



COMBINED CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES TO THE POOR

ISAIAH 58

BUILDING BRIDGES, MEETING NEEDS & RESTORING LIVES - SIMPLY GETTING ON WITH THE JOB!

Update Report – January - March 2009

A few words . . .

Even though things took a little while to get going this year (particularly with the schools opening so late), it has turned into an incredibly busy first quarter!

The mentoring and training program our community volunteers have been on, coupled with the specific responsibilities each volunteer has taken on, meant that the start-up was however quick and smooth picking up straight away from where we left off last year. The collection and distribution of donations however continued throughout the holiday season.



I think something we have all learnt over the last while, and are acting on more and more in our spiritual walk, is that there comes a time in our journey of redemption where we need to let go of our efforts to get close to God, stand up, turn around, and see the world as He sees it. It then quickly becomes a natural reflex to begin putting yourself to work, touching the lives of those around you in tangible ways and you discover that God, who you were striving to reach, has come to you and is at work right beside and in you. Working together, healing together, restoring together. This is the life we are called to and the example given to us through Jesus Christ and the joy and fulfilment it brings cannot be compared to anything else!



Blessings - Mark

Highlights

1. The involvement of 7 American volunteers who are in Port Elizabeth through Adventures In Missions (AIM) until the middle of May 2009. They have involved themselves in programs at the Centre and we are hoping to establish a permanent link with AIM as a partner for the future, imbedding their missionaries as volunteers in various areas of our work (donations distribution, community projects, schools, etc) when they visit the area.

2. The successful granting of a few small funding requests which are taking the pressure off the work load a little and allowing the ministry to grow according to our plans.



3. The completion of a comprehensive Information/Funding pack for use in raising awareness and fund raising. The packs include comprehensive ministry and project profiles, a detailed target budget breakdown and covering documents often required by potential supporters (constitution, financial statements, certificates, etc)

4. The generous contributions given in response to our requests towards school shoes for many of the OVC's serviced directly by the Ubomi Obutsha Centre have been tremendous.



Setback

Ill health forced Hamilton, our volunteer in charge of donations collections and distribution, to take a leave of absence which put huge strain on other volunteers to fill the gap. The contribution he has made is enormous and his absence was greatly felt by all! We have however recently taken on a new full-time volunteer, Sam Madlana, who has taken on this responsibility and proving to be a blessing to everyone. Fortunately, Hamilton has been able to continue in his role at the Ubomi Obutsha Centre (and taken on a few extra tasks!) and also assists Sam during the rounds.



What's Ahead



1. Fundraising.
2. Strengthening and developing new links with potential benefactors and beneficiary communities.
3. Recruiting local volunteers to assist with specific programs and activities.
4. Developing a volunteer program that can accommodate and facilitate the placement of individuals and groups who commit to work with us for a period of time.

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Banking Details

Ministry Account: **First National Bank**

Staff Support Account: **Bidvest Bank**

Account Name: **Combined Christian Ministries to the Poor** Branch Name: **Newton Park**

Account Name: **Mark Lawler** Branch Name: **Johannesburg**

Account Number: **62000371170** Branch Code: **261050**

Account Number: **244090001** Branch Code: **462005**

International donations can be made via MoneyGram – visit www.moneygram.com for details

(Please reference any deposits for receipting purposes and inform us via email as to how funds should be allocated)

www.ccmp.org.za



Ubomi Obutsha Centre



DEVELOPING THE POOREST OF THE POOR IN OUR COMMUNITY, THROUGH THE LOVE OF CHRIST, TO LIVE PRODUCTIVE LIVES.

The "New Life" Centre is a Community Development Project of Combined Christian Ministries to the Poor

Update Report – January - March 2009

Highlights

1. Our Educare program filled up very quickly this year. We have a group of 39 toddler orphaned or vulnerable children (OVC's) who attend a daily structured program at the Centre. These young children attend this program by invitation of our OVC Interventions Team who have identified them as living in "high risk" conditions through home visits and assessments. The children are doing really well and, although each morning is full of chaos, they love the activities and crafts and learning to write their name, etc. We are also very happy to hear the good reports of the five who were in the group last year and have moved on to Grades R & 1 this year.

2. It was sad to see one of the Dutch intern volunteers, Yvonne, leave in early February. We are thankful in particular for the gift of school stationery supplies and bags her and her colleague, Marjanne, were able to give to 70 of our children through their fund raising efforts back home. We are also glad to welcome Pam, also a Dutch social work intern, in Yvonne's place for the next few months.



3. It was also sad to see our volunteer social worker from Germany, Wiebke, leave after spending 5 months with us. Her contribution has been great, particularly in this first quarter where she focused her energy on the Educare program. The kids miss her tremendously.

4. The AIM volunteers (see CCMP update overleaf) are making a great contribution to our open programs (Sunday School, Kids Club, Teen Club, Soup Kitchen) and have helped give afternoon tutoring to scholars a much needed boost.

5. The Centre has enjoyed the visits of a few potential donors and volunteer partners who viewed the project very favourably ("I have never seen a project like this run as well as this!" – said one!) and we hope to see benefit from this before our next report is due.



Setbacks

1. The school support promised by a major donor at the end of 2008 has not yet materialised causing great disappointment and heartache for these 300 children. We have been fortunate enough though to meet some of their needs from other sources but it has not been enough. This has also put strain on the relationships we have with schools in the area and many of the caregivers of the children we promised to help. We do however expect to receive delivery of most of these supplies in April.

2. The severe dry weather experienced over the last while has put a lot of pressure on our food garden. After a decent harvest at the end of 2008, the seedlings expected from a donor didn't materialise and our seedling beds, out in the open, have struggled to flourish and so we are not looking at a very good harvest this quarter.



Sampled Stories



1. Shortly after the Educare program started for the year, 5 year old Liyema found her way to the Centre and asked Nondo, the project manager, if we could please look after her the way we do the other children! Needless to say, our hearts were broken and a home visit/assessment was arranged that day. It was found that her mother had abandoned her with her frail grandmother who doesn't have adequate resources or the ability to care for Liyema properly on her own. Liyema is now flourishing in the Educare program and enjoys coming to Sunday School as well. She and her grandmother now also receive a small food parcel and a visit from our volunteers every week. It is disturbing that there are likely many other little children in our community like Liyema that we do not even know about yet, but we work continually as our manpower, skill levels and resources increase, to be able to identify them and rescue them from a miserable fate.

2. Late last year, the father of the 9 year old Bashe twins (their mother disappeared years ago) died from AIDS leaving them in the care of their 18 year old sister. These children have been regular attendants of the Centre's programs. With the help of social services, our volunteers were able to place the twins in foster care within the community allowing their lives to carry on without being uprooted. They all continue to receive support from the Centre and continue to grow and develop healthily.



Impact Statistics Summary - (March '09 only)



529 orphaned and vulnerable children were serviced in various ways in March alone. This included **2701** meals to **462** of them!

50 children were provided with basic needs (clothing, regular food parcels, etc).

89 children were assisted with their schooling needs including supplies and tutoring.

39 children received Early Childhood Development care – Educare.

394 children received after school care by attending one of our programs.

298 children attended life skills programs.

271 children attended spiritual support and development programs.

19 homes were visited.

117 new children were reached in this month bringing the total number of OVC's serviced directly through the project over the past year to **1951** children.