

KAPASSENI CALLING

AN UPDATE FROM THE KAPASSENI PROJECT COMMITTEE

October 2001



Children in uniform stream from the new Kapasseni Primary School, built this year

“Kapasseni School Is Shining”

That is what the children are singing! On our visit this year, we saw the students line up and sing a most beautiful song in praise of their new school. Translated from Sena, it goes:

*“Our Kapasseni primary school is shining, shining
It shines, shines like the brightest star up in the sky
Teachers, we are ready for classes - teach us.”*

They sang and danced so proudly, and each child went in front to do a dance of appreciation to the school, parents, elders, and their teachers. Afterwards, Joseph thanked them, and told them how Victoria’s Gettin’ Higher Choir helped raise money for the school. All the students and teachers clapped their hands and said “Viva Gettin’ Higher Choir!” I spoke about the singers, musicians, and churches, who have helped, and the many wonderful friends in Victoria who are praying and thinking about Kapasseni. The people were full of joy, and the head master said “Indeed, this is Sharing the Light”, referring to the school motto and the theme of the fundraising concert held in 1999 that really got the project going. We’ll tell you more about the school in this newsletter, share letters from students, and update you on the planned health clinic, agriculture and more. Thank you so much!!

– **Perpetua Alfazema**

UVIC Presentation November 3rd

We took many pictures in Mozambique this year, and have a slide and video presentation to show you what is going on in Kapasseni. We’ll also talk about progress so far and our hopes for the future. The evening will include singing by members of the Gettin’ Higher Choir and the Moja Africa Singers, refreshments, and Mozambican crafts. Admission by donation (\$10/\$5 suggested), with proceeds to Kapasseni School. 7:30 pm, David Lam auditorium, UVic (MacLaurin Building). At 6:30 there will be a pre-show screening of the documentary *Journey To Kapasseni*, about the project’s remarkable beginnings.

St. Andrew’s Concert ... and CD !

The *Turn The World Around* concert on June 17 was a wonderful, warm evening of music and song. \$11,910 was raised for Kapasseni Primary School. We greatly appreciate the Gettin’ Higher Choir, Virgo Rising, and the Moja Africa Singers for their beautiful heartfelt performances, as well as all who attended and our hosts at St. Andrew’s Cathedral. The concert was recorded by John Ellis, and a CD has been made. The CD will be available at the November 3rd UVic presentation, and can also be obtained from Denis Donnelly at 598-5186.

Going To Mozambique

We Alfazemas (Perpetua and Joseph, and children Maza, Rafael, and Sara) arrived in Beira, Mozambique on Saturday, July 21. On Thursday we met with the Provincial Director of Education in Sofala province, who was pleased with our plans to add another school classroom and was supportive of our project. We also had four meetings with staff of the provincial health department, who explained procedures and requirements for establishing a health clinic in Mozambique. They also gave us a drawing showing how a health clinic should be built, and a letter thanking the Kapasseni Project for helping the Mozambican people in different ways.

We visited a clinic and posts operated by Dorcas Aid, a Christian non-profit organisation. Anita Simonis showed us around and explained how the clinic was run and maintained. The clinic in Beira is extremely busy, and helps to diagnose serious diseases such as HIV (AIDS) which is killing many people in cities and villages.

The "Journey to Kapasseni" was rough again, and we took two days to cover 400 kilometres. After this year's floods the roads were really dangerous. We got stuck about 12 times, and had to walk through big pools of water brought by the floods. We are happy that by next year much of the road will be upgraded, and that in some areas landmines have been removed.

