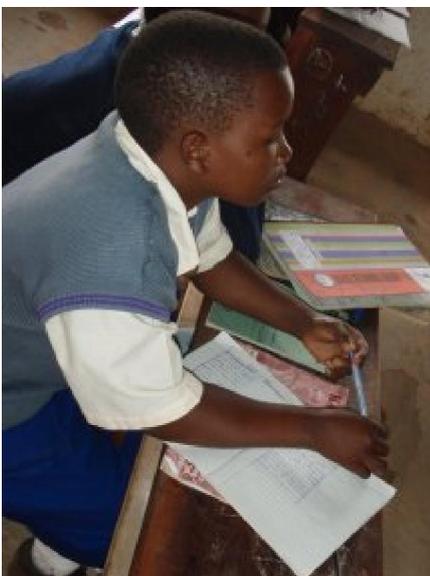
Uganda Humanist Schools Trust Newsletter 1

Report on Our First 6 Months – January to June 2009

The Uganda Humanist Schools Trust (UHST) has been operating for just over 6 months. We should like to thank everyone who has responded to our appeal for funds to support the Humanist Secondary Schools in Uganda.

I visited two of the three schools we are helping last week, the Humanist Academy and Isaac Newton High School, and was impressed by the progress they have made since my last visit in February. The schools now have a full complement of teachers, the students have some class sets of textbooks to work from, there is a little science equipment and they are making progress with new building work.

At the Humanist Academy I saw a very effective Biology lesson given by an impressive young teacher, John Lubega, whose salary we have raised for the whole of this year. He had two students demonstrate how the enzyme catalase breaks up potentially damaging hydrogen peroxide in the tissues of plants (potato) and animals (ox liver). I also saw a senior 3 Computer Studies lesson where the teacher was using a single desktop computer, powered by a small generator, to teach the students how to use the computer to make presentations.



During a visit to the Isaac Newton High School I saw students using some of the textbooks we have provided and Peter Kisirinya, who is in charge of the school, showed me the work on a new storeroom for the books and we visited the local metal works where secure metal doors and windows were being manufactured.



Since January the Trust has received donations of well over £20,000. During the first 6 months of this year we have already been able to transfer over £15,000 to the Ugandan schools. Two-thirds of the money has gone to the newest school, the Humanist Academy, which is owned by the Uganda Humanist Association. The remainder has been distributed between the Isaac Newton High and Mustard Seed Schools.

Donations have paid for scholarships for 55 needy children. This scholarship money has been essential in helping the schools to cover basic running costs, the largest of which is payment for teaching staff. In addition we have sent:

- £800 to meet the pay of part-time Biology and Chemistry teachers.
- £4800 for student textbooks and teachers' books.
- £850 for laboratory equipment for science.
- £2000 for essential access road improvements to the Humanist Academy.
- £1200 to build a secure storeroom for books at the Isaac Newton School.
- And small amounts towards general expenses, including an end-of-year open event.

Supporting the Humanist schools in Uganda is a collective effort involving: the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), readers of the New Humanist (Rationalist Association), local Humanist groups (especially the North East Humanists and South Cheshire and North Staffordshire Humanists) and our newly formed Charitable Trust (UHST).

The schools need a lot more help from the Humanist Community if we are to ensure that the children in them receive a good standard of education, following a liberal-secular ethos. If you want to find out more or to make a contribution then visit: www.ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org or email: info@ugandahumanistschoolstrust.org.

We shall be preparing a further fund-raising appeal in the Autumn so that we can continue to help the students and schools to progress during 2010. The schools are benefiting greatly from your support and they are very grateful. These are a few comments from the students themselves:

"Thank you for the textbooks you have given to us. Thank you for the computer, but I would like you to buy for us another computer, because one is not enough. The bad thing is we don't have a ball again. I am humbly requesting for you to buy us a ball."

"The school is very well organised by trained teachers and they teach well. But we need a library and laboratory and we have few balls for games."

"The school is very interesting to me because our teachers taught us very well and that is why I like the school. I think our Director should build for us a boarding house because some of us come from very far. We also need a school laboratory. I want to be sponsored for 5 years because I don't have my dad he has already passed away. My mum is very poor that is why I want to be sponsored for another 5 years. I will be very happy to get it."

"I love the school. The teachers teach well but we lack permanent ones. We lack a laboratory and library rooms, metallic goal posts and balls. Also a boarding section. I want to be sponsored for 6 years. I will work hard."

"I have been helped by my sponsor to find my fees. I thank for that response from you. Thanks very much. But if it is possible I can be helped again. If I get that help I will try my level best to read my books again this year, because my parent is earning little from unskilled labour. A boarding section is needed for us. A book per student in weekends so that we can improve in our studies, because if we read these books we can widen our understandings."

Steve Hurd
Chairperson, UHST

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