The Kasiisi Project

Annual Report

10/1/10-9/30/11

www.kasiisiproject.org    http://kasiisiproject.blogspot.com
SUMMARY

2011 was an exciting and pivotal year for The Kasiisi Project. The presence in Uganda of interim Field Director Caroline Riss, helped focus everyone on building capacity in Uganda, by developing a sound foundation for our organization in the field – community based organization The Kibale Forest Schools Project. We opened our new pre-school and the dormitory got a roof. Conservation education programs had a stellar year we moved the lunch program a step closer to self-sufficiency with the start of our school farm and a second school library was opened. The project expanded its Conservation Education and Girls Peer-Education programs to another 9 schools bringing the number of Kasiisi Project Schools to 14. We did all this with plenty of help from volunteers of all ages both in Uganda and in the US and many generous donors. (see below)

Harvard Students Michelle Sirois and Brennan Vail with friends Uganda 2011

ADMINISTRATION

New Staff
In January 2011 we recruited Caroline Riss, a public defense lawyer from Montana, to be our interim Field Director. As well as being responsible for general administration and financial oversight in Uganda she had the primary goal of working with our partner in Uganda, The Kibale Forest Schools Project (KFSP), to ensure that this registered Community Based Organization developed the solid foundations and local buy-in that it needs to be a successful, sustainable, locally managed project in the future.
We hired Kasiisi Project Scholar and recent Business School graduate Koojo Mathew to be her assistant.
In April we added a second Kasiisi Project Scholar, Rwabuhinga Francis, to the team as trainee Conservation Education Director. Francis, who graduated in 2011 from Makerere University with a degree in Environmental Sciences, is the liaison between our school wildlife clubs, KFSP and The Kasiisi Project.
In October we welcomed another Makerere Graduate, accounting major, Amanyire James to the team as our office administrator and accountant.

New Office

With the installation of main power (see below) at Kasiisi Primary School, our project office moved from Makerere University Biological Field Station (MUBFS) inside Kibale National Park to a room in the newly completed Nursery School at Kasiisi. The office, which is now located at the center of project action, provides desks for everyone, lots of storage and a table for meetings.

Kibale Forest Schools Project

With the help of local facilitator, the Kabarole Research Center (KRC), we held strategic planning meetings to map the future of the project. The interim board set up when KFSP was registered as a Community Based Organization (CBO), held a general assembly to register members drawn from the local community. The General Assembly voted in the full board, which included representatives of...
parents, school principals, school management committees, the Uganda Wildlife Authority, local churches and the research community at MUBFS.

CONSTRUCTION

Latrines
6 new latrines were built for girls at Rweteera Primary School bringing to an end the first phase of our goal to provide adequate latrines for everyone at all 5 core schools.

Nursery School
Rooms were painted, windows and glass installed, latrines completed and furniture commissioned at the new Kasiisi – Weston pre-school which opened in May 2011 (see below)
Dormitory
Thanks to a heroic sponsored walk by the Conway women and the support of all their generous friends we were able to put a roof on the Kasiisi Project Dormitory. Now that the building is protected from the weather we can begin to complete the rooms.

Kasiisi School Dormitory has a red roof!

Power

In 2011 mains power came to Kasiisi Primary School. We struck a deal with the parents where we agreed that, if they wired the school office/library building, the Kasiisi Project would find the money to bring in mains power. Thanks to Nashoba Brooks School, The Foundation for Metrowest and everyone who bought quilt raffle tickets and made donations we were able to fulfill our promise. Following a celebration to officially “Turn On the Power” electricity was also installed at the staff house and the pre-school.
Staff House
The Staff House at Kasiisi was renovated and a verandah added so that it can now be used for accommodation for visitors and volunteers. The substantial increase in park fees by the Uganda Wildlife Authority makes using the MUBFS much less feasible. The revenue from the Staff House will help fund project programs.

Adding a verandah to the Staff House

CONSERVATION

2011 was a year of enormous growth for The Kasiisi Project Conservation Program. We received grants from Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund, Cleveland Zoo and the Adessium Foundation enabling us to expand our programs to 14 schools.

