



# KEEI Notes

The Newsletter of Kijana Educational Empowerment Initiative

Empowering Kenyan and American youth through school development projects and cultural exchange.

Summer 2005

## Kijana:

"Youth, or Young Person"  
(In the Swahili language)



*A person is a person  
through other persons.*

-Bantu proverb

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## New Classrooms, New Promise

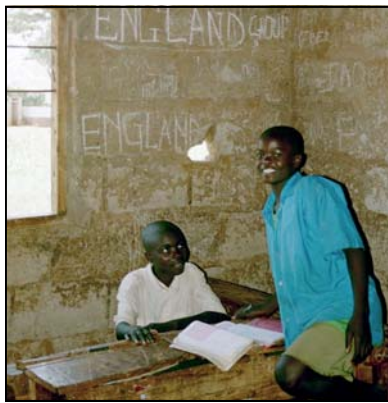
Following upon our successes in recent years in improving the quality of the learning experience at Ebusiloli and Essaba community schools, KEEI has embarked upon expanding our efforts to several schools in the Bunyore region. At **Ebbiba Primary School** near Kima, in Bunyore, we have just begun work to construct two complete new classrooms. In March, when Jim Cummings visited the region and several schools, two of the lower primary classrooms were found to be almost collapsing. Some 50+ students learn in each of the mud classrooms, one of which was missing a wall. (pictured here) No water supply exists at the school and the community is unable to gather funds for significant improvements. KEEI has stepped in to demolish the old classrooms and build two new ones, which will hopefully serve as an inspiration to local government and other institutions of what is possible. We hope it will serve to provide a source of pride to young students and the community inspiring youth to greater heights.



Crumbling old classrooms. Look for pictures of new classroom in our next newsletter.

## Expanding Our Impact

At KEEI, we are making a significant impact upon individual communities, while working to broaden our reach within Bunyore and within Palm Beach County. We recently identified several schools in need and are expanding our efforts to these several additional primary schools, including: Mumboha, Ebukuya, and Ebbiba. Previously we had expanded to assist Essumba and Essirulo primary schools. From April to May we funded several efforts at each of the schools mentioned. We funded four solar projects in which solar systems were installed at four of the schools to power a World Space Radio. Every primary school in the country has been given a World Space Radio by the government, which can be used for educational pro-



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## Mission

*Kijana Educational Empowerment Initiative*, a non-profit organization, promotes and cultivates youth empowerment through educational development, cross-cultural dialogue, and sustainable and environmentally friendly economic growth, among rural Kenyan school communities and American school communities.

gramming. However, the schools cannot afford to buy batteries and do not have access to grid electricity. KEEI is working to help schools use a resource they have (radios) and promote sustainable technology and economic development at the same time. By providing a solar power supply, we have helped the schools access a free source of energy to listen to their radios. Additionally we bought scores of desks for several of the schools. These desks, which seat two to three students each, are at a premium in the region. Our investments are providing students with a better learning environment. We also purchased several thousand tree seedlings for schools, improving the local resource base and providing income for local nurseries. Community members are excited, encouraged and appreciative of our assistance.



## *Bridging Continents and Communities*

We are continuing our cross-cultural activities and exploring innovative ways of connecting students in the United States to students in western Kenya. Inspired by a student video research project by a few students at Benjamin, Jim Cummings interviewed students at Ebusiloli about hunger and food issues in March. The Benjamin Key Club, under the leadership and initiative of students Jackie Daubert and Kim August, has followed up with a video/ DVD about life and issues in Palm Beach County and at Benjamin, which will be shared with members of the Ebusiloli community this summer. Meanwhile we continue our pen pal partners program. Benjamin Upper School Key Club members and Ebusiloli students have corresponded over the past several months. Students on both continents are very excited about the learning experience. Benjamin 6<sup>th</sup> graders have also corresponded with Ebusiloli primary students. We hope to expand this program to other schools in Palm Beach County as well.



Primary students smearing walkway with cow-dung

## **THANK YOU!**

**Thank You** to all who have contributed at our last *Cookout For Kenya* or to our recent fund drive. Your contributions are already being put to work on the Ebbiba classroom project and are making a dramatic difference in several communities. We recently refurbished two classrooms at Esirulo primary school with your help. Mud and cow-dung floors have been replaced with cement. Students no longer have the weekly chore of smearing floors with dung. If you haven't given, please consider doing so. A small contribution will make a big difference in the lives of many young people. \$20 for example will fund the construction of two student desks - each of which will seat up to three students.



Students thank you for the new cement floors and walkways.

## *3rd Annual Cookout For Kenya*

Please mark your calendars for December 3rd, 2005 for our Third Annual Cookout for Kenya. Which will be held at a new location, Ocean Cay Park, in Juno Beach. We want to thank **Nutrition S'Mart** of Palm Beach Gardens and **Imperial Frame Gallery** of North Palm Beach for already agreeing to sponsor us once again. We will have African art for sale and as prizes. Please join us and help us continue to bring smiles and hope to children.

*Kijana Educational Empowerment Initiative*

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Your contribution is making a fundamental difference on two continents. Please visit our website for more information and photos of our activities.  
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