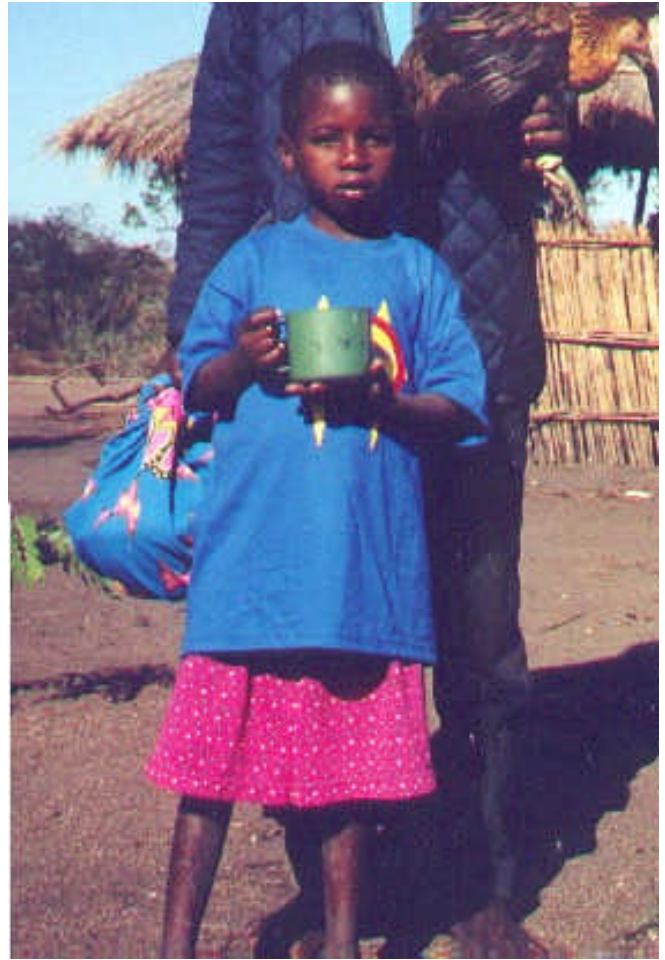
The New School

We arrived in Kapasseni at 10:00 pm, and all was dark. In the morning light we were amazed to see how beautiful the new school was, with its white brick walls and shining metal roof. Our three children, who had not seen the village since 1988, could not believe their eyes at the transformation. They had memories of empty fields with scattered huts, loss of hope in peoples' faces, and few children. My daughter Mazalari said, "Kids look happier! And now are wearing clothes!" She noticed that the school children keep their school compound and classrooms clean by sweeping them with brush brooms every morning, and said, *The kids learn both how to work and study, and that is really good!*

School Breakfast Program

Two women are hired to provide meals. One woman makes two large pots of porridge for the children attending the morning school session, and the other does the same to feed the afternoon session children. A full stomach really helps children to learn better. This year each school child was given a plastic cup for the porridge. Mothers and babies enjoy this program too. Village women are learning from the breakfast program how to make a healthy porridge for their families and are trying it at home. The recipe includes: millet and maize flour, brown (sugarcane) sugar, sesame oil, pounded peanuts, sun dried fruits, and water. Sounds delicious!

Kapasseni Breakfast - At UVic on November 3rd we will have the porridge mix for sale. Try some for breakfast!



A young girl holds her cup of breakfast program porridge

Storytelling and Songs

Our children were invited to attend class, and found that the kids learn through storytelling and songs. A teacher starts singing and the students sing along as a way of teaching. Even after school, the children often continue to sing the songs while helping around the house. This kind of teaching has long been a part of Kapasseni culture, where people often create songs of what they have seen or what is going on around them. This helps them to remember things, since most of them do not think of time as westerners do, in days or years.

Making School Uniforms

The villagers really like the blue school uniform T-shirts, but agreed with us that it would make sense for uniforms to be made from Mozambican cotton in the village, rather than having them brought from Canada. We have had problems with customs officials and carrying over-weight baggage (with hefty extra charges). A man in the village has a very old machine to make the uniforms. This man might help to teach the women's sewing group. All the parents agreed to pay some of the costs, with exceptions for those who cannot afford it, such as the orphans. The community hopes that the money from the sale of the uniforms will go towards maintaining or buying medicines for the health clinic. We want to purchase an additional sewing machine so that more tailors can be trained.

