



Shyira Trust/St. Luke's, Formby

Registered Charity Numbers 1118979 and 1130493

Shyira Update, April 2010

We try to produce periodic updates to keep everyone informed of progress in Shyira, with our newsletters normally following on from someone going to Shyira. Our last visit was early in 2009, so this update has been produced from information sent to us by Pastor Anthony and others in Shyira. People there accept the need to be accountable for money sent.

In 2009 we sent a total of £24,446 to Shyira. Quite a lot was for specific purposes; for example there was £6380 for child sponsorship at Groupe Scolaire and £1850 as an initial payment towards the maternity hospital extension. There was also £3750 to help support maternity services including midwife training.

Some of the money sent was for discretionary use on projects as approved by the parish council and some was for specified projects but with people in the parish having some discretion. As an example, money sent through alternative gifts had to be used in a particular way, but the people who would benefit was not specified. The general principle is that people in Shyira know the people and their problems better than we do, and they have freedom to ensure that money goes to the areas of greatest need.

Lent Project 2009.

Through our 2009 Lent Project we raised money for a solar power system at ACEC school to supply electricity for the computers provided by the Rotary Club of Formby. The background to this is that Shyira schools no longer have an electricity supply. There was a generator at Groupe Scolaire that provided some power for ACEC but it is worn out and now can't be used.



The solution is to provide solar panels on the school roof. The panels charge a battery whose stored energy is then converted to an alternating current supply at mains voltage for lighting or for driving computers, keyboards and the like.

We have heard from Shyira that following our 2009 Lent project they were able to provide power into the new building, partly shown in the picture, and have been able to use their new computers. Thanks to everyone who contributed—it makes a big difference to the children of ACEC.

Child Headed Families

In his report to us on the progress made in Shyira in 2009, Pastor Anthony tells us that he helped 22 child headed families. St. Marks church, our linked parish, worked closely with the families, giving them support through counselling and the Word of God.

The money we sent enabled twelve children to be given goats and four to be given sheep. Goats and sheep are valued animals and are cared for like family members. They provide manure that enables soil fertility to be enhanced and crops to be increased. To help in other aspects of crop production, 10 children received a hoe—used for digging in Rwanda—and one child a machete.

The children generally have no money, living from hand-to-mouth on what they can earn through casual work for other people and producing as much of their own food as they are able. One child headed family admitted to visitors from Formby that they go hungry as they wait for crops to mature. They do not have money for house maintenance or furniture and



we have embarked on a programme of house renewals. In 2009 one house was replaced, bringing the total number we have rebuilt or repaired to eleven. Five children received a bed, and twenty received mosquito nets.

Rwanda does not have a national health service, so everyone must pay for medical care. Shyira hospital allows people to pay a small sum of money for medical insurance, enabling them to receive treatment they need free of charge. The parish paid medical insurance fees for 26 children from the money we sent.

The best way out of poverty is for children to get a good education. The money we sent enabled one member of a child headed family to go to school and purchased a school uniform for another child.

Coffee Project

2009 started with about 2 hectares of land on which 1100 trees of coffee were planted. Another 4 hectares of land were acquired in 2009 and by the end of April a total of 5100 coffee trees should be growing.

In the project proposal prepared by the pastor Emmanuel a total of 50.000 trees was the target. This is still the target and is exciting because coffee growing it is the one project that could almost eliminate poverty in Shyira.

Child Sponsorship

Pastor Anthony tells us that children are doing well in primary, secondary, technical and nursery schools. School fees were paid through the Shyira Trust/St. Luke's sponsorship scheme for 67 students in Groupe Scolaire in the year 2009, and 4 in ACEC Bihembe.

2009 ended with students sitting for government national exams and the performance of our sponsored students was encouraging.

Pastor Anthony reports *"I am happy to express my joy that in two consecutive years, 2008 and 2009, the best students who sat the government national exams in Groupe Scolaire were Formby sponsored. I congratulate their sponsors and it is my prayer that the Almighty God recognizes their effort. A detailed report of Formby sponsored students is frequently sent by the person in charge of studies in Groupe Scolaire, Mr.Niyonambaza Gervais. As the Head Master of this school, I need to express my extra thanks to the sponsors of these children."*

CEFOPS continues to produce banana cards and they receive all proceeds from the sale of cards. The school are very thankful for the income they get. £820 in 2009.

Hospice and Social Centre

The hospice has now been renamed by Bishop Augustin the "Restoration Centre", this taking account of its expected work in restoring the people damaged mentally by memories of genocide. In 2009 some of the money we sent to the parish was used to pay the salaries of three security guards up to the time when Mr. Tomas Schumann and his wife Anett became responsible for the centre. Also two offices of the centre which were formerly built of plywood were built permanently with fired bricks.

Hospital

We support the hospital directly, sending money for midwifery and other services. Training of a second midwife is now well under way, and Robinah, the first midwife whose training was paid for is developing midwifery services in Shyira.

Shyira hospital was established by missionaries who created Shyira parish and continues to be a church hospital, although it is also a state hospital. The parish has used some of the money we sent to help people with their hospital stay by providing food for some patients, buying crutches, providing patient Bibles and looking after patients who are in a serious condition and have no one to help them. Normally patients are expected to have an helper who provides non-medical care, including food.



Church Projects

This entire document is about community projects supported by the church. In addition the church has used some money for its own work:

- The parish conducted youth seminars and conferences and this has improved Christian participation in the Parish.
- The house of an old woman who is helpless has been repaired. At the moment she is happy in the house.
- Some books have been purchased for the English Service.
- Some poor Christians were given Kinyarwanda Bibles.
- People who had simple needs that were affordable were helped.
- The parish responded to some of the needs of the sister churches, St. Mark and Kana that form Shyira Parish. This involved contributing to the expense of musical instruments that play a major role in worshipping. Pastor Anthony is happy to report that congregations are growing and lively.
- The mother's union work in beautifying the Lord's house was supplemented.

Future planning

We have several ongoing projects in Shyira and these must continue. Shyira Trust trustees are recommending that for building work we should concentrate on one project at a time rather than supporting them all at once.

There is little provision for children in Shyira, except for the schools, and therefore it is felt that we should give first priority to the construction of a Children's Centre. 450 children would benefit from this on Sundays and after school other days. Less than 50% of people are able to read so the building would also serve as a literacy centre for adults when children are at school.

Second priority should be an extension to the maternity hospital. The building we provided six years ago has been very successful in its work and is now overcrowded. A second floor extension is needed.

Bishop John

Bishop John will retire on his 65th birthday on 14th November 2010. His successor has already been appointed and is Rev. Dr. Laurent Mbanda.

Mbanda has been serving as the Africa Regional Vice President of Compassion International, an established global Christian ministry. He was consecrated as the new Bishop of Shyira on Palm Sunday and will be gaining experience of the diocese until Bishop John retires.

Bishop John has been an inspired leader of Shyira diocese, and has led the diocese through a period of post-genocide recovery. We thank him for his fellowship and wish him well for the future.