



Shyira Trust

November 2012

Registered Charity Number 1118979

Member's update.

First let us give you some good news. It is now three years since Robinah qualified as a midwife. Since she started work as a qualified midwife in Shyira maternity hospital we understand that no woman has died while giving birth in the hospital. In Rwanda overall one woman in nine will die while giving birth. We are awaiting some statistics, but know that there has also been a significant reduction in baby deaths.

It is amazing how a relatively small financial outlay can have such beneficial results.

However, the success of the hospital and its trained midwives, all paid for through the Trust or St. Luke's Church, is now creating a problem. More women want to use the maternity hospital and its services and it is overcrowded.

To maintain recent improvements we must extend the maternity services in Shyira and the surrounding countryside. Exactly how this will be done is still not fully resolved; we are discussing options with Bishop Augustin and the hospital staff in Shyira. What we do know is that it will be expensive possibly costing more than £100,000. We plan to try fundraising using the internet and will keep you informed.

Trust website. Our present website is 6 years old and in serious need of redevelopment. Also it does not seem to work with Windows 8. Development of a new website has started and the work completed can be seen at www.shyiratrust.org.uk/New. The new site is designed to work on normal computers, tablets or smart phones by moving parts of a page into different positions depending on the screen size.

While redeveloping the site we are adding facebook to our internet presence. See <http://www.facebook.com/shyiratrust>. There is still work to do!

We welcome help or comments on the website or facebook and ask that you keep reviewing it

as it is developed. Comments to the email address below please.

A Rwandan meal will be served in St. Luke's meeting room from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm on Saturday 8th December. Cost £10, or £6 for children, with any profit going to Rwanda. The meal will be cooked by Marie Claire, the Rwandan lady who travelled to Rwanda with two of your trustees last May. She will be helped by some African friends and will use authentic produce purchased at a specialist shop in Manchester. Contact us for tickets using email below.

Banana leaf cards are no longer made by Shyira technical school. This is because the national curriculum has been changed so that it no longer includes traditional crafts. We do have some cards left and are trying to find a fresh source – several women's groups make them for example.

Alternative Gift catalogues have been updated and new ones are available. Please consider using an alternative gift if you are unsure what gifts to give for Christmas, birthdays, etc. The catalogue can be seen on the website and copies are available in St. Luke's or email the address below to have one sent to you.

£246 has been raised by people using the Everyclick website. Everyclick is an internet search engine that gives advertising income to charities registered with it. To ensure the maximum benefit for your chosen charity you need to register your interest with Everyclick. You should go to www.everyclick.com and register, then when you use Everyclick the charity you have chosen will receive some income. Other funding options are listed on our new website.

Do you shop on the internet? Several companies are willing to donate to charities when their supporters shop on the internet and the Trust has £121 raised by this means through just seven people. So far we have used the website:

www.thegivingmachine.co.uk

but that requires people to register and remember to use the site. An alternative is to download some software from:

www.giveasyoulive.com/download

that will attach itself to your web browser and claim a donation from participating web retailers every time you buy from them.

National Council for Voluntary Services, NCVO.

The Trust has taken out a one year membership of the NCVO. If you look at their website you will find that they have negotiated huge discounts on many products – look at:

<http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/essential-resources>

for a list of what they offer.

As a member of the Trust you can benefit - NCVO tell us. *“We want as many people as possible at Shyira Trust to take advantage of your membership. You can all use everything we have to offer from software discounts to free HR support - there’s something for everyone.”* Our membership number is MEMBERVP/14809

You may need to register by going to www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/user/register If you need more information please email us.

Please let us know if you find NCVO helpful.

Kirkby Christian Fellowship gave us a gift of £1225 last year as a contribution to the further development of midwifery services in Shyira. They normally support two charities from a sponsored event, and the support is usually limited to one year only.

Last year their sponsored event was a Lake Bala swim; this year it was a swim across the Mersey, and we have been told that midwifery services in Shyira will again benefit. We are grateful to the Fellowship for their support.

Moses and Butaka. It has been decided not to develop the pyrethrum sheds because of an ongoing dispute over ownership. Therefore it is planned to develop a church centre in a location identified by Moses. There is still a need for financial support for Moses.

Conflict in DRC. Goma and Gisenyi are two cities at the northern end of Lake Kivu, Goma in DRC and Gisenyi in Rwanda. They form one large

built up area, rather like Liverpool and Bootle, but are divided by a fence that forms an international border.

Citizens of DRC and Rwanda can cross the border easily, just needing an ID. Many Rwandans study in Goma because it is cheaper to go to college there; for example a trainee midwife from Shyira studies in Goma. The communities are closely linked.

The DRC side of the border has suffered many years of conflict with loss of life and little international help. Bishop Augustin, who lives in Gisenyi, tells us that there was a lot of fighting in Goma on Monday 19th November and many people fled into Rwanda. Tuesday 20th it was all quiet and people returned home again.

The following is the situation as your chairman sees it, and does not represent the view of the trust.

In 1994 there was genocide in Rwanda. The war was halted because of the intervention of people who had been exiled into Uganda and were led by Paul Kagame, now president of Rwanda. Many of the Interahamwe militia, who were mainly responsible for the killing, fled into DRC. Rwanda tried to get them to return home to their families and some did. However, there is still a large group in DRC.

The Rwandese are determined there will be no repetition of the events of 1994, but the Interahamwe are considered to pose a threat. When we visited Moses in Butaka last May there was security along the border but we found that the people were strongly in favour, saying they needed their army to defend them.

Recently Rwanda has received a lot of press criticism and claims that it is supporting the M23 militia in DRC. I don’t know if such claims are true, but I am certain that Rwanda will do whatever it needs to do to protect its borders and prevent any reoccurrence of the events of 1994.

Whatever governments do, remember that our support goes directly to the people and we know that it is used correctly. It is all about the people.