Grade 3 Writes To Us

We brought back over 50 letters from the school children. These ones are from grade 3 students, dated August 3. Would you or your children like to write back to them?

Name – Tome Rui - grade 3

I want to write a letter to the students in Canada. I am Tome Rui Jalene. I live in the South of Kapasseni and I am schooling at Kapasseni school. I am in grade 3. How are you?

Name of the student-Sawelenga Ernest

letter to friend

I am Sawelenga Ernesto Sande. Before any thing, I want to talk to you over there in Canada. Here I am fine and you? I am in grade 3 in Kapasseni school. Thanks my brother.

Name – Zacaria August Miquitaio

Letter to my friend in Canada

I am attending Kapasseni primary school. How are you. I am doing good. Thank you

Higher Education Needed

The Kapasseni school now goes to grade 3, and our plan is to add another grade each year. The government has given permission for the school to go up to grade 5. For higher education, some boys have in the past been sent to high school at the Catholic mission in Murrasa, 60 kilometres from Kapasseni. However, not many villagers can afford even the nominal boarding and tuition costs. Parents are especially reluctant to send their daughters away, because they need them to help with chores and are also protective. We hope eventually to have grade 12 in Kapasseni, so that boys and girls can remain in the community. This will take a lot more resources than the little school we now have. Some Victoria citizens are thinking about ways to provide higher education, especially for the girls, who may not be allowed to leave home. If you want to help with this, please call Doris at (250) 474-5024.

New Desks Much Appreciated

Our thanks to the Canadian High Commission in Maputo, Mozambique for donating money to build 50 desks, benches and one table. The children look very comfortable sitting on their desks (instead of the floor) and are more attentive to the teachers.

A Community Focus

The villagers hold their big or important meetings in the school compound under the Masau tree. The village women meet every Tuesday to socialise and to learn how to sew. Mothers and daughters meet every Friday to learn about old ways through songs and story telling, with the help of elders. On Saturdays a soccer match is usually played, and the school soccer field is packed. On Sundays, a classroom is used for a worship service.



Perpetua helps distribute blankets to the children

Blankets for Orphans

Just before we left Beira for Kapasseni, we were given 61 blankets by Ben Kals, the local Coordinator of Lutheran World Federation – Mozambique. In Kapasseni we gave the blankets to orphans, disabled children, children whose parents were blind or disabled or deformed, and children who sleep at the school. There was lots of singing from the community to express appreciation to LWF and the Kapasseni Project for helping the children. 24 orphaned children attend Kapasseni primary school. Some sleep at the school and others with relatives.

Health Clinic

Mr. Vasco Botso, a registered nurse originally from the area, came with us to Kapasseni. We hope to hire him to run the health centre we want to help build next year. Vasco is very interested in serving the community. The first aid man and elders met with villagers to discuss plans and a suitable location for the health clinic was chosen. The first aid man reported that people coming to him suffer from ongoing malaria, worms, diarrhea, and bilharzia (passing blood in the urine), eye cataracts, ear infections, infection during childbirth and malnutrition in young children. The villagers were overjoyed to learn that their request of a health centre was answered positively. Pregnant women smiled and the mothers tossed their young ones in the air, joyful to hope for better health opportunities. The news was followed by loud singing and dancing in thanks to the Kapasseni Project.

Floods and Food Shortages

Last year we helped the villagers start an indigenous tree nursery and food gardens. Unfortunately the seedlings were all swept away by heavy rain and floods. There is a shortage of food this year for most people in the Zambezi valley. We saw hundreds of people still living in the roadside tents built for flood victims during relief efforts early this year. A proper method of food storage/security would be very helpful in Kapasseni.

Kapasseni – A Village Reborn

After the long civil war, when refugees returned to Mozambique from neighbouring countries, many people were devastated to return to empty fields and villages. Most of the youth abandoned the villages in hopes of better lives in the cities. Young girls got married very early. Elderly people lost hope because they saw young people leave and had no one to pass their knowledge to. In Kapasseni they believed the village was dead.

