

# Friends of Londiani Harambee 2016 Report



Harambee 2016 was very successful with volunteers travelling to Kenya to partake in FOL's ongoing health and community development projects. Preparation began in July 2016 with the 1<sup>st</sup> training day in Middleton, followed by a 2 day course in Middleton in September where more detailed discussion of tasks took place. The Harambee ran from 01 November to 14th November

## Volunteers

The team was made up of four first time volunteers Rae Auton, Jessica Hayden, Karen Lynch and Susie Quinn and returning volunteers Anne Healy and Mary Stafford. Working alongside Friends of Londiani Kenya staff, the team witnessed the varied and excellent projects Friends of Londiani support in the Kipkellion region.



## Project Site

After arriving in at 2130hrs on Saturday November 1<sup>st</sup> to Nairobi to be greeted by CEO Martin Ballantyne, Director Maria Kidney and Field Officer Joan, we overnighted there and set off early the following morning for our final destination, St Kizito's Londiani. Under the gracious hospitality of Fr Martin Barry and Fr Con Tobin we remained in dorms built in the grounds of St Kizitos and utilised the excellent facilities they have built for community use in the district.

On arrival to St Kiziitos's we were welcomed by a group of local women in their traditional manner. It was a very emotional occasion and gave a taster to the new volunteers of the wonderful hospitality they were to experience in the following two weeks. For the two returning volunteers it was a chance to meet up with old friends.

For the two weeks of the Harambee, St Kizito's grounds was a hive of activity as it was the base for all project planning, along with courses being run in the Church hall. During the two Wilderness First Aid Courses, heavily bandaged casualties were seen to make miraculous recoveries around the site.

During the time of our stay there were also courses running alongside our projects, chiefly the Alternative Rites of Passage training spearheaded by Friends of Londiani, Kenya staff.

## Harambee

Two busy weeks followed our arrival and tasks completed included Business Courses, Health Centre visits with follow up Essential Obstetric and New born care courses with clinic staff in their workplace, Sustainable stove surveys and installations and Remote Emergency Care Training. These are outlined on the following pages.



## Business Course

A Three Day Business Course was held in Kasheen Church hall with 25 people completing the course. This course was facilitated by FOLK's Operations Manager and Salim assisted by Harambee Volunteers Jessica Hayden and Mary Stafford. It's a continuation of courses held since 2011 in the region and was at the request of local officials. As quoted in its course content 'The course focusses on how to establish business/income generation schemes to enable economic empowerment and therefore improve economic wellbeing'.



Through active facilitation, brainstorming and discussion very positive feedback was received on this course. The overwhelming request being for more courses of this nature. Amongst one of the areas identified as a business opportunity was jam making, utilising the many products available in the region. In the future Londiani may have its own jam making producers.

Volunteers also took part on a one day feedback and review of courses held during summer 2016 Harambee team Business courses. The participants praised the course and again requested more courses for their areas.



## Stove Surveys and Installations



FOL is working with the Public Health Office in Londiani and in Kipkelion, to introduce a new fuel efficient stove to the District. This new stove has been built in almost 200 homes in the Londiani Area. These will have a major impact on the health of the entire family but especially on the mother (typical the cook in the household) and small children, either strapped to the mothers back or playing around near the old open fire. However the main point of delight for the new proud owners of these stoves is the fuel efficiency, the stoves need only one third of the fuel used by open fires. It costs about €12 to build one of these stoves, much of the cost is in the chimney but the benefits are huge.

During Harambee 2016 20 Stove Surveys were carried out and 10 new Stoves were installed with the assistance of FOL volunteers working alongside the local communities. The information gained in the carrying out of these surveys on the demographics and challenges these communities face play a vital role in planning Community Development and reaching Health targets for the District Public Health and for Friends of Londiani in supporting these programmes. It is also an opportunity to see how local communities adapt to the challenges they face in



## Sustainable Tourism



Anyone who has visited the Londiani Area and particularly areas like Ndubusat knows the beauty of the area. Trekking from village to village, as many volunteers have done is a delight and no one can come to the area and not wonder about its potential as a tourist magnet. However with no tourism infrastructure, the area is not in a position to attract tourism. November Harambee 2016 group went for a visit and camped overnight in the new campsite in Ndubusat. Facilities there excited everyone and the views were stunning.