We began implementing the first steps of a new program, which will bring together community, schools and research, in a collaborative partnership, centered in the schools Wildlife Clubs and with a common goal of preserving the forest.

Conservation Videos

In 2011 we continued to show the Nature For Kids (NFK) Conservation Education Videos translated into Rutooro, the local language adding 7 more schools our list.

In collaboration with NFK, UNITE, The Max Plank Instituite, Leipzig and JGI (Uganda) we obtained funding for the production of 3 videos on the African Great Apes. The movies, which will be produced in 2012 in English, French and at least one African language comes with 3 years of funding for teacher training and chimpanzee focused conservation education activities, to complement the videos.

The conservation education team: Rwabuhinga Francis, Amy Hanna and Tibeyalirwa Adolf
Disney Safari Guide
Kasiisi School Social Studies, Literacy, Computer and environmental teacher, Musinguzi Moses, was accepted into the Disney Safari Guide program at Disney World in Florida and after some visa issues arrived in the US in November. The program, which furnishes knowledgeable African guides for visitors to the Disney Safari Lodge, provides training in conservation education, teaching skills, effective presentation and handling people. We foresee that he will bring back knowledge and skills that will hugely enrich our all our academic and conservation programs. Thank you Disney!

![Musinguzi Moses](image1)

Teacher Field Trips
Funded by Disney we took 65 key teachers from 14 schools on Field Trips to 3 local National Parks. They tracked chimpanzees in Kibale National Park, watched elephant, lions and hippos in Queen Elizabeth NP and in Semuliki NP took to boats for the first time to see the rare and extraordinary Shoebill on Lake Albert.

![Trip to Semuliki National Park](image2)
Water Project
Thanks to funding from Cleveland Zoo and in collaboration with The Kibale Fish Project, 150 Grade 4 students from our 5 core schools began a project to monitor water quality around their schools and farms for a year. With help from volunteer Matt Barth they took water samples in dry and wet seasons and measured temperature, color, turbidity and acidity and compared their results with pristine water from the forest.

Wildlife Clubs
Volunteer Amy Hanna, who previously worked at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago spent 2 weeks a month from March and November volunteering with the project. Rwabuhinga Francis joined her as trainee Conservation Director and between them they started a new program to revitalize the Wildlife Clubs in 14 schools. In the pipeline are a resource binder, teacher training, conservation activities and field trips. Chimpanzee researchers gave talks about chimpanzee behavior.
Sport and Debate Cups
The Brevard Zoo Netball and Football Cups, and the Kibale Chimpanzee Project Debate Cups linked fun and conservation. Donations of uniforms from Brevard Zoo carried chimpanzee logos on their front to underline the project’s commitment to conservation.

Kigarama: The Brevard Zoo Netball Cup champions

Wildlife Camps
Funded by WWF (Albertine Rift) we held a wildlife camp at MUBFS where we were joined by students and teachers from Hoima district. Students played games, learned how to use binoculars and took field trips into the forest.
Pupils from Kyanyawara and Rweteera schools attended the Camp Uganda wildlife camp at The Uganda Wildlife Education Center in Entebbe where they fed the rhinos and chimpanzees, learned to make fuel-efficient stoves and made friends with children from other parts of Uganda.

Conservation camp tug-of-war
Nature walk
HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Girls Program
With help from JGI(Uganda) Kasiisi Project nurse Kabajansi Lucy held a peer education training session for 30 students and 15 teachers drawn from all 14 Kasiisi project school, expanding the reach of this very successful program. 1500 girls from the 5 core schools received free sanitary pads and underwear.

Peer Education workshop

School Lunch Program

Serving Lunch at Kyanyawara  Cooking Lunch at Kasiisi

For a third year we fed lunch to 1200 children from Kasiisi and Kyanyawara primary schools with funds raised by The Kasiisi Porridge Project (UK). In addition we began the development of the Kasiisi Project Farm.