That changed in 1999 when 7 volunteers from Victoria and one from the USA came to help build a school. Since then, Kapasseni and its people have been blessed with a spirit of togetherness. The community supports the children going to school, the parents are very proud, and the children themselves are very thankful to go to school and to have hope for the future. Young girls are busy going to school instead of getting married early. Fathers and mothers are also receiving adult education, sometimes regaining knowledge they lost many years ago. Building Kapasseni school brought the community and its culture back to life again. Now Kapasseni has become the most popular meeting place for the villagers living nearby and far away, and is serving as a role model for neighbouring villages!

Ideas For Self-Sufficiency

Two days before we left Kapasseni we had final meetings with the village elders and other villagers. We talked about ideas for local income generation, so that Kapasseni can move towards being self-sustaining. Many people liked the idea of purchasing a grain grinding machine and charging fees to those using it. Women and girls would especially benefit from the grinding machine, as pounding grains is mostly women's work and can take many hours. Women would then have more time for other work, and girls could stay longer in the school to finish their homework while there is still daylight, instead of rushing home to go and pound grain.

Children Helping Children

We are very grateful to the many school groups that have held penny drives and other fund raising activities. Ruth King, Discovery School, Burnside, Sundance, Lambrick Park, Safe Harbour Christian in Victoria, Zion Lutheran Christian School in Prince George, and the ICA youth group have supported the project. We would be happy to do a presentation at other schools or service groups. Contact Perpetua at 478-9571 for more information.

Portuguese Fundraising Party

The UVIC Portuguese Students' Association will support the Kapasseni Project with the proceeds from their Christmas party on Saturday, December 22 at the Portuguese Hall at Our Lady of Fatima church. There will be performances and lots of great Portuguese food. Call Lisa Furtado at 477-8898 FMI. We thank the PSA for the \$1,600 they donated to the Kapasseni Project following their wonderful Sao Joao Festa on June 23.

Finances To September 2001

FUNDS IN 2001

June "Turn the World Around" concert	\$ 11,910
Portuguese Student Association dinner	1,600
Other events, school groups	1,540
Other donations	6,850
Balance from 2000	<u>3,050</u>
Total Funds	\$ 24,950

EXPENDITURES IN 2001

Building 3rd classroom and desks	\$ 6,500
Teachers, first aid man, breakfast program	2,850
School supplies & uniforms	2,300
Mozambique contact persons	900
Coordinators' travel	5,590
Travel expenses for nurse	830
Beira computer printer and telephone	450
Administration & bank charges	700
Agriculture	700
Transportation	1,200
Customs & excess baggage charge	<u>640</u>
Total Expenditures	\$ 22,660

- The Kapasseni Project is run entirely by volunteers, so administration costs are very low.
- Funds raised this year will be matched next year by Canadian Lutheran World Relief in conjunction with CIDA, up to \$25,000. Through the matching, the benefits of your contributions will be doubled.

School Needs: January to June 2002

We need to raise \$4,100 to keep the school running for the first half of next year, as follows.

Teachers' salaries	\$1,500
Breakfast program	\$ 550
School supplies	\$ 600
Mozambican contact persons	\$ 550
Communications	\$ 200
Administration/misc	\$ <u>700</u>
Total	\$4,100

We hope that donations made at the November 3rd UVic presentation and other contributions will provide these funds. Please come and help us to reach this goal.

More Info - Our three newsletters, with more pictures of Kapasseni and info about the remarkable start of this project, are posted at the Hope Lutheran Church's website at www.pacificcoast.net/~hopelutheran. We also have a brochure and other materials available.

Want to Get Involved? - We welcome any who would like to work with us on this project, including possibly coming on our next trip to Mozambique. You can contact us at 478-9571 (Perpetua Alfazema) or send email to kapasseni@coastnet.com. Donations can be sent to: Redeemer Lutheran Church (memo "Kapasseni Project"), 911 Jenkins Avenue, Victoria, V9B 2N8.

Come Meet Us November 3rd at UVic!!