Enroute a stop off was made, where the team got a guided tour of the Kipkellion COOP Coffee Mills. The team got to witness the process from the raw coffee beans to the finished product in one's cup. The CEO presented each volunteer with a bag of Kipkellion coffee and once again the team experienced the wonderful hospitality of this nation.



## Girls for Girls Programme

Girls in Kenya can miss up to one week a month of school (up to 45 days a year) due to inadequate menstrual health management (MHM). It's a multi-dimensional problem: inadequate infrastructure; access to and affordability of sanitary products; hygiene and knowledge. FOL have developed a programme called Girls for Girls to address this issue. The programme integrates education, health and economic empowerment initiatives to enable girls to stay in school.

As a result of being involved in the G4G programme, a girl will have regular ongoing access to sanitary products - she can choose what type works for her; she can learn about her body and taking care of it; she can access clean, safe, reliable facilities with water available; she is economically empowered and therefore is prepared for the world. The intergenerational impacts of G4G will be seen through more educated and economically empowered women who in turn will seek the same benefits for their children.

During our stay in St Kizitos Caroline Chelangat field officer for Girls for Girls with FOL in Kenya, spoke to the volunteers on how this programme operates and the impact it has had in improving female attendance in schools and continuing education. The health promotion aspects and improved sanitary facilities in participating schools has also been noted to be a huge success and it is hoped for the continued role out of this programme going forward.

## Remote Emergency Care

A major component of November 2016 Harambee incorporated the running of two Remote Emergency Care courses. 52 Participants, over two courses, comprising Community Health Workers, Community Groups, Public Health Officers and FOL staff attended a 2 day Wilderness First Aid Course, held in St Kizitos in Londiani. The course provided basic emergency first aid and health training to support people working in very remote areas, where calling emergency services just is not an option. A Trainer for Trainers Day was held prior to the first course and those candidates who had excelled in previous courses were invited back to participate as instructors.



Having been out working on Stove surveys in rural areas the previous day it gave the Irish volunteers an appreciation of the challenges that face the community in accessing healthcare in a timely fashion and the importance of having trained Community Health workers who act as referral agents and provide correct immediate care to those injured in their region. Following the Ebola outbreak in North Western Africa, WHO and local Kenyan Public Health guidelines were explained and discussed with course participants as were dealing with a major incident in their region.



Feedback from this course was very positive.

All participants were given a first aid pack so that they could, have vital materials to hand. These items locally sourced, (with the exception of Irish made bags, and rescue masks) are utilised by trained Community Health Workers.

Demand continues to be very high for this course. It is planned to continue rolling out this course in 2017.

## Essential Obstetric and New born Care

Following on from the successful visit of Medical Students from NUIG during summer 2016 who undertook training sessions and evaluations of skills and facilities available in Health Centres throughout the district, further visits were carried out by nursing/midwifery members of the November project. This is a new venture for the charity, ensuring that the vital services the health professionals provide to their communities do not suffer while they attend continuing professional education courses.



All visited health centres had provided staff to attend EONC course run in May 2016. In between their working day they were reassessed on the skills learnt in relation to Resuscitation of the New born, Maternal resuscitation and a questionnaire completed on the equipment, staffing levels and hygiene standards in the various health centres.

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## Thank you

Friends of Londiani would like to thank each volunteer for giving up their time and energy for the communities around Londiani. It is deeply appreciated by the people and the two-way cultural interaction is a special opportunity for all concerned.

We would like to thank for Fr Martin Barry and Fr Con Ryan and the Parishioners of St Kizitos for their unfailing hospitality and warm welcome to all volunteers.

Finally we would like to thank the supporters and sponsors who have given generously to enable the projects to occur. Through your continued support FOL can strive to achieve its mission of enabling people to become the authors of their own development.



### Friends of Londiani Contact Details:

**Address:** No.4 The Crescent, Millbrook, Mill Road, Midleton, Co. Cork;  
**Telephone:** ☎ 021 4621748  
**Email:** [info@friendsoflondiani.com](mailto:info@friendsoflondiani.com)  
**Website:** [www.friendsoflondiani.com](http://www.friendsoflondiani.com)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/londiani](http://www.facebook.com/londiani)  
**Blog:** <http://friendsoflondiani.com/chat/>  
**Twitter:** @londianicharity