UK architect volunteers Matt Parker and Rob Mawson produced designs for the farm and began construction of farm buildings. The land was cleared and trees planted along its boundaries. When complete the farm will have accommodation for manager and laborers, an education center, henhouses and piggeries and eco-camping facilities for visitors. The first chickens arrived at the end of December.
Clean Water
Thanks to a donation of a mobile water-treatment unit, Kasiisi primary School now has chlorinated water produced from a salt solution and a car battery. Cheap and sustainable! This unit can treat multiple barrels of water in a few hours.
Clean Water!

Health Education

Michelle Sirois worked with Nurse Lucy on the new health curriculum and with help from educator Chris Affleck are all set to introduce the program in 2012.

Michelle Sirois and Nurse Lucy

LITERACY

A new library was opened at Kyanyawara and books, donated by friends in the US and by UK charity Book Aid International, filled the shelves in July. A room in the pre-school was equipped with shelves which now await books purchased with money raised by the children of Heywood Preparatory School in Corsham, UK. Book groups, women's literacy groups and reading circles continue to make a huge impact on the reading culture at Kasiisi Primary School where English grades have improved for the third year in a row.

Picking books at Kyanayawara Library

Richard leads a reading circle at Kasiisi

Women’s literacy group
In May we opened our first nursery school in the grounds of Kasiisi Primary School. Kasiisi Project Scholars Kazairwe Maureen and Kawino Jennipher completed their nursery school training and came back to the pre-school to teach. The classrooms were given names, The Forest Room, The Butterfly and Flower Room, The Farm room and finally the Wetland Room and the interiors were decorated to reflect these themes. At the end of 2011 48 children aged 3-6 were enrolled in 3 classes. This nursery school is the only one in the area to have teachers qualified in early childhood education.

RESEARCH

Harvard student Brennan Vail studied the impact of the school lunch program on energy levels in students and Ugandan PhD student Miriam Kanyago completed her data collection and did preliminary analysis to test the use of a new banana based porridge for school lunches.
Brennan collecting data at Kigarama School

STAFF BURSARIES

4 teachers from Kasiisi Project Schools attended college partially funded by The Kasiisi Project. In 2011 the Johanna Sweet Bursaries went to Kyota Thomas from Kasiisi, Marunga Ruth from Kiko and Mugenyi Didas from Kyanyawara.

SCHOLARSHIPS

In 2011 we supported 85 students in secondary school and college. Tumusiime Patrick began medical school and Tibusimwe Irene a course in at Makerere Univeristy. At the end of the year we added 2 more University graduates, Rwabuhainga Francis and Nyakato Flavian both from Makerere University and 4 students graduated from vocational training institutions. We have the proud record that 100% of our current University and Vocational graduates have jobs! Since 1997 the project has supported 115 students, 62% of whom have been sponsored privately, 61% of whom are still in full time education and 24% of whom have now graduated the program either from University or vocational training or to pursue alternate educational avenues.
2011 was a bumper year for volunteers. Amy Hanna from Lincoln Park Zoo volunteered 2 weeks a month from April – November with our Conservation Education project, educators Chris Affleck and Ellen Sarkisian helped Kyanyawara teachers teach literacy and comprehension, architects Matt Parker and Rob Mawson produced plans for the project farm and jump-started the building. Matt Barth volunteered from February to November both on the Water Quality Project and supervising farm building. Erica Nunlist helped children make animal masks, UK high school students from Dulwich College helped with computers and tree planting and members of the Riss, Donovan, Merrick and Van Rossen families joined in wildlife camps, conservation education programs, blackboard renovation and writing programs. Harvard Student, Michelle Sirois, worked with children at Kasiisi and Kanyawara schools to write and illustrate stories and legends about the environment and publish them as books for the library.
Sharing Computers and Hats!!

Merrick family paints chalk boards

Chris Affleck, Ellen Sarkisian, Amy Hanna, Matt Barth, Michelle Sirois and Caroline Riss at Kyanyawara Primary School
Everyone turns out to work on the farm!

FINANCIAL REPORT

Income for Financial year 10.10 - 9.11
Total - $180,571

Kasiki Project Expenditure for financial year 10.10 - 9.11
Total - 176,137

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