



# SAAS

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## ***Ruth and Jill Vance; SAAS Sponsor and SAAS New Editor visit Mombasa.***

Ruth and Jill Vance SAAS Sponsor and SAAS News Editor in Ireland respectively visited Mombasa on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and stayed for over 3 weeks. During their stay they spent an extensive time working tirelessly for SAAS on a daily basis both in the office and in the field. Jill assisted immensely with the Office Administration and day to day running. Ruth was mostly involved with our partner a Local NGO - (MEWA Drug Treatment Centre) where she attended almost on a daily basis counseling the drug addicts and generally giving motivational lectures.

Ruth and Jill also managed to have a tour of the Kongowea area a place where most of SAAS activities are concentrated and where almost all of our sponsored students live. Kongowea is a area afflicted with abject poverty where parents are either market sellers, water vendors, charcoal vendors etc so the population is mainly of poor people and our target is to help these poor toiling parents to educate their High School going children most of whom have dropped out due to lack of school fees. Most of the youth in this area are unemployed and lack any means to train for jobs which can help uplift their standard of living. Most of the youth end up in illegal activities or get involved in the use of drugs.

Ruth and Jill also visited some of the students' homes including Ramadhan. They also visited Kisauni Youth Polytechnic (Technical College) and Jaribuni Secondary School where a number of the SAAS students attend. They also visited Bombolulu Handicraft Centre a workshop for physically handicapped people who use

their talent in art to create items of varying designs from traditional attires, jewellery to bags and shoes with an African touch.



## ***SAAS Student Art Sale in Castleisland, Ireland.***

SAAS was blessed to have an Art Sale in Castleisland – Ireland. The sale was organised by Ms. Ciara O'Connor a student of UCC studying International Development and Food Policy. Ciara visited Mombasa in July and had a first hand experience in the struggles of the students in Mombasa. Among the students she met was Ramadhan. This sale featured pictures painted by – Ramadhan Athman (21 years) who is currently doing Carpentry / Joinery Course at Kisauni Youth Polytechnic.



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Ramadhan is a talented artist whose artwork has amazed many. We wish him all the best in his career in Art. SAAS Mombasa has signed a contract with Ramadhan to paint pictures for sale at an agreed amount. The money has helped Ramadhan with his family upkeep and savings for his future. Whereas the money raised during the Art Sale is going to go to the SAAS kitty to be used to sponsor other needy students. Here are some samples of Ramadhan paintings.



## **Triza's Corner.**



Triza Mghanga (18) is a SAAS student who is currently in Form 3 at Jaribuni Secondary School. Triza is a talented writer who aspires to be a Journalist. Through her writings, Triza has produced a number of heart moving poems some of which adorn the walls of our SAAS Mombasa office on subjects such as My Guardian Angel, I am Happy, Beautiful SAAS etc. In order to help Triza realize her ambition, we are giving her a chance to contribute a piece of writing of her choice and subject to our newsletter. This season Triza has come up with the below titled writing. This therefore is the reason we have a space specially for this student which is called Triza's Corner.

## ***What we go through in our society.***

*In this life, experiences are the best teachers in the world. When people pass through pain and hardship they realise how life needs to be taken care of. Each and every person has their own experiences. Some of them are good, and some of them are awful, when we feel that all hope is gone. When everything is so peculiar we don't lose hope we always take courage and move on.*

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*In my society where I come from people have their own experience they loose hope because to them they find that they cannot handle it any more. When life is so hard at home, no food, no shelter and sometimes clothing, they start looking for means to get what they want. This affects most girls in the society as you know girls have a lot of needs so they start looking for places where they can get money for their needs. Most girls also drop out of school because of school fees, when they see that at home there is nothing left, they start looking for jobs, the bosses are too harsh in some places so they can't bear the pain in their hearts and leave the job to start involving themselves in prostitution , sugar daddies in order to get money for their needs. This has made so many of them to end up with HIV/ AIDS or they become young mothers! A child bearing a child! This has affected most of the families in the society, because at home people are surviving and a girl brings a baby in the house what is that? Problems on top of problems, or when the girl is suffering from HIV/AIDS what would that be? That's why many mothers die in their early age because of the pressure they get from their daughters.*

