



Harambee July 2016 Report

Harambee is a swahili word meaning 'working together'. Friends of Londiani have adopted this word as the name for their volunteer projects because their projects are all about people working together to create better futures. Teams of volunteers travel to Kenya each year as part of the Friends of Londiani volunteer programme.

This is the story of the July 2016 Harambee.



Friends of Londiani

Who are Friends of Londiani?

Friends of Londiani are an Irish registered charity (CHY16505 & Charity Regulatory Authority Number: CRA 20059583) working in Londiani and Kipkelion, Kenya since 2002.

- We work with communities to create better futures by improving access to water, health and education.
- We are bringing people together to build a thriving economy and provide a safe, sustainable future for everyone.

How do Friends of Londiani do what we do?

The work that Friends of Londiani does is based on the needs of the community as identified by members of the communities themselves. We act as a catalyst in making change happen and we focus on the following areas -

- **Water** - Access to clean water is a basic need and Friends of Londiani is working to improve health, sanitation and food security.
- **Health** – We are committed to increasing access to health care in the communities, focusing on girls and women and increasing healthy homesteads in the Londiani.
- **Education** – We are enabling children to stay at school for longer, improving the environment in which children learn and enhancing understanding of development through increased knowledge and partnerships.
- **Economic Empowerment** – We want to increase household income, providing economic empowerment reducing poverty and creating sustainable livelihoods.

Some key facts & figures

- Kipkelion and Londiani are sub-counties in a remote region in North West Kenya. They are part of Kericho County.
- *The population of Kericho County is 758,339 of which 50% are male and 50% female and 43.6% are under 14 years of age.
- *The population in Londiani town is 43,152 and in Kipkelion town it is 46,760.
- *In Kericho County, 56% of households have access to improved water, 11% have access to electricity, 13.8% of the county roads are paved.
- Health conditions in this area include malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, typhoid, respiratory illness and water borne diseases. It is estimated there 1 nurse per 1,823 population and 1 doctor per 15,000 population in Kericho County.

**Kenya County Fact Sheets Dec 2011 based on 2009 Kenya Census*



Harambee 2016

The July Harambee Team

The July Harambee volunteer team was made up of 9 people from Mayo, Cork, Dublin, Carlow, Limerick and Galway along with a project leader, project manager and local staff in Kenya including a driver, catering staff and members of the Friends of Londiani Kenya staff team. Four of the volunteers were medical students from NUIG who spent five weeks in Londiani and the remaining five volunteers spent three weeks in Londiani.

Each volunteer began preparations for the project months beforehand with trainings held in Ireland to prepare them for the practicalities of the trip, inform them about Kenya's community health strategy; train them in the skills they would require for the project; explore community development; look at cultural awareness and provide support and ideas for fundraising for the project. During their time in Kenya the volunteers got involved in many different ways, they helped facilitate Lifeskills Peer Education courses, assisted at Outreach clinics, installed smokeless stoves and much more.

Fundraising

Friends of Londiani rely on the generosity of supporters and donors who fundraise to support the community development programmes we deliver. Each volunteer committed to raising a target of €1,000 each to contribute to these programmes and between them they well exceeded this target. In addition to this, each volunteer paid for their own costs to get to Kenya either from their own funds or through further fundraising efforts.

Friends of Londiani are very grateful to all of the friends, families, local business and members of the public who supported the volunteers in their fundraising efforts.

Location

Home for the duration of the volunteers stay in Kenya was in the grounds of St. Kizito's Catholic Church in Londiani town where accommodation is provided and there are also facilities for trainings and gatherings. The 'landlords' as it happens are from Ireland – Fr. Martin Barry from Glanmire and Fr. Con Ryan from Tipperary. From here, the volunteers travelled out each day to villages, schools, clinics, homes and community gatherings.

Community

Based in Londiani, Friends of Londiani have a Kenyan staff of 14 who work with local communities to implement Friends of Londiani's plan of action to make change happen. The people that the Harambee team worked closely with included men, women and children from Londiani and Kipkelion districts. They also worked closely with representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, community health workers and local volunteers.

Friends of Londiani's aim is to work with communities to help create a better future for themselves by supporting them to make lasting changes and improvements to

their lives. The Harambee team followed this aim working closely with Friends of Londiani's partners and volunteers in the community. They supported the community by sharing with them their skills and knowledge, facilitating opportunities for training to happen and creating cultural exchange by living in the community. They helped build a confidence and sense of wellbeing in the community that comes from knowing that people cared enough to come and help them in their efforts to improve the future of everyone in their community.

Work Undertaken by Volunteers

During the project, the volunteers worked on:

Lifeskills Peer Education Courses

Friends of Londiani has run peer education courses since 2002 in Kenya. Thousands of people have attended and benefited from information on sexual health, HIV/AIDS, relationships and communication. While in Kenya, the volunteers were involved in the running of two full courses which were held in Tulwap and Kapsenda. What is required of the volunteers involved in this programme is a level of facilitation skills, a non-judgemental attitude, knowledge of the programme content and the ability to be flexible and creative!

Trainings are held in the area where the community live using a church or a meeting hall of some kind as venues. This is a training environment sometimes without 'power point' or even electricity for that matter, and with the additional challenge of translation from Swahili to English, showers of rain on a tin roof that can drown out all chance of being heard and the very welcome and sometimes distracting addition of small babies and toddlers who come attached to their mothers.

The volunteers could see that the participants had put their lives on hold for the week of the course and it was obvious that there is huge interest from the community in participating in the Lifeskills programme. The outcome from participating goes beyond what is learned and understood. During the 5 day course the participants bond and relationships are formed that often become the foundation of groups who go on to tackle issues in their community from no access to clean water to female circumcision.



