



## News from the Kisoro Children

As the new academic year started at the **Kisoro School for Deaf Children**, on 2nd February 2004, we are delighted to bring you the latest news from the project.

Sadly a fierce political conflict continues within the Diocese of Muhabura, which includes Kisoro. You have perhaps read about this in the national press. But there have been positive outcomes for the school, for example the establishment of an independent management committee. And despite the external difficulties, the deaf unit is continuing to thrive, its pupils working hard at their



lessons, and also enjoying participating in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including football, athletics, volleyball, snakes and ladders, and draughts. They have also presented songs, poems and stories on national and international day celebrations including Labour Day and Independence Day.

### Sylvia's Story

Sylvia is a 12 year old girl, who started at the deaf unit in 2001. Her deafness was caused by meningitis which attacked her when she was five years old. She lost her both parents and two uncles plus their wives through HIV/AIDS. She now lives with another uncle who is a widower of about 75 years.

Sylvia used to perform better in class in her first and second years before having to take on more responsibilities at home, such as cooking, cultivating, weeding and all sorts of domestic activities which are essential for survival. There is no one else to assist her with the domestic chores. She is happy and proud to be in the deaf unit and she likes the school, teachers, support staff and other children, especially those she can interact with using Uganda Sign Language (USL).

She enjoys music, dance and drama, skipping, knitting, compound cleaning and scrubbing. As for her future plans, she would like to become a teacher for deaf children or a Pastor/Priest for the deaf community.

### Muhire's Story

Muhire Emmanuel is a 16 year old boy, the youngest of 7 brothers and 2 sisters. His home is about 1/2 km from the Uganda / Rwanda border. The cause of his deafness is believed to have been the noise from heavy artillery used in the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

Muhire is hard of hearing and cannot utter a single word, communicating only by Sign Language. His parents are very old and do not know Sign Language. But fortunately one of his brothers has an interest in the language and he is the one who looks after Muhire.

Muhire is one of cleverest boys in the whole school. He has now been promoted to P.4. He likes his teachers and is always asking them questions about anything which he doesn't know!

At school he also likes to play football, volleyball and he is an expert at draughts. At home Muhire looks after the crops in the garden and sometimes goes to graze his father's cow. Muhire says that in the future he would like to go to University and become a doctor or an engineer.

### Ivan's Story

Ivan is 14 years old and has been a pupil at the school since 2001. Ivan's mother died when he was 4 years old. After his mother's death, his father married another woman, who treated Ivan badly.

During the holidays Ivan helps at home by collecting firewood, grazing goats, cleaning, etc. He is very happy and comfortable at school, and likes to eat a lot because he receives such miserable portions at home!

He appreciates the project staff and everyone who supports the project through the Kisoro Trust Scotland. In future he hopes to be a farmer to earn his living.



## A Monster Fundraising Effort

By Clare Bird, The Kisoro Trust

One of my dreams has been to row down Loch Ness. The image I had was of sparkling water, a rowing boat, and just me, leisurely whiling away my retirement years... so imagine my surprise when I found myself on Loch Ness in August, wet through and paddling for dear life against a howling gale and 2-foot waves, with my nephew Brendan in another sea kayak being tossed about for company.

Transported by our Thrifty van the plan was to start from the Inverness end at Dores, paddle 5 miles the first day, 5 miles the second and 10 miles the third, ending up at Fort Augustus in grand style, against the prevailing wind. However the weather being particularly inclement we decided to reverse the middle and last stages, so that we ended our trip pretty much half way back, at Foyers.



Never having been in a kayak before and not having time for any instruction, our progress (without splash decks to entrap us and near enough the shore to swim for it) must have looked slightly ungainly. However, this did not deter the odd tourist from taking photographs

of us. Admittedly there was nothing else to take pictures of on the Loch, with Nessie not being in an accommodating mood and the local fishermen wisely in front of their fires. But our kayaks, hired from Tiso's, and named Hansel and Gretel because we had to hide them in the forest every day while we retrieved our vehicle, were indeed very beautiful.

Nights were comfortable and undisturbed as the van turned into a large dormitory, there were great overnight parking spots at both Dores and Foyers, and the high winds kept the midgies away. One of the highlights of the trip was attending the Sunday evening service at Foyers. We met a delightful couple who live on the top of a remote hill, and insisted on picking us up in their Landrover on Monday afternoon when we had finished our 3-day paddle. The trip to their home shifted my idea of a hairpin bend into quite another dimension - but the celebratory tea and company was worth it.

So overall it was a body, mind and spirit-expanding experience which I would highly recommend to anyone, and which raised several hundred pounds for the **Kisoro School for Deaf Children**. And nobody believes me of course but I definitely saw something quite large swimming in the middle of the loch early one morning...



## Easier Ways to Help

If you don't fancy a canoe expedition, there are much easier ways to help the children in Kisoro. Simply send a cheque, made payable to The Kisoro Trust, to the address below, or better still, tick the box to request a standing order form.

Whether you'd like to make a single gift or become a regular supporter, you can increase the value of your gift by nearly a third, at no extra cost to yourself, by completing the Gift Aid Declaration (UK taxpayers only).

And, if you're full of new ideas or would like to help out by organising a fundraising event, please get in touch - we'd love to hear from you!

Yes, I would like to make a donation to the Kisoro Trust. I enclose a cheque for £.....

Please send me a standing order form.

Name: .....

Address: .....

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Tel: .....

Email: .....

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all donations made by me to the Kisoro Trust from 6th April 2001. I understand that I must pay sufficient tax each year to cover the amount to be reclaimed. Signed: .....