*In my society, so many girls are school drop-outs. Some dropped from primary because of early pregnancy and some in secondary school because of school fees. Most people in my society struggle to get food for the day, there is also child labour because of shortage of food at home children start doing work at a very early age. Life in my place is so difficult but people work so hard to feed themselves and to pay rent. People work hard so hard but at the end of the day they get very little to cater for their needs. This makes them feel that God has forsaken them, till when do they have to carry the bundle and the bundles of their families?*

## **Students Visit on Half Term.**

The Kenyan School System runs from January to November with 3 terms per year. The total number of years in Primary School is eight, Secondary school is four years and University is four years hence the system of 8-4-4. The first term is from January to March, second term is May to July and the third term is from September to November. The months of April, August and December are holidays. In between the term there is a mid-term break of 3 days or so in February, June and October respectively.

The month of October comes at such a time when students are halfway through their third term of school. This means that they get to have a short break of a weekend or so. Fortunately for some, this break has come at a time when there is a national holiday on 10<sup>th</sup> (Moi Day) and Eid day (end of fasting month of Ramadhan) on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2007. Most of the students therefore had a longer break on mid term and visited the office to update us on their progress while some who had not brought their second term reports and fee receipts submitted them to the office.

The office also received several bursary students both for secondary and polytechnic (Vocational Training). Hopefully we shall be paying their fees next year. During the visit by Denis, Ruth and Jill Vance to Jaribuni Secondary School where a number of SAAS sponsored students attend, they were able to meet with the School Headmaster, Mr. Katana who took them around the school explaining the students plight. Mr. Katana explained that the school has students who are in needy situations with arrears yet the parents cannot raise any more fund to educate them and they depend on well wishers to see them through term to

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term. He mentioned cases of some students who may be forced to drop out of school if they do not receive any assistance. For this reason, he was asked to select 5 special cases of students currently in form 3 who will be going to form four next year so SAAS can help raise fees for their final year. Those students included 3 girls (Salome, Mnyazi, Leah) and 2 boys; Abubakar and Samuel. These students fees will be raised during the visit of Denis and Ebby to Ireland in order to pay for their bursary.

## ***Other Activities.***

1. Hosted 2 students from University College Cork (UCC) for the month of August namely Ciara and Sinead who stayed for 4 weeks. They helped with the office administration as well as worked with students among those they interviewed were Ramadhan Athman the artist mentioned in an article above.
2. Hosted Fr Bill (73) from Minnesota, US. Father Bill is a priest based in Minnesota USA. This is his third visit to Kenya, his first visit was in 2005. His visit is mainly as a Counselor in the Drug Treatment Centre of MEWA, our partner where he stays for 3 months during each visit in order to have extensive sessions with the clients at the centre.
3. SAAS donated several computers to Kenya Association of Professional Counselors and also to a local Muslim Women School -

Madhahirul Ulum. There was also a donation made to MEWA (Muslim Education Welfare Association (SAAS Partner) of Kenya Shillings 35,000/= (€389) towards the Education Fund during the "Futari" dinner fund raising event.

## ***Coming Soon.***

Ebby and Ahmed (SAAS Staff and Chairman respectively) are being sponsored by well wishers in Ireland to attend Diploma in Counseling, with Kenya Association of Professional Counselors KAPC. They had their interviews conducted in early October and they both passed their interviews therefore they will be starting this course in December.

Denis Dennehy and Ebby Soinani (SAAS Staff) will travel in November for fundraising events in Ireland and will be available for school talks and other groups such as girl guides so they can make them aware of the work SAAS is doing in Mombasa, Kenya.

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