Pictured here are some of the volunteers with staff member Richard, volunteer facilitators from the community and participants of the Lifeskills courses.

Smokeless Stoves

Friends of Londiani is working with the Public Health Office in Londiani and Kipkelion, to introduce a new fuel efficient stove to the District. During this project, the volunteer team helped to install over twenty stoves in homes all over the district and a few of the volunteers even got the opportunity to help build an industrial size stove for a school.

These stoves are having a major impact on the health of the entire family but especially on the mother (typically the cook in the household) and small children, either strapped to the mothers back or playing around near the old open fire. However, as well as the health benefits, the huge bonus 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 between €45 and €50 to build one of these stoves, which includes a training programme for installers and follow up visits to each household. The benefits are huge.

As part of the smokeless stove installation process, a survey is conducted with each household to identify the kind of improvements that come in the long run in health and a reduction in the amount of wood used as fuel for the fire. Questions are asked of the head of each household about the people of the house, the buildings themselves, the cooking pattern in the day, the kind of health issues experienced in recent times and the type and amount of fuel used. The volunteers conducted this survey for each of the households where new stoves were installed.



Volunteers getting to grips with mixing clay, water, sawdust & sand for the new stove



Example of the current open fire type stove – note the black on the wall caused by smoke filled room



New stove with chimney just completed

Outreach Clinics

Outreach Clinics are run by the District Health team to provide access to vaccinations and ante-natal care especially for new mothers and babies in remote areas of the district. These areas are difficult to access and without the clinics people would have to travel long distances on foot to reach a clinic. The outreach clinics are set up in churches and similar buildings taken over temporarily for the day.

The medical student volunteers attended many outreach clinics in places all over the district during the project. They helped with baby weighing, filling in registrars and general crowd control. As visitors they were a very popular addition to the clinic and the community welcomed them and requested speeches and information about them and where they had come from. The outreach clinics also provide a platform for Friends of Londiani to provide information about what they do in the community.



Sean and Lucy helping weigh babies at an outreach clinic



Conall and Ger meeting people at an outreach clinic

Business Training

Volunteers assisted in the running of two business training courses with local communities groups in Kamasian and Kaylet. This course covered the basics of business planning, budgeting etc. The course was run for the members of the local community who were presently involved in some form of business life &/or entrepreneurial people who had business ideas for the future. The key objective of the course was to help the participants develop their own ideas / generate some new ones & formulate a business plan that could be used in acquiring capital and ultimately bringing the idea to life. Before the volunteers left Ireland they also attended a training day with a past volunteer to help improve the facilitation of this course.



Volunteers facilitating at one of the business training courses.



Medical Students

Friends of Londiani run a course on Essential Obstetric and Neo-Natal Care with staff at hospitals and clinics in the Londiani and Kipkelion area to help improve maternal health. The medicals students trained on this course in Ireland and then while in Kenya they carried out assessments on past participants of the course to assess their knowledge base after the course and assist them in improving skills learned. This gave the students an excellent opportunity to visit clinics all over the district and to meet many members of the medical staff and communities.

The medical students also got the opportunity to partake in clinical placements at hospitals in the area; they spent a number of days in Londiani District Hospital and a week in Kericho hospital. They got the opportunity to see what working in facilities in a resource poor setting was like and added capacity to structures already there.



Conall and Lucy out at a clinic in the area for EONC training



Lucy and Ger at Londiani District Hospital

Menstrual Hygiene Management Workshops

Volunteers also had the opportunity to be part of something new while on their project, Friends of Londiani were running their first community workshops around the area of menstrual hygiene management. These workshops came about as an extension of the Girl4Girls programme and were about giving women from local communities more knowledge about menstruation and how to manage it and about dispelling local taboos surrounding menstruation. This was a ladies only event so the female volunteers got a chance to be involved from the very beginning and were instrumental in designing the workshop and facilitating it!



Trekking Route

During one of their weekends, the Harambee team took the opportunity to try out a few trekking route in the Ndubusat area, the community there are developing as a sustainable tourism project. The area is in the hills and it is very beautiful with stunning views, local people along the route to meet and chat with and interesting projects to visit like a fish farm. The project is being part funded by the Irish Foundation for Cooperative Development and the team stayed at the campsite which was developed in Ndubusat as an overnight base for those on the trekking route. In the long run, the project is intended to be an income generator for the villages in the area as it is hoped to attract tourists interested in trekking and supporting a sustainable tourism venture in the process.



Friends of Londiani staff member Reuben at the fish farm



Photo call for volunteers on one of the trek routes

Other experiences

During the 3 weeks of the project, the volunteers packed in many other experiences such as:

- Visiting the equator line for a photo call;
- Welcoming Esther Korir and her son from the nearby village of Lelsothet to talk about local customs and practices;
- Visiting the Londiani District Hospital and attending the opening of a maternal health shelter there which Friends of Londiani supported the building of;
- Visiting staff member Reuben's home and farm;
- Trips to the busy market in Londiani on a Wednesday;
- And visits to the Classic Hotel & Butchery in Londiani for a soda!



Asante Sana ... Thank you

Friends of Londiani would like to take this opportunity to thank each volunteer for giving up their time and energy to the communities in Londiani & Kipkelion and for their hard work, commitment, enthusiasm, flexibility and good humour throughout the project.

Friends of Londiani would also like to extend their thanks to the families, friends, supporters and sponsors of the Harambee 2016 volunteers who have given generously to support this project. Through your continued support Friends of Londiani can fulfil its aim to support these rural communities in Kenya to make lasting changes and improvements to their lives.



Harambee 2016 Volunteers at the Equator

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